"Believe and Be Baptized"

A Study Guide To

Learn Christ from the Apostles and Prophets

Volume 3:
14 letters of the Apostle Paul

SunGrist
BELIEVE AND BE BAPTIZED

14 New Testament letters of the Apostle Paul and of course the Holy Spirit

Unfortunately, most generally the custom is to think of “baptism” as what takes place in the baptistry of the church. Not so in the Bible of Jesus and the Apostles where “baptism” most generally refers to what takes place inside the life of the believer before entrance into the baptistry. All the great teaching scriptures about baptism from Romans, Peter, and Jesus are more concerned with the internal change in the believer when they believe that is created by the Holy Spirit of God. Believe is what we do for salvation: baptism is what God does inwardly in the believer when there is real faith. Granted, baptism in the baptistry {which could even be a river as in the case of the water baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist} is instructed by Jesus as an act of obedience, and it does preach a message of salvation that should have already happened inside the believer; but far more important is the inward change of baptism by the Spirit of God, that can be called nothing less than salvation. Why do you think in the seven major doctrines of Ephesians salvation is not in the summary of all the majors such as one God, one Christ, one Spirit, one body, one faith? Well, that is covered by the one baptism.
The actual quote of Mark from which this book title is taken, Mark 16:16 and part of the final great commission of Jesus to disciples, in the New King James Version has the exact wording of “He who believes and is baptized is saved...”

“And He said to them, ‘Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.” (Mark 16:15,16 NKJV)

Copyright:  August, 2006 by SunGrist Bible Commentaries
Volume 3: Believe and Be Baptized

CHAPTER 1  The Ministry of the Apostle Paul  17
1-1: Other Scriptures to Support Colossians 1:25. 18
1-2: Where Paul Got His Doctrine. 20
1-3: Peter recognized and told the Christian world that Paul was writing Scriptures. 21
1-4: Peter Verifies that Paul wrote Scripture. 22
1-5: Paul like Peter championed the doctrine of inspiration of Scriptures. 24
1-6: Sufferings and the Ministry of Paul. 27
1-7: Apostle with Children, I Timothy and II Corinthians. 30
1-8: An Outline of I Timothy. 31
1-9. “Believe” in the letters of the Apostle Paul. 31

CHAPTER 2  Paul and Erosions of Doctrine  33
2-1: Doctrine, often a Tight Shoe that Crimps our Style. 34
2-2: Marriage, Divorce, and Qualifications of Leaders. 35
2-3: What Can Happen if We Erode our Tolerance of Sound Doctrine. 36
2-4: “The Office Should Seek the Man, not the Man the Office.” 42
2-5: Creations, Christians, and Christian Leaders. 44
2-6. “Believe” in the Letters of Paul Continued. 49

CHAPTER 3  Magic Outline of the Bible  51
3-1: THE LIVING GOD OF THE LIVING 53
3-2: Righteousness of God and Man. 56
3-3: The Composite Witness of the Bible. 58
3-4: God, Man, and the “Son of Man”. 61
3-5: THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS. 66
3-6: Wisdom from God. 68
3-7: THE GOSPEL. 70
3-9: What Happened to the Jews as The Chosen People of God? 72
3-10: The Salvation of God. 73
3-11: The New King of the New Israel 75
3-12: The Living God Wants Others to Live. 76
3-13: “Believe” from the Letters of Paul Continued. 77

CHAPTER 4  Baptism  79
4-1: Baptism in the Old Testament. 80
4-2: The 4 figures of baptism of I Peter 3:18-22. 82
4-3: National Baptism in Jeremiah. 85
4-4: More on "Baptism of Self" as Predicted in Ezekiel. 88

CHAPTER 5  
**Gospel in Isaiah**  89

5-1: The 17 quotes from Isaiah in Matthew. 90
5-2: A Remnant of Israel Saved, Romans 9-11. 92
5-3: From “The Bible in Context”, Two Sections from chapter 3. 94
5-4: The New King of Israel, Isaiah 54-66. 96
5-5: 16 more Quotes from Isaiah in Matthew. 98
5-6: Matthew from the “Prophets and Apostles” Appendix. 99
5-7: Gospel of the King and the Kingdom. 101
5-8: And Baptism. 102
5-9: The “Baptized into Christ Jesus” of Romans 6. 103
5-10: The Doctrine of Baptisms and One Baptism of Hebrews 6. 105

CHAPTER 6  
**“Kingdom” in the New Testament**  109

6-1: Where we Have Found Similarities in Hebrews and Romans. 109
6-2: Methods of the Making of History by God. 110
6-3: Last Word on the “Kingdom” from John in the book of Revelation. 113
6-4: “Kingdom” in Luke with guidance from Paul. 115
6-5: Checking the OT quotes in Luke for the concept of the Kingdom. 119
6-6: The “Kingdom” in Acts and from Paul to Dr. Luke. 121
6-7: Our Bible Outline on the Gospel of the King and the Kingdom. 123
6-8: “Believe” in the Letters of Paul Continued. 123

CHAPTER 7  
**Gospel of the King and Kingdom: Romans and Hebrews**  125

7-1: Our Bible Outline on the Gospel of the King and the Kingdom. 125
7-2: Divine Glory, Human Pride, and Self-destruction. 125
7-3: Appendix OT Book Outline of the Bible on Romans 1-3 and Hebrews 1-6. 129
7-4: 17 Old Testament Quotes in Romans 1-3 and Hebrews 1-6. 131
7-5: “Man Dominions” of Hebrews and “all things work together” of Romans. 133
7-6: Now, how similar is that to Romans 8? 133
7-7: Some Definitions in Romans 4-8 and Hebrews 7-12:2. 135
Volume 3: Believe and Be Baptized

CHAPTER 8  
Skill in Understanding: I Corinthians 141

8-1: Our Bible Outline of chapter 2 and 3 on I Corinthians. 143
8-2: Those Given the Grace of Understanding. 146
8-5: Extra-Biblical Revelations and the Anointing. 157
8-6: The Wise, the Miracle-seekers, and the Wind-Bags. 163
8-7: Wisdom on Apostles. 165
8-8: Wisdom On Divisions and Contentious in the Church. 165
8-9: Wisdom On Miscellaneous Church Matters {1,2,3}... I Corinthians 1:16-17 165
8-10: Wisdom and Conscience. 165
8-11: Wisdom About the Falling Away. 165
8-12: Wisdom on Spiritual Gifts. 165
8-14: “Believe” in the Letters of Paul Continued. 166

CHAPTER 9  
The Wisdom of God, I Corinthians Continued 167

9-7: Wisdom on Apostles. 167
9-8: Wisdom On Divisions and Contentious in the Church. 170
9-9: Wisdom On Miscellaneous Church Matters {1,2,3}... 173
9-10: Wisdom and Conscience. 175
9-11: Wisdom About the Falling Away. 175
9-12: Wisdom on Spiritual Gifts. 178
9-14: “Believe” in the Letters of Paul Continued. 193

CHAPTER 10  
The American Style 195

CHAPTER 11  
The Ministry, II Corinthians 209

11-1: The “WE”s of II Corinthians. 209
11-2: What We Do Get of II Corinthians from Our Topical Bible Outline. 211
11-3: A Possible Outline of II Corinthians. 211
11-4: II Corinthians 6, the Ministry of a Distinct and Empowered People of God. 213
11-5: The Ministry of a Cleansed and Perfected People of God, chapter 7-9. 217
11-6: The Fellowship of the Ministering to the Saints, II Corinthians 8,9. 218
11-7: Paul’s Authority for Edification came from Christ, 10-13. 219

CHAPTER 12  
**Titus, “Our Proven and Diligent Brother”**. 221

12-1: Exhort and Convict Those Who Contradict. 223

CHAPTER 13  
**Timothy, Sound Doctrine** 225

13-1: I Timothy, Seducing Spirits and Doctrines of Devils. 227
13-2: II Timothy, “Perilous Times” and “The Time Will Come”. 233

CHAPTER 14  
**Galatians, Gospel of the One Baptism** 235

14-1: Galatians in the other books of the New Testament. 236
14-2: I and II Peter as Commentaries on Galatians. 237
14-3: Defence of Apostleship and the Source of Scriptures. 241
14-4: The One Baptism of “Believe and Be Baptized” of Galatians 2:20. 245
14-5: Freedom of Choice in Galatians. 248
14-6: Applications and Implications of the One Baptism of Galatians 6. 249

CHAPTER 15  
**Acts of Paul and the Holy Spirit** 251

15-1: Acts 8:1-3, Saul Persecutes the Church. 252
15-3: Saul Preaching, Escaping, and on to Jerusalem and Tarsus. 254
15-4: From Damascus to Arabia to Damascus and then Jerusalem. 255

CHAPTER 16  
**Philippians, the Gospel of Good Church Behavior** 261

16-1: II Timothy versus Philippians on Church Behavior. 262
16-2: Good Church Behavior and Good Church Attitudes in Philippians. 265
CHAPTER 17  Thessalonians, Second Coming and Prerequisites  269

17-1: Thessalonica. 269
18-2: Previous Ministry of Paul at Thessalonica. 270
17-3: Day of the LORD and Lord. 271
17-4: I Thessalonians on The Day of the Lord. 273
17-5: Prerequisites of the Second Coming, II Thessalonians. 274

CHAPTER 18  Colossians and Ephesians  279

18-1: Some Background on the Asia of New Testament Times. 280
18-2: OT quotes in Colossians and Ephesians. 283
18-3: The One Baptism Presentation of Colossians 2 and 3. 289
18-4: How To Walk? 292
18-5: One Hope of the Christian Calling, the Message of Ephesians 4:1-16. 293
18-7: Philemon, Colossians, and Philippians and I,II, and III John harmonized. 297
Volume 3: Believe and Be Baptized

Christ for Individuals

A Study Guide To

Learn Christ from the Apostles and Prophets

Volume 2: 5 books of the Apostle John

Revelation, the Gospel of epistles of John

John, and the three little...
Unfortunately, most generally the custom is to think of “baptism” as what takes place in the baptistry of the church. Not so in the Bible of Jesus and the Apostles where “baptism” most generally refers to what takes place inside the life of the believer before entrance into the baptistry. All the great teaching scriptures about baptism from Romans, Peter, and Jesus are more concerned with the internal change in the believer when they believe that is created by the Holy Spirit of God. Believe is what we do for salvation: baptism is what God does inwardly in the believer when there is real faith. Granted, baptism in the baptistry (which could even be a river as in the case of the water baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist) is instructed by Jesus as an act of obedience, and it does preach a message of salvation that should have already happened inside the believer; but far more important is the inward change of baptism by the Spirit of God, that can be called nothing less than salvation. Why do you think in the seven major doctrines of Ephesians salvation is not in the summary of all the majors such as one God, one Christ, one Spirit, one body, one faith. Well, that is covered by the one baptism. Who is saved above, Jesus said, “He who believes and is baptized”? We believe and God baptizes through the Spirit and based on what Jesus did on the cross. Would you not much rather have God’s baptism than any other baptism, no matter how outlandish the claim is about the benefits of baptism by this or the other church?

At first it may seem strange to take a verse from the last chapter in Mark to introduce a volume on the life and writings of the Apostle Paul, but not as much so when you consider that these are words from the Great Commission itself from the Risen
Christ, just before His Ascension. As Jesus for 40 days made resurrection appearances to disciples, their slowness to believe (Mark 16:11, 16:13, and 16:14) made it evident to Him that another Apostle was needed. In a few years, and after a couple of appearances from the Ascended Christ (on the road to Damascus and later extensive teaching from the Ascended Christ in Saudi Arabia), that Apostle would be converted from the Saul who persecuted Christians to the Apostle Paul who would practice beyond any all the implications of the Great Commission. This Apostle Paul as a lawyer of the Hebrews would have unique knowledge of the Old Testament once "the veil had been taken away from his eyes, and Paul would later write in Romans of what kept most of the religious leaders—chief priests, Pharisees, Sadducees, scribes, and Herodians—from understanding the oracles of God of their own nation. The Apostle Paul as a Roman citizen would have the legal protection of the Roman government like was needed later at Ephesus when they sought to kill him during the Second Missionary journey, would have as a Roman scholar the ability to speak with "new tongues"—one of the signs Jesus predicted would follow those who did "believe" (Mark 16:17), and would have personal and intimate knowledge in high and low places of the members of the Roman Empire to whom Christ commissioned him to take the Gospel, first to the Jews but primarily to the Gentiles.

{Recall that a few years after the Messiah was cutoff, the Jews as a nation were likewise cutoff as the chosen nation of God, going into that period of abomination of desolation where they would no longer have "eyes to see and ears to hear"; and that only approximately 100,000 in the days of Acts and the first few centuries were converted in the short period after the Crucifixion, 5,000 at the first day of Pentecost after the Resurrection.} Paul would be the Apostle of choice by the Ascended Christ, and His "alter ego"—the Holy Spirit—to take the Gospel of the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ to the Gentiles; at the same time, explaining what both happened to the Jews as the former chosen nation of God, and how the Gentiles would with the "Fullness of the Gentiles" take their place in the kingdom of God. (That mantle of Gentile leadership we know from history and church history fell on the United States, until recently, as America became the leader among the believers of the world; and as the US sent missionaries to every nation of the world in obedience to the great commission.)

"Believe and be baptized", words from Jesus Himself, best summarize the message that Paul delivered to the Roman Empire. It also best summarizes the many messages that Paul delivered in Jewish synagogues and Gentile houses throughout the Empire in two missionary journeys; and in the most significant and lasting influence in the Gentile world with a few Jews, the writing of 14 New Testament books and the sponsorship of 3 more. You know how a decision made by early church fathers about a New Testament Canon included the criterion of authorship by an apostle or
an associate of an Apostle; but a little known fact which can only come out of the internal evidences of the New Testament is the supposition that Paul left manuscripts and parchments (those same books and parchments that Paul requested Timothy to bring to prison in Rome while Dr. Luke was there, and at the same time to bring John Mark since he was profitable to Paul's ministry as chief editor of the New Testament (II Timothy 4:11-13)) for John Mark and Dr. Luke to write respectively Mark, Luke, and Acts. Stop to think about it a few moments since hindsight is better than foresight; and since we can look back over the actual history of the last two thousand years, realizing that the total influence the books of the Apostle Paul is much greater, by any measure you might chose, than the influence of his missionary journeys. Instead of extending approximately one century as did the influence of His immediate life and journeys, the 14 letters with three supplements have extended for over two thousand years. And to think that this was not in the plan of God and the implementation in the kingdom of Christ is as foolish as overlooking the ways God has worked and continues to work in history as the Great Maker of History, the same truth noted by the Apostle James at the great Jerusalem conference when after quoting from Amos 9:11,12, says "known to God from eternity are all His works." (Acts 15:18)

"Believe and be baptized" best summarizes the message that is needed today to explain why the local churches and denominations are about to be overwhelmed by the tares as in the Falling Away of II Thessalonians and Daniel, as "the power of the holy people is completely shattered" (Daniel 12:7). We in the kingdom of God and of Christ have never learned the details of the parable of the seed and the sower, or some of the details of that parable has become part of the time and doctrine we will no longer be endured during the Falling Away. Remember the part where church members, whose hearts like seed sown on stony ground, receive initially the Word with so much enthusiasm {the exact words of the explanation of Jesus in Mark 4:13-20 is "immediately receive it with gladness") that it is interpreted by the evangelist and local church as a conversion, then how Jesus explains that, having no root and because of persecutions and tribulations for the word's sake, they endure only for a time and stumble. Like the citizens of Jerusalem during the day of the Prophet Jeremiah, who lived as they wanted during the week then came to the temple on the Sabbath to say "We Are Safe" (Jeremiah 7:10), we also think we are safe in our beautiful, comfortable, and many church buildings, not realizing that the bad behavior of church members, like of the temple attendees, has overtaken us (II Timothy 3:1-9), that our intolerance of sound doctrine has sealed the God determined fate of our demise (II Timothy 4:1-4), that we have completed our usefulness as a nation to God in the evangelization of the world and in the Fullness of the Gentiles, and that our pride in Bible knowledge, Bible teachers, and preachers has really become more the vast "heaping up of teachers with itching ears" (II Timothy 4:1-4) of the end time false prophets and teachers more than any signs of revival. What we really have in our nation is not signs for encouragement among the few truly members of God's
kingdom who remain, sort of like the thousands who had not bowed to Baal during the time of Elijah, is a like in all the times of the OT Prophets a lot of false prophets saying peace when there is no peace, a lot of pastors and teachers convincing their audiences that they are the people of God when there is only a remnant of those people left in the whole nation, and an innumerable heaping up of misleading teachers that help place a fortress of protection and security, and by the way ignorance, around the so-called "people of God" of many churches and denominations. We are far too "tolerant" today and in our country to admit that Satan has placed the tares in the churches and kingdom for the very purpose of subversion and destruction. Look again carefully at the parable of tares and wheat taught by Jesus and as explained by Jesus to His disciples, and if you can not find eyes to see and ears to hear this parable with explanation then you like most religious leaders of Jesus' day do not have the spiritual understanding of the ASI (Authorized Semi-Public Interpretation). What you see and hear Jesus saying is that "the enemy who sowed them is the devil" (Matthew 13:39), and if the Devil sowed those tares in the churches as well as in the larger kingdom then like the nature of Satan Himself as destructive and as a liar, then the tares in the local churches and denominations have the same goals as Satan himself, that of THE LIE and lies, deception, and destruction. Of course, if your sound doctrine has never progressed to the extent of believing in Satan as the prince and power of this world, then your doctrine will also "be slow to believe" all the Prophets and Apostles said of both Jesus and Satan!

"Believe and be baptized" is the message that Jesus wants to spread His influence in this time as in the time of the 12 Apostles. It is the complete message that will go beyond initial "belief" only which can not save to the "utmost": that is, can not save to the extent of a corresponding inner change which is nothing less than a 9 month new birth, a progressing sanctification, and then a glorification that is a real visual of Christ in the finalized kingdom of the new heavens and new earth! As I told a Chinese friend recently, one who was surprised that a simple belief could bring salvation, there are two "beliefs" in the Bible as the Apostle James makes clear. There is one belief which the devil have and tremble, knowing the facts of hell and their God determined fate there and of their fall; and then there is another faith, one which shows itself in works and that is a righteousness by faith apart from works. This later faith which saves and coverts all the way, and with an adequate concept and more importantly practice of a 9 month new birth as contrasted to an instantaneous new birth of the fundamentalists and of the immediate joy of the seed on stony ground, is the "believe" of Jesus that is coupled with the power of God acting on that individual belief summarized as "and be baptized". Sorry if you thought "and be baptized" related to water baptism. NO, NO, and NO, NO, and NO. It is the "baptism" that Paul speaks of most often in the book of Romans; it is the baptism that Paul writes of most often in his 14 letters; it is the "one baptism" of Ephesians; and most importantly it is the "and be baptized" that
Jesus gives to all His disciples as a great commission. If you do not see this on the positive side of Mark 16:16 where you have the two divisions in "believe and be baptized", one you do in the exercise of your freedom of choice and then the second which God does on you in response to the proper belief and attitude of repentance and belief which when He sees, He starts an act of God in you; then you should see it in the negative side of Mark 16:16—that is, in the "but he who does not believe will be condemned." You know and I know if Jesus had made water baptism necessary for salvation, in spite of all seeing it as a work rather than of grace, he would have said something like, "but he who does not believe and be baptized will be condemned". Right, you know it to be true even though you must face up to an onslaught on unsound doctrine to the contrary. Popularity of Bible teaching, like a best-seller, is now a bad sign; and the popularity of many Bible teachers, both male and female, is a sign of how far we are into itching ears and the time of itching ears teachers as in "the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables." (II Timothy 4:3,4) I would have to say, like Jesus said of His first disciples who at first would not endure the sound doctrine of His resurrection, that you "are slow to believe" the signs in your local churches, in the denominations, and in particular the signs of the warfare in the SBC, if you can not see in all this, and more, the signs of the Falling Away as given by the Apostle Paul and the Holy Spirit of God in the two verses of II Timothy 4:3,4. What you do see in your local churches, denominations, and the larger kingdom of God is: (1) a vast heaping up of popular Bible teachers in conferences, on television, and in books and on the radio {have you ever seen or heard of so many Bible teachers and preachers, and does it not for even one second make you stop to think of how Jesus and the Apostles, especially Paul, told you that there would be many false prophets and teachers—and where do you think those are coming from}; (2) the motivation for such church members is twofold—(a) they have passed beyond ignorance of sound doctrine to a point of no return where they "will not endure sound doctrine", and this intolerance toward sound doctrine is aided by an increased popularity in the churches and denominations which they detect so that they "can come out", so to speak; and (b) it is motivated by "their own desires" for comfort, security, inertia—in that they have a desire for things to stay like they know them, they like their lack of root convictions, they have become comfortable with their cares of this world and the things of this world, they like the deceitfulness of riches of the Gospel of Prosperity and the corollary of success; (3) the turning of ears away from truth while like the religious leaders of Jesus’ day practicing vain worship with a substitution of the teachings of men for the doctrines of God came so slow and gradual with years as to be unnoticed, and they like the people of Plato who lived under ground so that they though the reflected light to be the real light, the vast number of church members today do not know that they have turned into fables.
Jesus said certain “signs” would follow along with the believers.

“And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.” (Mark 16:17,18)

Instead of these signs in our churches today, we have the signs of the Falling Away such as (1) distortions of God's concept of marriage among church members; (2) the taking of God's name in vain as a common practice among church members so that like in Romans 1, men consider by themselves as teachers of the law have become something else, the name of God is blasphemed throughout the world; (3) the popularity of Bible teachers with itching ear teachings, especially as related to the Gospel of Prosperity, success, the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, in churches and outside in the larger kingdom; (4) the rebellion against the authority of Christ in churches as trusted in the pastors with the unheard of large number, in the name of democracy, who run off their pastors, choosing ones less demanding in the preaching of the Word; (5) the accepted but bad church behavior of church members like that enumerated in II Timothy 3:1-9 where they exhibit a form of godliness but deny the power and presence of God; (6) the unrighteous and rebellious gap between churches and Christ that most see with any spiritual understanding at all; and (7) the warfare between “fundamentalists” and “moderates”, between the Texas State Baptist Convention and the present leadership of the SBC, a warfare that started in this largest Protestant denomination in the world 20 years ago as Criswell announced for his cohorts like Stanley, Rogers, Falwell, and LeHaye that “they would keep fighting until one side or the other won”, and which the fundamentalists did until they took control of the SBC, the kind of fighting which shows a bad spirit even if you can not see the non-conservative nature of the fundamentalist's superficial, hunt and peck method of Bible interpretation, a method based more on Scofield notes than on real ASI Bible. (You don't think this has hurt the SBC; well, it is all over in a matter of a short time for the SBC unless the real southern Baptists rise up to take control of their own convention, which can hardly take place during the time of the Falling Away as the Holy Spirit is withdrawn and as the power of the holy people is completely shattered. In other words, don't plan for it to happen!)

Granted that some of the signs which follow legitimate believers mentioned above are still going on with a very small scale and hidden from most, even like the healing work of God that Jesus said He saw God doing before His life on earth and which is still going on. Granted likewise that many tares and the leaders of tares have learned to simulate the signs of Jesus, like Jannes and Jambres to simulate the works of God up to a certain point, and then join the people of God when they can no longer simulate. However these signs did follow the life, teaching and preaching of the Apostle Paul as we will look at in this volume from the book of Acts.
The ASI

One last piece of housekeeping remains in the Preface before we continue in chapter 1 with the Ministry of the Apostle Paul as chief editor of the New Testament. That is an explanation of ASI for Authorized Semi-Public Interpretation. You have suspected that there is one legitimate interpretation of the Bible based on the Scripture, "no prophesy of Scripture is of any private interpretation" (II Peter 1:20); and therefore that we come closest to that one interpretation when we chose a "public" method of interpretation over a "private" method of interpretation such as the exclusive method of Scofield and the living legends in their own minds of the fundamentalists. However an understanding of parables as Jesus taught it, and in particular an understanding of how "all things are given in parables" as Jesus also taught in order that only real disciples, not the tares, would understand, then we are lead beyond "private" and "public" to Semi-Public. Hence the "S" of Semi-Public in the ASI. Yet this is only the beginning of the ASI method of interpretation which you must come to appreciate more fully in this volume, even as in the other "from the Apostles and Prophets" approach of the LEARN CHRIST commentaries and first developed in all the Old Testament quotes in the New Testament of volume 1, "The Prophets and Apostles"; and here in this volume where you will find Paul often quoting from the OT, explaining what they said under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, and before that in the so-called seven silent years at Tarsus as he read back through the Law and the Prophets according to what the Ascended Christ taught him in Arabia, recording on a parchment OT quotes for future NT writings, his and those for John Mark and Luke. I don't know how to explain the comfort of the ASI to you, except to say that it can change your life and your Bible study to extensively correlate what the Prophets said with what Jesus and the Apostles said (at the same time just letting the Bible say what the Bible wants to say, the Bible is a consistent whole from the mind and heart of God so that if you miss that consistency you miss the truth of God, and remembering that the sum of the total is greater than the sum of the individual parts), and vice versa; and while a few minor problems may remain in your Bible study, you will pass far beyond that popular attitude of not reading the Bible because their are too many interpretations and denominations, if not all the way to an extreme comfort in the soundness of the doctrines to which you hold! {Don't fret over it at this point in the volume, we will continue to discuss and explain it, according to Jesus, the Apostles, and the Prophets!}

The LEARN CHRIST commentaries

By the way in the form of general information, the four volumes of the LEARN CHRIST commentaries are as follows.

volume 1: "Prophets and Apostles", the OT according to the NT.
2: "Christ for Individuals", the five books of the Apostle John.
3: "Believe and Be Baptized", the 14 letters of the Apostle Paul.
5: “The Message of the Writing Prophets”, 19 Prophets of the OT.

If you desire some additional reading on doctrine and what is happening in churches and the kingdom of God in our challenging times of the Falling Away, the following conservative, evangelical, and up to date books are recommended.

1. “Some Sounds of Sound Faith”, 10 very basic teachings of the Bible on majors.
3. “A Cup of Water”, a condensed version of Mark with comments.
4. “What Churches Don’t Want You to Hear!”.

And in the usage of abbreviations, you will find OT and NT for respectively Old Testament and New Testament; and as you have also found in this introduction, you will find ASI for Authorized Semi-Public Interpretation. If in the reference to a quote from the Scripture the version is not listed, it is assumed to be either the New King James Version (NKJV) or King James Version (KJV) unless otherwise stated as for example in the case of the New International Version (NIV) which is so popular in the outstanding and conservative NEW INTERNATIONAL COMMENTARIES. It hardly matters about the translation if you are willing to meet the other Bible standards for understanding, especially that one mentioned by Jesus as knowing the doctrine if you are willing to do the will of God and Jesus; and a corresponding negative outcome, so prevalent among would-be Bible scholars such as the PhD’s of the “Jesus Seminar”, which also explains so many false interpretations and how the majority never understand the Bible the spiritual. Some of my favorites through the 50 years of personal Bible study and formal training have been the Wuest Expanded Version, Moffat, the RSV, the ASV, of course the KJV from which I have been memorizing Scripture since age 9 and reading through once a year for many years, and more recently I have developed a real respect for and love of the New King James Version.
When you hear of the ministry of the Apostle Paul, what do you normally think? Most often we hear and speak of the missionary journeys of Paul. We read of the marvelous conversion of Saul on the road to Damascus in order that Paul might preach the gospel to the Gentiles. The premise of this chapter and the book is that the primary ministry of Paul was to serve as chief editor of the New Testament. Certainly as we in contemporary times look back on what has happened in the approximately two thousand years since Paul, Jesus, and the other Apostles of Christ, the most pervasive influence of Paul has been from his fourteen letters that became fourteen books of the New Testament. In other words thousands more people had read and become Christians from the reading of his letters than have become Christians because of his missionary journeys. You can almost miss this aspect of the ministry of Christ in the reading of his letters. The one single place that it is obvious is in the reading of Colossians 1:25.

"Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God..." (Colossians 1:25 KJV)

Notice that: Paul is made a minister in order to fulfill or complete the word of God! That tells me that God had in mind a certain number of books for the Bible and in particular for the New Testament (27), and that the responsibility of the ministry of Paul was to make sure that this number was completed. This Paul did by personally writing 14 out of 27 of those books, and then pass on to John Mark and Dr. Luke manuscripts for the writing of three more books of the New Testament; so that Paul becomes personally responsible for 17 out of 27 of the New Testament books. I
would say that is a significant aspect of Paul’s ministry when you consider to how many countries the Bible has gone over the last two thousand years, into how many homes, and from how many pulpits and Sunday school classes the Bible is taught every Sunday. To belabor this chief editor aspect of the New Testament now as related to John Mark and Dr. Luke is somewhat jumping ahead, but I think it is necessary to immediately establish an internal evidence aspect to this claim. Two scriptural facts can quickly lay this foundation.

1. Paul after becoming a prisoner requested that Timothy bring his books and parchments from Troas.

“The cloak that I left a Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments.” (II Timothy 4:13)

2. Paul wrote that John Mark was profitable to him for the “ministry”, and recall that the most important aspect of the ministry of Paul was in the writing and editing of New Testament books.

“Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry.” (II Timothy 4:11)

1-1: Other Scriptures to Support Colossians 1:25.

As stated earlier it is possible to overlook this writing and editing aspect of the ministry of Paul until you focus on it as found in Colossians 1:25; however once it has your attention, you can find other scriptures to support the same thesis. (It should be stated here something that will be emphasized later. That is, the sufferings and preaching and other aspects of the ministry of Paul are closely related and essential to the ministry of writing. In fact those other aspects of the ministry make the writing ministry possible. Also Paul’s acceptance in the church as an Apostle was also essential to the ministry of writing, since it was a well known fact that only Prophets and Apostles wrote Scriptures. Something else that we will look at in more detail later.)

1. Ephesians 3:2,3.

“If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: how that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words...” (Ephesians 3:2,3)

Notice several obvious exegetical points from these two verses: (1) the method of Jesus by which He let Paul know of this great mystery was through “revelation”, and everyone knows from the study of the Bible in totality that the method by which Scriptures are written is revelation; (2) when this mystery was revealed to Paul he passed it on in a letter which became a book of the Bible (no doubt this was the book of Colossians); (3) if you read the verse before, Ephesians 1:1 you will notice that Paul relates this ministry of revelation and writing to both being a “prisoner” (sufferings for Christ and the church) and for the fact that it is all...
Volume 3: Believe and Be Baptized

done for the church; (4) you also see this fact in the “which is given me to you-ward” in the wording of Ephesians 3:2; (5) in Ephesians 3:5 this great mystery is “now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit”, once again all Bible students knowing that this is the method of revelations from God--revelation to apostles and prophets through the work of the Holy Spirit (II Timothy 3:16,17); (6) the great mystery hidden from the foundation of the earth is that the Gentiles are members of the same body of Christ through the same Gospel, Ephesians 3:6; (7) and this is the reason that Paul is made a “minister”, Ephesians 3:7; (8) part of this ministry to the preaching of this mystery and gospel to the Gentiles, Ephesians 3:8; and (9) another aspect is in order that all men on the earth of all time might know this mystery--“and to make all men see what...”, Ephesians 3:9. Now what seemed at first to be a little unclear from internal evidence in the Scriptures begins to become obvious!

2. II Timothy 3:16,17.

In a later section of this chapter we will look at Paul’s concept of “the word of God” as used in Colossians 1:25 to determine if it had a written Scriptural context as well as the more obvious aspect of preaching, so that since we mentioned above this verse of II Timothy 3:16,17, it behooves us now to put it up front as part of the understanding of the Apostle Paul about inspiration, revelation, and the Scriptures.

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.” (II Timothy 3:16,17)

All written Scripture is given by the inspiration of God through the Holy Spirit. If you look at the verse before, II Timothy 3:15, you will notice that Paul is talking about written Scriptures as he relates how Timothy has learned the written and “holy” Scriptures from his childhood. This would also be a good time to look at the Apostle Peter’s concept of inspiration and Scriptures, and how in particular that Peter had accepted the writing of Scriptures as an important aspect of the ministry of the Apostle Paul, and that furthermore Peter sought to gain this acceptance of writing Scripture among the rest of the church.

(1). II Peter 1:20,21.

“Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.” (II Peter 1:20,21)

Here the speaking or preaching of Scripture is closely related to the writing of the Old Testament books by the Prophets.
(2). II Peter 3:15,16.

“...even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things in which are some things hard to be understood, which they are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.” (II Peter 3:15,16)

You didn’t miss that did you: (1) Peter puts the written epistles of the Apostle Paul in the same category with the Scriptures of the Old Testament; (2) in those epistles Paul is “speaking” while he writes; and (3) it is because of the wisdom given to him from God that Paul writes to these churches in epistles that have become accepted as Bible.


Where were we when we got carried away with this great doctrine of the inspiration of Scriptures? We were looking at support in other Bible verses for the writing of Scriptures as the most significant aspect of the ministry of the Apostle Paul.

1-2: Where Paul Got His Doctrine.

Paul leaves little doubt in the mind of readers where he learned what He did about the Doctrine of Christ and other teachings. It was from the Risen and Ascended Christ Himself!

1. From out in the Desert of Saudi Arabia.

“But I certify you, brethren that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ....But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord’s brother.” (Galatians 1:11-12,15-19)

(1). Much of the doctrine of Christ that Paul wrote of is almost synonymous with the gospel, and above Paul is saying that it came from direct revelation from the Lord Jesus Christ.
Volume 3: Believe and Be Baptized

(2). Paul didn’t get the teachings of Christ from the other Apostles as after his conversion he only saw two of them, Peter and James, and that was 3 years after his conversion, those three years being spent listening to Jesus in Arabia.

(3). Part of my major theory on Paul being the chief editor of the New Testament, continuing his work through Mark and Luke for whom he left written manuscripts on Old Testament quotations, is also that Paul left the gospel testimony manuscripts from Peter and James--written during his first visit back to Jerusalem to Peter and James--respectively becoming the Gospels of Mark and Luke.

2. From Peter and James.

As mentioned above, Paul already knowing that his responsibility was to be Chief Editor of the New Testament, having learned that from Christ on the road to Damascus, from Ananias in Damascus, and from Christ in Saudi Arabia, began to do research on the task by recording the gospel testimonies of Peter and James on parchments.

3. From reading back through the Old Testament during the 7 “silent years” at Tarsus, recording on manuscripts all the quotes that would become part of the 14 letters that he wrote, plus Acts, Mark, and Luke.

Quite often the seven years or so of Acts 9:30 are called the silent years. I think not; as Paul was reading back through the whole Old Testament in light of his conversion, the teachings of Jesus in Saudi Arabia, what Ananias told him, and what Paul learned from Peter and James. All of the quotes that would later become book of the New Testament were recorded on parchments as he read through the Old Testament.

1-3: Peter recognized and told the Christian world that Paul was writing Scriptures.

“...as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which those who are untaught and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures.” (II Peter 3:15,16)

1. By the time the Apostle Peter wrote II Peter, approximately 66 A.D., Paul was well established as the “beloved brother”.

2. The source of Paul’s doctrine and Scriptures is obvious here, it was “according to the wisdom given him”.

LEARN CHRIST commentaries 21
It came from outside himself, from God the Father, the Ascended Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. In a few paragraphs we will briefly discuss "inspiration" of all Scriptures as (1) divine in origin, (2) absolute in authority, and (3) sufficient in message.

3. By this time in approximately 66 A.D.--"in all his epistles"--Paul had written many epistles.

4. Paul wrote of these things that Peter had been addressing in II Peter, in particular as mentioned a few verses before, the coming of the day of God when the heavens and the earth shall dissolve; and how the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation.

5. Paul writes in his epistles of some things hard to understand.

It would seem that except for the Apostle John near the end of the First Century when he wrote the difficult book of Revelation, that the Apostle Paul was given the task (as a chief editor should have) of writing the most difficult and deep things of salvation. But this was the way it should be as Paul was a lawyer before his conversion, and being a lawyer in Israel in the first century meant based on the law of the Bible as the law of the Bible was the law of the nation. All Paul needed was conversion, a word of encouragement from Ananias, several years in the desert with Christ, a brief visit back at Jerusalem with the Apostles Peter and James, and then seven years at Tarsus to read back through the Old Testament with which he was already very familiar--but in the light of the new experiences and testimonies.

1-4: Peter Verifies that Paul wrote Scripture.

So when Peter mentions Scriptures in I and II Peter, it applies, of course, to the doctrine and Scriptures of the Apostle Paul.

1. Paul was a holy man of God that spoke or wrote as moved by the Holy Spirit.

“For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.” (II Peter 1:21)

2. Paul was not making private interpretations of Jesus or the Old Testament when he wrote Scriptures.

The Doctrine of Paul is the doctrine of Christ and of God. It is consistent with the teachings and epistles of the other Apostles. In fact, if proof were needed of the
Bible as the Word of God, it is the unity of content from the Prophets and the Apostles that convinces us that a common source was necessary, that source being God the Father through Jesus and the Holy Spirit. (It is amazing how some Muslims know so much about Jesus and believe those things at least in their brains, but you speak of Paul and draw a blank. Among believers there are those who think of the Scriptures from Paul as lesser Bible. Well, if you have faith in the Scriptures from Peter, then you must also have from Paul; and in the case of both, as well as all the Apostles and Prophets, it is “every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.” I am sure that if you don’t treat it as such, in faith and practice and doctrine, you will be held responsible by God Himself.)

It was not recorded yet but I am sure that either the Ascended Christ or Peter or James had told Paul as Jesus said, and later the Apostle John recorded in the Gospel of John that there would be no doubts about “doctrine” if a person were willing to do the will of God.

“If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.” (John 7:17)

Of course, in the context, Jesus was primarily speaking of the group of teachings and of Himself as the reliable source that passed on doctrine from God the Father.

“And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned? Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.” (John 7:15,16)

Paul could likewise talk of his doctrine while making it clear, as he often did, that it was really doctrine from God and Christ; and likewise in the title of this volume, THE MINISTRY AND DOCTRINE OF THE APOSTLE PAUL, we can talk of the doctrine of Paul while knowing unmistakably the source.

3. Peter must have known also of the time and effort Paul made at Tarsus when he carefully re-read the Old Testament Scriptures, of the matters of salvation, of the grace that was presently coming to his generation, and what the Spirit of Christ had recorded in the Old Testament of the sufferings of Christ.

“Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven...” (I Peter 1:10-12)
(1). Paul would have been on the mind of Peter as one of the Apostles who preached that gospel with the Holy Spirit help.

(2). Paul along with the Old Testament Prophets would among those who "minister the things".

(3). The "Spirit of Christ" was with Paul in Arabia even as it was with the Old Testament Prophets in the writing of Scriptures.

1-5: Paul like Peter championed the doctrine of inspiration of Scriptures. Certainly it was the Apostle Paul that championed the very inspiration of Scripture itself, as he did on most of the doctrines of the Bible.

1. It was the Apostle Paul as a medium that gave us those great verses on "All scripture is given by inspiration of God..."

“All scripture if given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” (II Timothy 3:16,17)

You just know that Paul had to aware of the fact that he like the Prophets and other Apostles was writing Scripture: if he didn’t know before Peter told him in the epistle of II Peter. What do we mean by "inspiration of God”? Certainly it is not inspired as the same sense as Robert Browning or any other poet is inspired.

(1). We mean that the Bible is divine in origin

The short meaning of “divine in origin” is like Jesus announced to us: it is “every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.” The longer is, while over 40 authors over a period of thousands of years did the human penmanship, whatever we believe related to various theories of “inspiration” we must believe that God is the origin. Over at Socorro, New Mexico is the Very Large Array of antennas pointed to pick up some communication from space. Well, in the Bible we have communications from heaven, from the Maker of all in the universe. And somehow the Word of God transcends within the Bible all verbal shortcomings and the limitations of pen and paper to communicate the truth to us.

(2). We mean that the Bible is Absolute in Authority.

When God has spoken as He has in the Bible, what could man possible have to say that would be in the same category. The Bible is up near as number one in authority while commentaries, statements of faith, church covenants, and preachers are about number ten in authority. Like one teacher of theology said, "Study your
Bible: it will throw a lot of light on the commentaries.” How can you really compare in authority the words that come from God Himself to the words of any human. Those teachers and preachers who do not quote the Bible at all show a lack of recognition of that authority, and those who “take a verse and go everywhere preaching”, have about the same amount of authority recognition. (Granted the Ascended Christ did give some authority to pastors, teachers, and evangelists, an authority which must be recognized, but it is not the revelation authority that God reserved for only Prophets and Apostles--it is called in Ephesians 4 “gifts” instead of authority. Let us not confuse “revelation” which is the giving of truth from the mouth of God through Apostles and Prophets with “illumination” which is the understanding of those revelation, a gift from the Spirit of God. Illumination belongs to pastors, teachers, and evangelists: revelation belongs to Apostles and Prophets. If some false teachers recognized this, they would not say “God told me”; if the Mormons recognized this they would throw away three of their four Bibles and ignore as authoritative the words from their First President; if the Roman Catholics recognized this, they would accept as advice only any papal decrees. Baptists are also not innocent as many put the Scofield Reference Bible notes on the same level of authority as Scripture itself.) When we confuse authorities between the Apostles and Prophets and others, not only are we denying the authority of the Word of God but also we have abrogated our “priesthood of believers” to another human.

(3). We mean that the Bible is Sufficient in Its Message.

It may not tell us all that we want to know: however, it tells us all that we need to know for salvation, for the worship of God, for faith in Jesus Christ, for the living of the Christian life, and etc. And most often we have not received a solution to a perplexing problem with what God has to say about it, because we have not yet discover under the illumination of the Holy Spirit what has been there ever since the Apostle or Prophet wrote it. Evolution has confused our brain. The Bible has not evolved one iota since the Prophet or Apostle wrote it. What has evolved is our collective and individual understanding of what that Prophet or Apostle wrote.

(4). The Bible is high fidelity in understanding.

I added this fourth meaning of the Bible as the Word of God after listening over 50 years to fundamentalists and others of the same attitude who think that God can not overcome any limitations of language or word choice. We called them “fundamentalists” when I was growing up in the SBC; but now it is like what you call a Texas Aggie at General Dynamics, Fort Worth, ”boss”. They left the SBC approximately 1900, but now as of 20 years ago with the leadership of W.A. Criswell, Charles Stanley, and Adrian Rogers they took over the SBC. The reason we called them fundamentalists then, and I still do now, is because of their fighting spirit wherein you knew what they were against more than what they were for. It also feeds their ego and that of their congregations as they talk about “verbal inspiration” as something...
they have and no one else has. (It is a straw man to make you think that they are “con-
servative”. I am conservative on all Scripture as the Word of God and conservative on the
spirit of Christ not being a fighting spirit. Fundamentalists are not conservative.) That
verbal inspiration, sometimes to the extent of accepting only the King
James Version, is generally a disguise for some pet doctrine they have
taken from the Scofield Bible Reference notes, like PREMILLENNIAL-
ISM.

I wish we could have a counterrevolution in the SBC where real southern baptist, in
spirit and doctrine and attitude, take back over control from the fundamentalists.
I think it was hardly fair to millions of real southern baptists, when two other
denominations was formed. And what I am truly concerned about besides the
present “spirit” of the Convention is the books that have replaced those of real
Southern Baptists. By and large, except now at the Seminaries where fundamental-
ists have replaced the professors, the fundamentalists were trained out back of
the church in a little building called a seminar with books of lesser quality. What
has really happened now in the SBC is as predicted by Dr. R. G. Lee in his sermon
“The Menace of Mediocrity”, “Wrens make prey where eagles dare not perch”. Of
course, there is the likelihood that we are so deep into The Falling Away, there we
are past the point of no return. What I am saying is that the Bible can speak for
itself in any version. It is a living and dynamic book through which the Holy Spirit
speaks. The problem, most often, is not in the exact word or words; but rather in
the willingness of the reader or preacher to really do the will of God. As Jesus
said, “If any man will do His will, he will know of the doctrine if it be of God.”

2. The Word or Word of Truth were favorite terms for Bible or
Scriptures in the writings, and we will look at those extensively in the chap-
ters of this volume. Two will be briefly mentioned now as examples.

(1). II Timothy 4:2.

This verse as a preliminary to the warning of the time when there will be little tol-
erance for sound doctrine, tells a possible preventive measure.

“Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove,
rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.” (II Timothy 4:2)

This concludes with a good combination. Even as preaching must include the triad
elements of exhortation, comfort, and edification (I Cor 14:3), so here preaching
the word ends in exhortation with longsuffering and doctrine. The longsuffering
tells of love and patience; and certainly on all doctrine we would dare not be among
those that cast the first stone. It is no person or persons that we are aiming at
when we talk about what the Bible teaches: it is not personal; it is something that
was in the Bible before you and I were born. You know what is right behind this
verse above, “for the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine...” And what this means as we dive further into the Falling Away is that less and less churches of the SBC and other churches will put up with reproof, rebuke, and even exhortation with sound doctrine.

1-6: Sufferings and the Ministry of Paul.
Above all Paul was told in his call to the Ministry of the great things he must suffer, and I think somewhere in those scriptures about “suffering” we will find also the great thing that Paul did as Chief Editor of the New Testament. When you stop to consider that second to Christ Himself Paul is the most famous Christian that has ever lived, I frankly am surprised that there are not several Old Testament predictions that foretold of Paul and his work. Perhaps there are, and during this volume study we can seek them out.

1. The call to Paul’s Ministry in the vision of Ananias.
Ananias in the vision was told to go to this one Saul of Tarsus who was praying, and to put his hands on him so that he could receive his sight. Ananias objected. He said, “I’ve heard of this man, of the evil he has done in Jerusalem to Christians, and how he has authority from the chief priests to put all in prison that call on the name of Jesus.”

“But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: for I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name’s sake.” (Acts 9:15,16)

Here is what we can nail down so far on the Call to the Ministry of the Apostle Paul.

[1]. He was a chosen vessel to Christ.

[2]. Paul’s call was to bear the name of Christ before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel

[3]. Later Christ (no doubt in Arabia and subsequently) would show Paul “how great things he must suffer” for Christ.

2. Suffering was always part of the ministry of the Old Testament Prophets, especially the writing prophets, and Paul as a lawyer was very familiar with that.
Stephen in his famous last words of Acts 7, in a condensed history of the Old Testament, tells us of the sufferings of the prophets.

“Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers…” (Acts 7:52)

3. The Ministry of Jesus Himself is often referred to as a ministry of suffering.

The famous passage of Isaiah 53 tells of the Ministry of Jesus in terms of the “Suffering Servant”.

“He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.” (Isaiah 53:3)

And with many others similar words like—borne our griefs, carried our sorrows, stricken, smitten of God, afflicted, wounded, bruised, chastisement, stripes, oppressed, as a lamb to the slaughter—Isaiah 53 tells of the suffering ministry of Christ.

4. Paul testified that the ultimate in the Ministry and in being a Christian was what could result from suffering, that is the attainment of the Resurrection from the dead.

Let us also not forget that the preparations of Paul before the call to the ministry were also preparations for his ministry. He tells us of some of those educational, training, and experience backgrounds before His call.

“Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinks that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.” (Philippians 3:4-6)

Yet those were not the sufferings that helped Paul fulfill His call to the Ministry.

“But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss of Christ.” (Philippians 3:7)

There is the obvious motivation in the Ministry of Paul!
“Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ...” (Philippians 3:8)

There is “sufferings” again, in the loss of all things that were in important of the flesh and in the world. Surely in order in fulfill the Ministry of Paul, in preaching, in missionary journeys, and in the writing and editorship of New Testament books the essential foundation was the knowledge of Christ Jesus. Not only knowledge, but to be a leader in these avenues of expression about Jesus, Paul needed “excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus...” Somewhere before we finish this volume, we must prove from the Scriptures that EXCELLENCY and SUFFERINGS are closely correlated.

“...and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.” (Philippians 3:9-11)

There it is again: know Him, the power of His resurrection, and “THE FELLOWSHIP OF HIS SUFFERINGS”. Ephesians and the Ephesian ministry form a benchmark in the writings of Paul and in the ministry of the Apostle Paul. It was after the three year ministry in Ephesus and in the area of Asia Minor near Ephesus, that he could truly say that he had worked where he was not building on other men's ministry. You can detect that landmark in the way that Paul addressed his letters, boldly calling himself “an apostle of Jesus Christ” with children (I Timothy 1:1 and II Corinthians 1:1). In the writing of I Corinthians he was almost there as he was “called to be an Apostle”. A little weaker than that would be the “servant and called to be an Apostle” of Romans and Titus. Begging the issue of Apostleship would be the “an Apostle, not of men but of Jesus” of Galatians. {Remember like with any other auto, you must distinguished between the time of writing and the time of publication.}

When Paul came to formally write his earliest synagogue address as recorded in the book of Hebrews, it without the salutation of any name at all. Therefore if you continue this trend and sequence the 14 letters written by the Apostle Paul in terms of
Paul’s own concept of his ministry—at least, as he felt accepted in the Church and churches—then it would go as follows.

**TABLE 1. Paul’s Concept of His Own Ministry in Writing**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>books from Paul</th>
<th>Name of the epistle</th>
<th>how Paul addressed himself</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Galatians</td>
<td>Apostle not of men but of Jesus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Hebrews</td>
<td>no name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>I, II Thessalonians</td>
<td>names only (Paul, Silas, Timothy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Romans, Titus</td>
<td>servant and called to be an Apostle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>I Corinthians</td>
<td>called to be an Apostle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>I Timothy, II Corinths</td>
<td>an Apostle with children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Ephesians, Colossians, and II Timothy</td>
<td>an Apostle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Philippians</td>
<td>servant with Timothy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Prisoner</td>
<td>Philemon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1-7: Apostle with Children, I Timothy and II Corinthians.

It is felt that the exact sequencing should not be belabored, and that it should be considered helpful only in that it leads to the spiritual messages of the letters. No doubt Paul digressed back to servant near the end of his ministry in order to identify with the ministry of Timothy, or have the churches identify with the ministry of Timothy, and also out of deference to the friend-servant concept of the final teachings of Jesus on earth. Paul almost called himself an Apostle in the first writing of Galatians; however, it was little or no concern for the acceptance of the churches which came later. Of course this writer is aware of different sequencing and respects especially that of the conservation Bible scholar F.F. Bruce which goes like this: (1) Galatians; (2) Thessalonians; (3) I Corinthians; (4) Philippians; (5) II Corinthians; (6) Romans; (7) Colossians, Philemon, and Ephesians; and (8) Pastoral epistles. It is obvious that Bruce has not attempted to sequence the pastoral epistles of Titus, I, and II Timothy. However, enough of this sequencing. Recall that the emphasis in this volume as in all nine volumes of THE LEARN CHRIST COMMENTARIES is to be on the internal content. That is interpreted to mean that the 14 New Testament books themselves and their context, rather than
information about them, will be the focus in this volume while working on any sequence.

1-8: An Outline of I Timothy.

{Grow accustomed to these periodic outlines of single books of the Bible. By the completion of the 9 volumes we will have outlined all 66 books.}

I. Historical Background of Ephesus, Timothy there, Paul’s Apostleship, and his charge to Timothy. I Timothy 1:1-2:15

II. Elders and Deacons. I Timothy 3:1-13

III. The Church and the Mystery of Godliness. I Timothy 3:14-6:21

1. The Church is the pillar and ground of truth. 3:15

2. From the God manifested in the flesh in the Christ through the received into heaven, the Ascension of Christ. 3:16

3. The work of a minister during the last days. 4:1-6:21.
   a. Some will depart from the faith, getting into seducing spirits and doctrines of devils.
   b. Be an example of believers.
   d. Godliness with contentment is great gain: follow after godliness, I Timothy 6:6-19.
   e. Keep what has been committed to your trust, not as those who have erred from the faith, 6:20,21.


“Believe” as you would expect is a big word in the Bible, much larger in the New Testament than in the Old Testament. If you listened to some preachers you would think that the noun “faith” has no verb equivalent, some trying to invent the word “faithing” as a verb equivalent of faith; but let us look at what is really in the NT in the King James Version. The Greek word for “believe” is “pisteou”, and it literally means “to adhere to, rely on, trust.” I like that, don’t you. We adhere to Christ, God, the Bible, and God’s plan of the one baptism for salvation; we rely on Christ; and we trust Christ, God, the Bible, and the one baptism by the power of God. The word “believe” itself independent of verb forms like believeth and believer is found approximately 330 times in the New Testament, approximately 53 times of those in the 14 letters of the Apostle Paul. We will start at the end of this chapter with the 53 times from the Apostle Paul since this is a commentary on the letters of Paul.

{Granted the Apostle John is the most frequent user of the world “believe”, indeed the Gospel of John has the stated purpose that readers may “believe in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God”; but you can read about that in volume 2}
of the LEARN CHRIST commentaries, "Christ for Individuals", a commentary on Revelation, the Gospel of John, and the three little epistles.)

1. "Believe" in Romans 1:16. Here Paul is not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ for it represents the power of God into salvation for everyone who "believes".

2. "Believe" in Romans 3:22. If you desire to know the very beginning of the way to put the righteousness of God first along with God and His kingdom; well, the beginning of righteousness in an individual is through faith (the noun equivalent of believe) in Jesus Christ. It is "to all and on all" who believe.

3. "Believe" in Romans 4:3 and 4:5. Abraham believed God, and that faith was accounted to by God as righteousness. If you work for righteousness, then there is no grace; the righteousness would be a debt from God. He has no provision for that, and never has! The way God does it is the opposite of work, only "believe" on the God who justifies the ungodly, and that faith is counted for righteousness in the sight of God.

4. Romans 4:11. Even though Abraham received circumcision as a sign that he already had the seal of righteousness by faith in his life--just like we receive water baptism as a sign that we have received in the one baptism the seal of the righteousness by faith in our lives; of course, Abraham thus became the "father of all who believe", circumcised or uncircumcised. Righteousness is "imputed" by God! It is important in the case of circumcision and baptism not to confuse the seal and the sign, circumcision and baptism are signs and the seal in both cases is righteousness by faith.

5. Romans 4:17. This verse tells about the One in whom Abraham "believed": the God who calls things into existence that did not exist before; the same God who gives life to the dead; and the God the Father that was present when these promises were made to Abraham through a messenger from that God.

6. Romans 4:18. It did not look good for Abraham many times that the promise of God to be the father of many nations would be fulfilled--little or no hope--but with hope he believed in the promise of God.

7. Romans 4:24. Righteousness is likewise imputed to us "who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead". Of course, that is a lot of beliefs: Believe in the God the Father who sent, was in Christ, and Who raised Christ from the dead; believe in the Crucifixion of Jesus; and believe in the resurrection of Jesus from the grave on the third day; and believe around this gospel is centered the salvation of God.

(These references to "believe" in Paul and the other Scriptures will be continued at the end of other chapters to follow.)
I know that the Apostle Paul cried quite often about what happened to him before he became a Christian, how he persecuted the church. No doubt he confessed his sins, God forgave his sins, God forgot his sins; but to a certain extent--at least in Paul's memories--the load was still on his back. Let us be careful here--this matter is very practical for daily Christian and church life--there is no need for Paul or us to carry around any "care" of any kind, including past weights and sins. The Apostle Peter made that clear.

"Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you." (I Peter 5:6,7)

However, in spite of forgiveness; in spite of God's forgetfulness; in spite of the getting of Paul's cares off his back, something remained in his memory and on his back related to his persecution of the church. I don't think we have all the answers, but we do not it clearly remained. Paul wrote that he was not any worthy to be called an Apostle because he persecuted the church of God. Of course, we did know that part of the problem was because Christians had difficulties initially accepting Paul as an Apostle. Some were afraid of him because they knew as Saul how he had dragged Christians into prison. Remember Ananias when God told him to go talk to Saul, "Lord, I've heard about this man, and how much harm he has caused the saints in Jerusalem." (Acts 9:13)
Even though God forgives our past sins and forgets them, casting them as far as the east is from the west and promising to remember them no more, I think there are certain inevitable laws that exist here on earth such as the law of gravity, the law of supply and demand, the law of inertia, and the law of sowing and reaping. We simply continue to reap certain consequences of our past here on earth and in the history of earth. And no matter how much we cast our cares on Christ, realizing the assurance of forgiveness and forgetfulness, the memories even if in our subconscious remain. Listen to it straight from one of Paul’s letters.

“For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.” (I Corinthians 15:9,10)

When we consider doctrine, alias the teachings of the Bible, and especially as related to our past and present weights or sins, we need something of the attitude of the Apostle Paul as reflected in I Corinthians 15:9,10.

1. By the grace of God, past and present I am what I am.

This assumes that he has confessed his sins, asked and received forgiveness and God’s forgetfulness.

2. Considering himself the least in his group, the least of the Apostles, only made Paul work even harder to prove that the grace of God toward him was not wasted.

He worked harder than all the others. Even there, he pauses to acknowledge that in the work it was not really him, but the grace of God that was working in him.

2-1: Doctrine, often a Tight Shoe that Crimps our Style.

Now, I have mentioned all this in order to say that doctrine is often a “Tight Shoe” that puts a crimp in our walking and living style, especially that doctrine that I discuss now that seems to have become a major problem for us in the more recent years. It is by no means a new problem as I can recall it from the 1960’s in Tucumcari, FBC, and Portales at Emmanuel Baptist Church as well as other places. Which doctrinal problem am I speaking of? That of, marriage, divorce, and the biblical requirements for pastors and deacons. In particular we think of two scriptures in I Timothy 3:2 and 3:12.

“A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife…” (I Timothy 3:2)

“Let deacons be the husbands of one wife…” (I Timothy 3:12)

Now, before we proceed on the “Tight Shoe” of this doctrine, realizing that our nation is approaching the point where over 50% of marriages end in divorce and knowing that some of our most respected and active churchmembers have been
divorced as well as close loved ones; and at the same time knowing that we must hold
high the standard of marriage from our Creator from the beginning, in spite of the
allowance in the time of Moses of a writ of divorcement because of the hardness of
the peoples heart, we must preach, teach, and write the whole counsel of God, being
concerned quite often about the totality of doctrine. You know what our most
important concern must be: the erosion of our endurance for sound doctrine.
This matter of marriage and divorce in general and specifically as related to the
qualifications for pastors and deacons is just one example of the battles that we
must fight today and in the future of the soundness of doctrine. As the Apostle
Paul wrote in II Timothy 4:3,4.

“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according
to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for
themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be
turned aside to fables.” (II Timothy 4:3,4)

Wow! I will come back to this latter as a main point; but before I pass on I want to
ask you the question, “Are we there already?“ Have we significantly eroded our
endurance for sound doctrine, and do we continue to significantly erode that endur-
ance. Do we often find what we want in the Bible instead of an exegesis of what is
really in there? And do we go looking for teachers that will tell us what we want to
hear? Clarence W. Kerr writes in GOD’S PATTERN FOR THE HOME.

“Decade by decade the problem of divorce becomes more and more acute.
It is hard for us to realize that a century ago divorce was well nigh unheard of
in this country. We are not saying that there were not marriage problems,
but few of them reached the courts of the law. Now our divorce rate vies
with death as a dissolver of the marriage relationship. If the rate keeps on
increasing as it has, it will not be long until each license for a new marriage
is counter-balanced by a certificate of divorce for the legal dissolution of
another. The problem is more acute in Christian America than in many
pagan lands.”

2-2: Marriage, Divorce, and Qualifications of Leaders.
What do reliable commentators say on this Doctrine of Marriage, Divorce, and Qual-
ifications for Pastors and Deacons? Okay, enough meddling, let us get into some
comments for respected commentators. And I remind you, don’t change horses in
mid-stream. Don’t change you reliable commentators when there is a possibility that
you have encountered a doctrine that is a tight shoe on your feet. Now for me, the
most reliable of all commentators is Dr. B. H. Carroll. Dr. Carroll was the founder of
Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth where he established a seminary that would
teach all the way through the Bible. Many of you know that Commentaries on those
lectures have been written, published, and re-printed as AN INTERPRETATION OF
THE ENGLISH BIBLE.
1. Dr. Carroll, as a high school friend of mine presently teaching at Southwestern reminded me, is part of our Christian and Baptist heritage. Here is Dr. Carroll on I Timothy 3:3 and I Timothy 3:12.

   “First, ‘the husband of one wife.’ Does that mean that he must be the husband of a wife—is that what it means? In other words, that an unmarried man ought not to be a pastor?...We had an old deacon once that put his foot right on it that it meant: ‘I am willing to give that young preacher a place, I am willing to recognize him and even ordain him to special mission stations to preach, but no unmarried man can be pastor of this church.”

And continuing about deacons Carroll writes.

   “The deacon. So far as moral qualifications go, there is little difference between the qualifications of preacher and deacon.”

2. How about Barclay and his commentaries, I know many of you like him.

   “The Christian leader must have been married only once. The Greek literally means that he must be ‘the husband one wife.’ Some take this to mean that the Christian leader must be a married man, and it is possible that the phrase could mean that...But in this context here we can be quite certain that the phrase mean that the Christian leader must be a loyal husband, preserving marriage in all its purity. In later days the APOSTOLIC CANONS laid it down: ‘He who is involved in two marriages, after his baptism, or he who has taken a concubine, cannot be an episkopos, a bishop.”

3. How about your pastor as a Bible commentator?

   He has labored as your overseer or pastor for 15 years, through the hard times and the easy. You listen to him teach and preach every Sunday and more. Why should you suddenly stop listening to him because you feel a tightness in your shoes? I don't understand why any active member of this church, even if honestly persuaded of another interpretation can not say to the pastor, “I don't agree on this matter, but I am willing to go along with your leadership.”

2-3: What Can Happen if We Erode our Tolerance of Sound Doctrine.

   Now, let me come to the main point of the message (chapter), and that is some of the dangers of tampering with this doctrine or any other doctrines of the Bible.

1. It can hamper Friendship with Jesus.

   Recall how that Jesus in John 14-16 in some of the most significant and last teachings to the Apostles emphasized how that He wanted them to pass from being servants, who did not know the will of the Master, to being friends who knew the plan of the Creator. And Jesus told what the qualifications are for being a “Friend”. Parenthetically, you know if I had to make a choice between being a pastor, a deacon, or a Friend of Jesus, I think I would chose being a friend of Jesus. For one
thing Friendship with Jesus which comes from love and keeping the commandments or teachings of Jesus, gives great boldness on the day of judgment.

It is true that those that inherit the office of the deacon also inherit “great boldness in the faith”, but I think I would prefer boldness on the day of judgment. Just think about the matter of memories, sins, weights and the judgment day. The Bible tells us “it is appointed unto man once to die, and after this the judgment”. We are told in the book of Revelation that all the books of our works are going be opened on the day of judgment, the recorded memories of all that we have done. And the world will be judged out of those books. But don’t fear! There is another book, the book of life, and if our names are written in book because of our faith in Jesus, the previous books will be set aside and the book of life with our name in it will be the only book that gives us basis for boldness on the day of judgement.

“You are My friends if you do whatever I command you.” (John 15:14)

“Jesus answered and said to him, If anyone love Me, hew ill keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make OUR home with him. He who does not love Me does not keep My words...” (John 14:23,24)

2. Eroding our tolerance for sound doctrine can deny our heritage in the New Testament Church, in Church History, in Baptist faith and beliefs, and in the Southern Baptist Convention.

I can recall at Quachita Baptist University in 1961 when writing a senior research paper. I asked the Professor, Dr. Blackmon, if I could write on “Baptist Distinctives”. I took a step back and thought to myself, “you old reprobate”, when his replay was “Is there any such thing?” But you know after over 40 years in the ministry as both a military chaplain, a pastor of churches, and a Bible professor he had a point, that on the practical level in talking to members of different denominations on doctrine it is quite often hard to tell the difference. And if this was true in 1961, with the trend obvious of erosion of tolerance for sound doctrine, what must be the situation in this day and time. You know that I have interim pastored approximately 16 churches in New Mexico from the size of Yeso Baptist Church, twice, to the size of First Baptist Church of Tucumcari, also twice; and I use to have the habit as a young man--don’t worry, I don’t do that anymore--of asking people in the congregation on Sunday night to list 10 major doctrines of the Bible. What I was looking for was the great truths on God the Father, the Lord Jesus Christ, salvation on the cross, heaven, hell, the second coming, the Holy Spirit as a Comforter, and so on; but what did I get: go to Sunday School, go to worship, tithe, be on time--all good practices but hardly major doctrines of the Bible. We can allow tolerance for sound doctrine to erode by (1) negligence, (2) ignorance, or (3) just plan purpose or desire.

(1). Neglect of the Bible.
Volume 3: Believe and Be Baptized

We just do not study the Bible itself as much as we ought to. As Dr. Wolber used to say, "Study your Bibles, they will shed a lot of light on the commentaries." Large corporations are now telling their employees that whereas the reading level of the average American a few years ago was sixth grade, now it is the third grade; and that is the reason that you see USA TODAY written for a third grade reader level. That also is the reason we enjoy it so much. Now, do you think that this obvious lack of reading and reading skills does not affect also Christians reading of the Bible. Certainly it does.

(2). Ignorance of the Bible.

How many times have we heard things like a old farmer outside Hot Springs, Arkansas tell me. It is in the Bible that "you can lead a horse to water but you can't make him drink". I don't know where, but it is in there. The problem is that we do not take the effort to check of understanding of the Bible by reading and re-reading it. By looking it for ourselves.

(3). Desire to erode sound doctrine.

We hate to think it but some are in the category of the seared conscience of the Bible, who simply desire to distort, mis-interpret and mis-apply the teachings of the Bible. It was also the Apostle Paul who warned about this group of eroders. Isn't it amazing that this is also in I Timothy, I Timothy 4:1,2.

"Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron..." (I Timothy 4:1,2)

Obviously this seared conscience is related to doctrine--in this case the doctrine of demons. In conclusion we will look at some doctrines from demons such as the doctrines of Balaam, of the Nicolaitines, and of the Prophetess Jezebel.

3. Eroding our endurance of sound doctrine can put us in the category of those that desire to hear something new, seeking after other teachers. Boy, that scripture in II Timothy 4:3,4 should get our attention lest there be any hint that we may be doing the same thing. Here is a point by point summary of II Timothy 4:3,4 of the "every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God": (1). The time must come, or is already here, but God forbid that we are a part of it, when Christians and churches will have no, zero, endurance for sound doctrine; (2). At that time, or at this time, how then will Christians or churchmembers make decisions about what doctrines are valid. The answer is there! "according to their own desires". What they want to believe because of a life style, or preference, they will come to believe; (3). Their ears itch, and this is rather difficult. You would think that the itch or hitch is in the conscience or in the heart or even in the mind. But since it follows the desire for different doctrine, we can conclude that there is an immedi-
ate link between the emotions, that is the desires for different doctrines, and the itch in the ear. (I wonder if tight shoes can cause an itch in the ears!) But it is a line of continuity: the emotions and the itchy ears lead to the next step; (4). They will heap up teachers that say what they want said. They won’t find just one, but call them, and elect them, and seek the preaching and teaching of preachers and pastors of a similar low tolerance for sound doctrine.

4. Eroding our tolerance for sound doctrine can indicate that concretely we do not care that much for the Inspiration of Scriptures.

Our adherence to sound doctrine, even when the shoe is tight and hurts, really proves how much we believe in the inspiration of the Scriptures as the Word of God. We hear a lot in this day and time about “fundamentalists” and about being “conservative” on the Bible; and many give it lip service; but how do they stand on issues like this about marriage, divorce, and the qualifications of pastors and deacons. This is the proof of the pudding. This tells how much we believe the Bible is the Word of God!

5. Such erosion of endurance from sound doctrine can put us in the category of the less desirable church examples of Revelation 2 and 3.

There were more churches in Asia Minor than the seven listed, but these were typical of all the churches in Asia Minor and typical of our churches today. If we erode our endurance for sound doctrine, we can place ourselves in the category of the five out of seven that were on the verge of having their pastor removed by Christ and having the churches place in the church (candlestick) removed.

(1). The church at Ephesus had left their first love even though there were many good things to say about, and recall that a loss of love can also mean a loss in the Friendship of Jesus. They did have enough endurance for sound doctrine to hate the doctrine and deeds of the Nicolaitans, a heresy of doctrine related to Christian behavior and to church leadership. Jesus threatens that if they do not repent to come and remove their candlestick, their place among the other churches.

(2). There were a lot of good things to say about the church at Pergamum, but there was among the minority a doctrinal problem, called the doctrine of Balaam, Balaam being the prophet of the Old Testament who showed for profit how Balak could seduce the children of Israel to go after other gods and to sexual immorality. And the second doctrinal problem was the doctrine of the Nicolaitans. If the church had voted on these two doctrines, it appears that the majority would have suppressed the doctrines of Balaam and the Nicolaitans. Of course, in this church Christ promised to distinguish between the majority of sound doctrine and the minority, saying that He would fight against them with His Words.

(3). Likewise Thyatira had a doctrinal problem: Jezebel, as she called herself, a prophetess as she called herself, was being allowed to teach unsound doctrine in the
Volume 3: Believe and Be Baptized

church. There, Jezebel was playing the role in the church that Baalam played for Balak, misleading the church in false worship and sexual immorality. Again this must have been a minority that had lost this endurance for sound doctrine, because Christ threatened only the prophetess and the few who supported her, to the rest of the church (Revelation 2:24) that did not have this doctrine He would put on them no other burden.

(4). What can we say about the church at Sardis? Wow, there were in trouble! They had a name, a reputation in the community and possibly even in the association, state, and convention; but they were dead. It sounds like the attendance was good, which within itself can keep the spirits up; but that the doctrine was bad. It definitely looks like if that church had voted the majority would have voted in terms of holding on their reputation, ignoring the call to repentance from Christ and the call to hold fast to the sound doctrines which they had heard. Why do we conclude that? Because it said that there were a few, obviously a minority, that had not defiled their garments.

(5). The problem in the church at Laodicea was that they were neither hot nor cold, either a love problem or a doctrinal problem, or both. It is obvious that they were proud of their accomplishments, saying they were rich, that they needed nothing and nobody. It is hard to know how the vote would have gone in that church!

6. The Erosion of Sound Doctrine can be an assist to the way Satan works.

Boy, how hard Satan tries. He was gullible enough to believe that he could erode Jesus's confidence in the sound doctrines of God during the temptation in the wilderness. He even quoted Scriptures out of context.

(1). The Doctrine of the Priority of Word of God over physical well-being. Satan told Jesus prove that the are the Son of God by turning these rocks to stone. Jesus was out there to fast for 40 days and nights, and in doing so to concentrate on the Word of God. You remember Jesus famous reply, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." (Matthew 4:4)

(2). The Doctrine on the testing of God. Satan said, "It is written in the Scriptures that the Son of God has been given angels to care for Him, if you are the Son of God throw yourself down from the temple to prove that you will be rescued and that you are the Son of God. (Matthew 4:5-7)

(3). The Doctrine of Worship of God over Satan. The last temptation, Satan took Jesus to a high place--here you see some of the power of Satan--and said "all that you see I will give you if you will worship me". The supreme affront to God is to worship Satan. Jesus replied quickly, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." (Matthew 4:10)
In short, if Satan were at work in your church today, he would not deny truth per se; for that is too obvious. What he would do would be to quote scripture out of context and mis-apply it! And don’t you think that any place that the work of God has been going on steadily for 15 years, that Satan is going to neglect it. The prince of this world, who is a lion that goes about seeking whom he can chew on, maim and destroy, will be active where Jesus is, where the work of God is going on. It simply remains for Christians who can discern the spirits to figure out where Satan is working!

7. Erosion of sound doctrine is an assault on the character of God.

We often say and pray—and certainly it is true—that God forgives us when we confess our sins because it is recorded in the Bible; but ultimately the real reason is because it is based on the character of God. It is the character of God that wants to forgive sins when they are confessed. And you can say the same of any doctrine in the Bible. All the principles, doctrines, teachings, and instructions of the Bible are based on the character of God: that is the reason we call it the Word of God or the Book of God. It reflects what God is and what God wants us to be. Now when we in any way malign, distort, or erode the doctrines of the Bible we are making an assault on the character of God. God can certainly withstand the assault, but can we?

8. Erosion of sound doctrine is an attack on the Bible as the Word of God.

Here is where we prove how deeply and sincerely we believe the Bible to be the Word of God. Do we believe it is inspired only in the sense of many books like Robert Browning or the poets are inspired, or do we really believe that it is divine in origin, absolute in authority, and sufficient in its message?

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” (2 Timothy 3:16,17)

Notice that if the first given reason for the existence of the Bible is heed, “for sound doctrine”, some of the others will follow like reproof and correction will not be needed, and the righteousness and Christian maturity will follow behind sound doctrine.

9. Erosion of sound doctrine indicate superficiality, instability in the faith, and immaturity.

When a church changes it mind because of the practices of the people or because of the pressures of the world in the American Society, they start fitting into the category of those that are blown back and forth by every wind of doctrine.
“...that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness by which they lie in wait to deceive...”  (Ephesians 4:14)

You can quickly see what the opposite of this erosion of sound doctrine is, in what precedes 4:14. The very purpose that God sent pastors, teachers, apostles, and evangelists is for the work of the ministry--in which each member has a part--for the building up of the body of Christ, and to promote unity among all Christians.

10. Erosion of sound doctrine isolate a church from church history, Baptist History, and the heritage of the Southern Baptist Convention; and at the same time it puts us more in the mainstream of American Society where now over 50% of all marriages end in divorce. You just cannot get away from the conclusion that all we trust as commentators, preachers, and statements of faith in church and Baptist history lead us to the sound doctrine of marriage for life and pastors and deacons as the husband of one wife, notwithstanding any teacher or preacher of itchy ears that we might dig up to justify our lives and desires.

11. Erosion of sound doctrine is an affront to and grieves the Holy Spirit who came to take the place of Jesus on earth, reproving the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. Where you can see that affront to the Holy Spirit most obviously is in the matter of righteousness. I am not talking about the legally declared and external righteousness of Jesus with which we are cloaked through justification by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, but in the actual outworking of righteousness, or right doing, in our lives that is the natural consequences of the inworking of the Holy Spirit. It is ordinarily called sanctification, the process by which the Holy Spirit increases the actual righteousness in our lives.

2-4:  “The Office Should Seek the Man, not the Man the Office.”

When Paul wrote that he was not worthy to be an Apostle but by the grace of God that is exactly what he was, he was saying in another way what I read from B. H. Carroll, “The Office should seek the man, not the man the office.”  Paul did not seek to be an Apostle. The only thing he was seeking was to do the service of God, and he thought by persecuting Christians he was doing exactly that. Jesus on the road to Damascus struck him down, spoke to him, caused him to temporarily be blind until Ananias came to talk to him; and then let Paul know that he was a chosen vessel to deliver His message.

1. Paul practiced what he cautioned over Christians on the attitude about yourself in the church, writing for each member not to think more highly of themselves than they should.

“For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly that he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.”  (Romans 12:3)
Volume 3: Believe and Be Baptized

We need to be able to see ourselves in the eternal perspective of God's truth and timeline. All of this truth and doctrine in the Bible existed long before we were born. We have, by the grace of God, inherited the Word of God from over two thousand years of writing, interpretation, teaching, and preaching. We are inheritors of Church History, Baptist History, and the History of the Southern Baptist Conventions. Primarily, we are Creators and re-creations of God. It is nothing personal, and it should not be taken personal, if doctrine is a tight shoe that we must wear: for it existed long before we were on the face of this earth!

2. Pride is what can serve to mislead us on doctrine.

What Paul was talking about when he said that he was not worthy to be an apostle was humility and pride: what he was talking about in urging Christians to think soberly of themselves was pride and humility. Pride is the internal enemy that can mislead us to do what we desire or want to do on the matters of doctrine. It is true that we live in a changing world. Each decade now we seem to live in a new world of technology and information explosion. Our friends change, we lose many of them to death. Our environments change; but we must remember that in a world where truly there is a social evolution, God does not change. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever more. And there are certain things that God hates or despises: those things do not change. At the head of the list if pride, or a proud look.

(1). “Whoever secretly slanders his neighbor, Him I will destroy; the one who has a haughty look and a proud heart, Him I will not endure.” (Psalm 101:5)

(2). “Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.” (I Corinthians 10:12)

(3). “But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.” (James 4:6)

(4). “These six things the LORD hates, Yes, seven are an abomination to Him: A proud look, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that are swift in running to evil, a false witness that speaks lies, and one who sows discord among brethren.” (Proverbs 6:16-19)

Notice how connected the proud look at the beginning with the sowing discord among brethren in the church at the end are and with the matter of the erosion of sound doctrine!

3. We can easily put ourselves in the category of the religious leaders of the time of Christ who had substituted the commandments of men for the doctrines of God. It was on the very issue of marriage and divorce where Jesus condemned the Pharisees, Sadducees, and their historical traditions of the world of putting the commandments of men in the place of the doctrines of God.
“The Pharisees came and asked Him, ‘Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?’ testing Him. And He answered and said to them, ‘What did Moses command you?’ They said, ‘Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce, and to dismiss her.’ And Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Because of the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept. But from the beginning of the creation, God made them male and female. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh; so then they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no man separate.’ And in the house His disciples asked Him again about the same matter. So He said to them, ‘Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her. And if a woman divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery.” (Mark 10:2-12)

God does the joining; and no matter how we may desire or rationalize or seek other teachers, God intended that there be no separation of what He joined together.

2-5: Creations, Christians, and Christian Leaders.

We naturally expect a progressive of expectations from God as history developed from all humanity to Christians to Christian leadership. You would think normally that the requirements, standards, or expectations from God would become more stringent.

1. God’s expectations for all Humanity.

As far as we can tell, since before Moses recorded it in the Pentateuch, there were only two requirements that God placed on all humanity, before the recorded of the written law. It was word of mouth or custom and tradition that carried those two requirements forward until Moses wrote the book of Genesis.

(1). Both requirements were given by God so close together that it is almost difficult to tell which was first; however it appears at least the germ of the first great expectation for humanity is given first.

“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.” (Genesis 1:27)

The full explanation of all the implications comes later in the recorded Word.

“Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.” (Genesis 2:24)

In a few paragraphs we will find that Jesus amplified on this, re-enforced it, laying the requirements once again on the chosen people of God and Christians in particular in spite of the lapse on the requirements by the nation of Israel as Moses for generations allowed a “writ of divorcement”. Surely the standard that Christ and God placed on Christians had to be greater than that on all humanity. However,
first and briefly, let us look at the other great expectation that God placed on all humanity, a commission for dominion over all the universe.

(2). Second Great Commission to all Humanity.

This great expectation follows immediately behind the first. In fact, in the next verse.

“And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thin that moveth upon the earth.” (Genesis 1:28)

J. Clyde Turner in THESE THINGS WE BELIEVE calls man (man in the generic sense of male and female) the “crown of Creation. Notice that immediately after the first great expectation from God in Genesis 1:17--the joining by God of the man as a male and female--the record states that “God blessed them”. Do you think this is incidental? Don't you think that somehow the blessings of God on societies of history in their efforts to have dominion over all creation is contingent of how well they live up to the first great expectation. Look at the United States for example: no other country on the face of the earth in inventions and creative efforts has extended humanity's dominion of the earth as has the United States, and in such a shorter period of time; and surely we must see the connection to the Christian heritage and roots (biblical foundations) where the marriage vows were honored--up until recent history where over 50% of marriages end in divorce--in respect to the great expectation of God.

2. Jesus in His teachings on earth re-enforced the original expectation of God, and surely we will find for the chosen people of God and for Christians in particular a greater expectation from God about marriage than on all humanity. Indeed as we have read the history of the chosen nation of Israel, often the prophets would warn them against polygamist marriages; and what distinguished the people of God from the heathen (Gentiles) around them was often God's great expectations for marriage. Moses at one historical point did allow a "writ of divorcement" because the people out of their own desires were bugging him out of a hardness of heart.

{NOTE: I would caution you to see that this was probably due to a majority vote or will from the nation of Israel.}


“When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favor in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house. And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's wife. And if the latter husband hate her, and write her a bill of divorcement, and giveth it in her hand, and sendeth her out of his house; or if
the latter husband die, which took her to be his wife; her former husband, which sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after that she is defiled; for that is abomination before the LORD: and thou shalt not cause the land to sin, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.” (Deuteronomy 24:1-4)

How Moses must have travailed before the law was passed to allow for these divorces, and how that the people must have murmured. You can see the “hardness of heart” in the indifference to the feelings of the wife who is flippantly given a piece of paper and passed around the land from one household to another.

[1] Even here in the case of a divorce, God does not recognize the right of the first husband to re-marry the wife he divorced.

[2] Such an act of re-marriage, like pride and a proud look, is considered an abomination to God. You see, He sees and knows.

[3] This is not a personal preference: the husbands and wives have an objection to society--“not cause the land to sin”.

(2) Even then the law was not completely insensitive to the needs of a wife, Deuteronomy 24:5. Immediately after the giving of the law of the "writ of divorce-ment", consideration was given for a new wife.

“When a man hath taken a new wife, he shall not go out to war, neither shall he be charged with any business: but he shall be free at home one years, and shall cheer up his wife which he hath taken.” (Deuteronomy 24:5)

(3) How Jesus dealt with the original requirements of marriage, and surely we would expect for the chosen people of God during the life of Jesus and for Christians in particular for the expectations to be greater than those originally on all human humanity.

“The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.” (Matthew 19:3-6)

At this time there were two groups of rabbis divided on the issue of divorce, the Shammais that advocated divorce only in cases of sexual immorality and the Hillels that allowed divorce for any trivial reason (which sounds like the United States now). Once again Kerr writes in GOD’S PATTERN FOR MARRIAGE:
“Jesus had already expressed himself briefly on this matter. We find it in the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5:31,32: ‘It was said also, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: but I say unto you, that every one that putteth away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, maketh her an adulteress: and whosoever shall marry her when she is put away committeth adultery.’

And on fornication and adultery Kerr adequately summarizes the Bible and church history for us.

“Let us note, however, that in the Bible, the word ‘fornication’ is not used in the restricted sense that we use it. (Unlike the dictionary definition of fornication as committed by unmarried couples.) Jesus used the word ‘fornication’ twice, in the passage already quoted, and in Matthew 19:9, ‘And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and he that marrieth her when she is put away committeth adultery.’ Quite evidently Jesus used the word ‘fornication’ in a class sense as referring to all illicit sexual intercourse, including both fornication and adultery as we understand the terms. Such is the general Biblical use of the word. It is for this reason that such modern translators of the Bible as Weymouth, Goodspeed, Moffatt, and those of the Revised Standard Version use such words as ‘unchastity’ or ‘unfaithfulness’ rather than ‘fornication’ in the translation of these verses to which we have referred.”

But Jesus goes back to God’s original and great expectation. God made a man to be male and female; they become one flesh; and the union between husband and wife takes priority over parents. Also Jesus cautions them again that no judge, or law, or society should allow a divorce on a marriage that God has joined together. Is this last part--“what therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder”--a more stringent requirement than what was originally laid down by God at Creation in Genesis. Yes, we can not find no other statement so that we appears to be a higher standard placed on man and societies.

(4). Now surely you would expect the most stringent requirement of all to be placed on Christian leaders, on pastors and deacons.


“A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife…”

Blameless is certainly a highest of all expectations from God, and comparable is the “husband of one wife” Here we must consider what Jesus said to the Samaritan woman at Jacob’s well.

“The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband: for thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly.” (John 4:16-18)

What does this mean plain and simple? It means that Christ and God do not accept any wives or husbands past the original, except in the case of sexual immorality. Does it mean that person can not be a Christian, and receive forgiveness? No, we notice that all the indications is the record of John 4 is that the woman believed, and furthermore she had a good Christian testimony in that many of the Samaritans believed because of what she told them about Jesus. You see it would not matter how we interpreted I Timothy 3:2 above, or mis-interpreted it, or the similar requirement for a deacon, the most strict standard of one wife would still be on Christian leadership. (This is a basic principle of Bible interpretation, to compare scripture with scripture in order to get the full meaning; and this is part of the reason that the Bible states that we will know of the doctrine if we do His will.)


“If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly.”

Once again blameless is right in there with the husband of one wife. Don’t you see the connection that there can be no possible grounds on which a pastor or deacon can be accused as related to any doctrine. In the book THE CHRISTIAN PASTOR, Wayne Oates has a chapter on “The Personal Qualifications of the Pastor” in which he discusses these scriptures. By the way, Wayne Oates was years was Professor of the Psychology of Religion at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, also this book has been used at southern baptist colleges and seminaries to teach pastors and prospective pastors. Wayne Oates thoroughly discusses the three possible interpretations.

“First, polygamy and concubinage were prevalent practices in the communities of which the early churches were a part, and the writers evidently were insisting that their leaders be an example of the Christian principles of monogamic marriage.” “Secondly, this passage may be interpreted less directly to mean that the early Christians preferred a married minister to a single one.” “Thirdly, this passage may be interpreted in the light of another prevalent social problem at the time of the writing: divorce.”

Then Wayne Oates gives us a good and short history of the church on this matter as well as Baptist beliefs.

“The statements of Paul in I Corinthians, chapter 7, reflect that the early churches were very tender and sensitive to the plight of people who became involved in pagan marriage prior to having become Christians.
They most certainly did not consider divorce or even remarriage as an unpardonable sin for which they would break fellowship with an individual Christian. However, the early Christians had a higher standard, and seemingly legalistic attitude about divorced persons, especially those who had remarried, becoming the shepherds of the rest of the ‘flock of God’. By their word, no divorced man who had remarried could hold such a place of responsibility. This seems to be a harsh measure, but the study of the present-day experience of divorced men in the ministry vindicates it as the kindest measure in the long run.”


“Likewise deacons must be reverent, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy for money, holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience. But let these also first be proved; then let them serve as deacons, being found blameless. Likewise, their wives must be reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things. Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. For those who have served as deacons obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.”

Wow, those are most stringent requirements on deacons; and you will notice once again the “blameless” and “husband of one wife”.

5. Since this chapter is on Paul and Doctrine, we must also give Paul another say about marriage.

“For the woman that hath a husband is bound by the law to the husband while he liveth; but if the husband die, she is discharged from the law of the husband. So then if, while the husband liveth, she be joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress, but if the husband dies, she is free from the law, so that she is no adulteress though she be joined to another man.” (Romans 7:2,3)

Kerr can be used again to summarize much of what Paul wrote on marriage.

“Marriage was designed of God to be a monogamous, holy institution. In I Corinthians 7:2 Paul writes of each man having ‘his own wife,’ and each woman having ‘her own husband.’ The holiness of the relationship, under God, is likened to that existing between Christ and His Church. (Ephesians 5:31,32) Christian believers are admonished to marry only believers. In I Corinthians 7:39 Paul writes of marrying ‘only in the Lord.’ His admonition in II Corinthians 6:14, ‘Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers,’ surely applies to marriage. Marriage is designed above all else to be a holy relationship.”

The numbering of these references below takes up where the believe references in the writings of Paul left off at the end of chapter 1.

8. Romans 6:8. Here is something we “believe” as disciples. We believe that we shall only live with Christ to the extent that we have also died with Christ. Of course, the died with Christ like in Galatians 2:20 is another way to say repentance or to express the one salvation of the one baptism. {NOTE: Isn’t it amazing that we have so many problems related to these major doctrines of faith, believe, baptism, and salvation when the Bible is so straightforward and repeats itself so often. It is another sign of the contemporary departure of Christians and church-members from God, Christ, and the Bible. The Falling Away is not from church, church attendance will no doubt go up as more see end events; however the Falling Away from God, Christ, and the sound doctrine of the Bible will escalate.

9. Romans 9:33. Wow, what a statement of faith here! “Whoever” believes in Jesus will not be ashamed; God will not allow that individual to be ashamed in His presence and eternally; and this confidence—the opposite of ashamed—is based on the words and Word of God.

10. Romans 10:4. Sure, today you do not seem but a few Jews who believe in Christ. Paul says they have much religion and zeal, but they need salvation. Further they are ignorant Paul says, ignorant of God’s way of acceptable righteousness through faith in Christ. Everyone who believes receives the righteousness.

11. Romans 10:9. What is necessary for the salvation of the one baptism, only. To believe in your heart the Gospel story of Jesus, that which requires the most faith is to believe that God raised Him from the dead—this is faith in God and Christ; and two to confess with your mouth that the Lord Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

12. Romans 10:11 and Isaiah 28:16. How about that the “whoever believes in Christ shall not be ashamed” is a quote from long ago in the book of Isaiah, noting that faith in Christ has always been the plan of God for the one baptism of salvation.

13. Romans 10:14. Praying or calling on Jesus for salvation demands “believing” first; and “believing” demands the hearing of the Gospel of Jesus.


15. Romans 13:11. Yes, even more true today than when Paul wrote: our completed salvation of glorification and heaven is much nearer now than when we first believed.

16. Romans 14:2. There are some fine points of distinction on beliefs like on the eating of certain meats and other religious practices, not on major doctrines.
Sorry, I can think of no other word than “magic” to use for this 12 subject topical outline of the Bible which at the same time is an approximate record of the time sequence of God’s progressive revelations in the Bible. The marvel of both a topical and Bible-book sequential outline of the Bible comes out of the way God had the Bible of Old and New Testament books written, another marvel of the way He has and continues to work in history. (Revelation is complete, but the process of illumination goes on!) Paul as chief editor of the New Testament, having written 14 of the 27 NT books and sponsored 3 others, was key to the manner in which God, Christ, the Spirit of Christ, and the Holy Spirit used a careful selection of quotes to be taken from the Old Testament and repeated in the NT, with explanations and further revelations based on those quotes; however, Jesus started the trend, as you will notice especially from Matthew how often He quoted form the OT and with what respect it had for it as the Word of God (taught by God Himself, Jesus knew both the original source and how it was Scriptures); also the other Apostles like Peter and John, indeed all the writers of the NT were either Apostles or had special apostolic sponsorship as John Mark and Luke did from Paul. God Himself created the consistency and harmony of the Bible itself by controlling the time, places, and events that made up the quoting of the OT in the NT, with subsequent explanations and amplifications. Of course, the consistency of the Bible as far as content and as far as method of writing is based on the consistency of the character of God Himself.

Subject Outline of the Bible.

I. The Living God of the Living
Volume 3: Believe and Be Baptized

II. Righteousness of God and Man
III. The Composite Witness of the Bible
IV. God, Man and the Son of Man
V. The Resurrection
VI. Wisdom From God
VII. The Gospel
VIII. Listening More Important Than Sacrifice
IX. What Happened to the Jews as the Chosen nation?
   X. The Salvation of God
   XI. The New King of Israel
   XII. The Living God Wants Others to Live

What is amazing is that the whole Bible of 66 books, 39 in the Old Testament and 27 in the New Testament, can be outlined under 12 major subjects! I will tell you upfront why that is possible: because of the Old Testament quotes in the New Testament, and because the New Testament provides the proper interpretation of those Old Testament quotes. The first three topics are given only for reference as they outline the Law of Moses, the first five books of the Bible, as quoted in the NT and with explanations. {You see you can not just say the first three topics outline the Law of Moses since the proper interpretations of these quotes form the NT is also part of the magic outline, that is some of the guidance of God that makes it beyond norm to the magic. We would call it supernatural, which of course both the writing, preservation, and promotion of the Bible is; but we do not wish to presume on God in a bold claim that the outline itself is supernatural. It is not, only to the extent that God blesses it; but it is a believers approximation of the supernatural and gradual revelation. For a more thorough look at these first three topics from the Law of Moses as well as a look at all of the 12 topics, the reader is referred to volume 1 of the LEARN CHRIST commentaries, entitled “Prophets and Apostles”. Yes, Moses was also a Writing Prophet.}

The next four topics--“God, Man, and the Son of Man”; The Resurrection”; “Wisdom from God”, and “The Gospel”--largely are based on Psalms and the other Wisdom Literature of the Bible, with their quotes in the NT, therefore as previously discussed form a minor part of this volume. There will in this volume also be very little of topic VIII, “Listening More Important than Sacrifice” since this largely is that part of the outline of the Bible that deals with the historical books. {You now Chronicles, Kings, Joshua, Judges, and etc.} Although we must consider a great amount of Hebrew history as we consider the 16 Writing Prophets, especially Isa-
iah where you have by record and prediction most of the OT history from the time of Isaiah though the life and death of Christ. My goodness, Isaiah even goes beyond that with one of the most thorough descriptions in all the Bible of the final shaking of this earth with the heavens. The last four topics of the magic outline--“What Happened to the Jews as the Chosen People of God?; “The Salvation of God”; “The New King of the New Israel”; and “The Living God wants Others to Live”--corresponds to the 16 books of the Writing Prophets, therefore is the main focus of this volume. In fact, we will accept as a major challenge for the last chapter of this volume to do a rewrite of those last four topics based on the Bible research that has been done in this volume.

3-1: THE LIVING GOD OF THE LIVING

I. God, Man, and Marriage.

Genesis


   (1). Let US make man in OUR image bespeaks of the plurality of God during the time of creation.
   
   (2). In our image and after our likeness tells of some of the glory of man that during Creation was acquired from God.
   
   (3). The dominion of man over all the other works of Creation tells of the First Commission of man to be a pioneer in the exploration and control of the works of Creation.
   
   (4). The Bible refires to man as male and female so that in marriage male and female becomes a complementing couple of male and female. That is the way God originally created them; and in marriage that is the way He intends for it to keep going according to Jesus, and absolutely no person is to have any part in the separation of those two which God has joined together.


   (1). From Gen 2:7 we learn that: (a) God created man physically from something that already existed, from the elements of the earth; (b) As far as the actual existence or inward spirit of man that came from God breathing into him the breath of life; and (c) With that spirit of life also man became a living soul.

   (2). From Gen 2:24 we learn of the one flesh characteristics of marriage that God still intends and has always intended, that oneness emphasized by Jesus and the Apostles in the New Testament.

   (3). While Paul in I Cor 15:45 is emphasizing the difference between the first Adam and Christ the second Adam, also the difference between the natural and the
spiritual body, the first man from earth and the second from heaven, he also contrasts the living soul and the living spirit.

(4). As a man departs from the household of his mother and father, cleaving to a wife in marriage, the two become in Gods sight as one flesh (Matthew 19:5,6 and Mark 10:7,8).

(5). So serious is this matter of joining with God that the Bible considers when a man has a relationship with a harlot that he becomes one body with her (I Cor 6:16).


(1). Genesis 5:1,2 reinforces and builds on previous doctrine as God calls their name, male and female, Adam.

II. God and the Gospel.


(1). With Gods call to Abraham to another land, God gave the everlasting covenant of: (a) From Abram's seed God would make the great nation of Israel; (b) Through his seed Christ the name of Abram would be great; and (c) Through Abram all the families and nations of the earth would be blessed.

(2). Paul writes in Galatians 3:8,9 that:

a. When God said "In thee shall all nations be blessed" God was preaching the Gospel to Abraham;

b. This all nations meant the Gentiles, or heathen which is the favorite word of the Bible for Gentiles;

c. This Gospel is justification through faith; and

d. All Gentiles and Jews who believe in Christ becomes the seed of Abraham through faith.

2. Genesis 15:5,6, Romans 4:18, and James 2:23.

(1). In Genesis 15:5 God identifies that the seed of Abram will be as numerous as the stars of the sky, and in Genesis 15:6 since Abraham believed God will He said this the belief was counted for righteousness.

(2). In quoting "So shall your seed be" from Genesis in Romans 4:18, Paul emphasizes how Abraham believed in hope against hope that he would indeed be the father of many nations although he had at the time no sons.

(3). The Apostle James in James 2:23 reiterates how the faith of Abraham was counted as righteousness, adding that Abraham was called the friend of God.

(1) As God changes the name of Abram to Abraham, He says “A father of many nations have I made thee”.

(2) Paul tells us in Romans 4:17 that this quote from Genesis 17:5 tells us two things about God Himself:
   a. God is a life-giving God; and
   b. God is a God that can call into existence what did not previously exist.

III. God of the Living, our Father in Heaven.

   (1) God told Abraham and Sarah that though old and stricken in years they would have a son, and when Sarah laughed God said, Is any thing too hard for the LORD?
   (2) Jesus in Mark 10:27, not in the same context but with a paraphrase of the same meaning, talks of salvation as all things are possible with God.

   (1) All nations will be blessed with salvation through the seed of Abraham.
   (2) That Seed is singular, the Seed is Christ.

   (1) Judah told Oman to raise up children to his brother Er whom God had slain.
   (2) When the Sadducees brought up the matter of raising children by a died brothers wife and as to whose wife she would be in the resurrection, Jesus told them that what was important was that God was the God of the living, the God of the living Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Exodus

   (1) God told Moses in the call at the burning bush that He was the God of Moses father, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
   (2) About the dead being raised to life, Jesus quotes Moses and Exodus 3:6 how God is the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; and with the emphasis on God as each time God with repeated with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

   (1) God has Moses tell Pharaoh that he has been put on the throne of Egypt for two reasons: (a) To demonstrate the power of God in securing the freedom of
Israel; and (b) That the name of the living God and the God of the living might be
declared over all the earth.

(2). In quoting that in Romans 9:17 and in explaining the meaning in Romans
9:16,18, Paul is telling us of how God is in control of world events; and what is
important does not depend on the will of man or the competitiveness of man, but
rather on the mercy of God, and that ultimately God will have mercy on whom He
alone desires.


(1). The Passover feast in remembrance of Gods rescue of Israel from
Egyptian bondage among other things included that the lamb of the feast should
not have a bone of the body broken, a direct quote of which we will see later in
Psalms.

(2). When the Apostle John in John 19:36 tells of how at the Crucifixion
of Jesus, and since Jesus was already dead contrary to custom, not a bone in His
body was broken, John is quoting from both Exodus and Psalms 34:20. {Psalms
34:20 is directly quoted, and the reference from Exodus 12:46 is closer to a
paraphrase.}

7. Exodus 16:18 and II Corinthians 8:15.

(1). During Gods supply of manna during the 40 years in the wilderness, those
who gathered much had nothing left over and those who gathered little were not
hungry so that it was completely by the grace of God and according to the individ-
ual needs.

(2). Paul quotes this in II Corinthians to illustrate equality among Christians
in the churches, or to illustrate the democratic nature of salvation.

3-2: Righteousness of God and Man.
I. The Ten Commandments.

1. Exodus 20, Luke 18:20, Mark 7:10, Matthew 5:38, Romans 13:8,9, and James
2:11. {These are the Ten Commandments according to Jesus and the Apostles.}

2. Exodus 21:17 and Mark 7:10: speaking evil of mother and father was consid-
ered so serious to God that those who did such were to be put to death.

3. Exodus 21:24 and Matthew 5:38: under the law it was to be life for life, eye
for eye, and tooth for tooth s greatly did God respect human life and welfare and
desire Israel to do the same.

4. Exodus 32:6 and I Corinthians 10:7: Paul reminds Christians at Corinth not to
be idolaters even as the children of Israel were while Moses was on Mount Sinai
getting the Ten Commandments.
Volume 3: Believe and Be Baptized

II. The Laws of a Holy God {the laws went beyond the commandments to regulations, civil law which would be the law of the new nations, and how to organize}.

Leviticus

1. Leviticus 4:18-20 and Hebrews 9:22: not a paraphrase or a quote, but rather in Hebrews 9:22 Paul summarizes what blood could do in the laws and ordinances of the Old Testament, the practices of which Leviticus 4:18-20 is typical.

2. Leviticus 11:44 and I Peter 1:16: God requires that His people be Holy since He Himself is Holy.

3. Leviticus 18:5,16 and Galatians 3:12: any person who desires to live under the Laws must life by keeping the Laws.


   (1). In these just and holy requirements of the Law of Leviticus since “I am the LORD”, His name is not be sworn by falsely nor profaned.

   (2). With this quotes as a starting point, Jesus says don’t make any oath.

III. How Did the Law Read during the time of Jesus.

1. Luke 10:26: “And He {Jesus} said to him, `What is written in the Law? How does it read to you?” (NASV)

2. Leviticus 19:18 and Luke 10:27: (1) To Love God with all the heart, mind, and soul; and (2) To Love your neighbor as yourself.

3. Leviticus 18:5 and Luke 10:28: “And He (Jesus) said to him, `You have answered correctly; DO THIS, AND YOU WILL LIVE.” (NASV) {NOTE: If you could really do this, keep these laws, you would live eternally. If now and during NT times, as the Scriptures tell us is true, that is if “the law is our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, was it also the schoolmaster to bring the remnant of the remnant in OT times to Christ. I think so, although they looked forward to the atonement while we look behind; and we are told that the Gospel was preached to Abraham, how can we fail to see that it was also preached to all God’s people of the OT times. Indeed we will see how much in the last chapters, with all the “Prophet Messiah” references in the Prophets, how much really the Writing Prophets did speak of Christ, and of the Gospel aspects of Christ. Can we say then that God’s people of the OT, like the Gentiles and the Jews of whom Paul wrote in Romans, that “they are without excuse for their sins.”}

IV. The Laws Jesus Came to Fulfill, not Destroy.

1. Leviticus 19:18 and Matthew 5:43: You have been told to love your neighbors and hate your enemies?

2. Be like God (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." (NASV)

3. Galatians 5:14, Romans 13:8,9, and James 2:8: All the Law is fulfilled in Love for Neighbor as yourself.

4. Leviticus 20:9 and Mark 7:10 (with Exodus 20:12 and Deut 5:16): Since in the Law the requirement to "Honor father and mothers has already been established and quoted here, it follows also on the ordinances of the law, or applications, that those who curse mother and father should die. {NOTE: The emphasis of Jesus in Mark 7:13 is that the religious leaders were trying to invalidate the Word of God by their traditions.}

5. Leviticus 28:12 and II Corinthians 6:16: God desires a distinct or special people among whom He can dwell and be their God. {NOTE: In Isaiah 52:11 as quoted in II Corinthians 6:17 this is to be a clean and separate people.}

V. The real way to eternal life, to fulfillment of righteousness and the Laws, is through faith in the Crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ for the sins of the world.

**Numbers**

1. Numbers 9:12 and John 19:36 reminds us that as predicted in the Old Testament not a bone in the body of Christ was broken during Crucifixion.

**3-3: The Composite Witness of the Bible.**

I. The Importance of Witnesses.

**Deuteronomy**

1. Deuteronomy 5:16, Exodus 20:12 and 21:17, Leviticus 20:9, and Mark 7:10 where with Honor to parents and the law of death with dishonor, Jesus teaches that what is inside man rather than what goes inside him is defiling.

2. Importance of knowing the Commandments: Deut 5:16-20 and Mark 10:19. {You know the commandments, DO NOT MURDER, DO NOT COMMIT ADULTERY, DO NOT STEAL, DO NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS, DO NOT DEFRAUD, HONOR FATHER AND MOTHER. (Mark 10:19 NASV)}


(1). First is THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE LORD, Deut 6:4,5 and Mark 10:29,30.


5. The importance of a special people to bear witness to God begins here and runs throughout the Old Testament: Deut 7:6 and Titus 2:14.

II. OKAY, HOW IS MAN TO LIVE?

1. Live by Listening to what Jesus, the Prophet Messiah has to say: Deut 18:15,19, Acts 3:22,23, and Acts 7:37. (Listen to the Apostle Peter as he preaches quoting from the Prophet Moses in Deuteronomy: 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. And it shall be that every soul that does not heed that Prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.’ (Acts 3:22,23 NASV))

2. Live by Listening to the testimony of God the Father to God the Son: Mark 9:7, a paraphrase of Deut 18:15,19 except from God Himself, and a direct quote in Psalm 11:7. {Then a cloud formed, overshadowing them, and a voice came out of the cloud, ‘This is My beloved Son, listen to him!’ (Mark 9:7 NASV)}

3. Live by Listening to other reliable and trustworthy witnesses: Deut 19:15. {One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth; at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established. (Deut 19:15 KJV)}

(1). Deut 19:15 and Matthew 18:16: if your brother sins against you but refuses to listen, take your grievance to him byway of two or three witnesses; and if that does not work take it before the local church.

(2). Deut 19:15 and II Corinthians 13:1: Listen to the Apostle Paul! {This is the third time I am coming to you, EVERY FACT IS TO BE CONFIRMED BY THE TESTIMONY OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES. (II Cor 13:1)}

(3). Deut 19:15 and John 8:17: Listen to Jesus Himself! {Even in your law it has been written, that the testimony of two men is true. I am He who bears witness of Myself, and the Father who sent Me bears witness of Me. (John 8:17,18)}

(4). Deut 19:15 and I Timothy 5:18: Listen to the elder of any local church {same as the pastor or bishop} right up to the point that any accusation against him has been established in that local church at the mouth of two or three witnesses.

III. How Can you Listen to a Common Criminal Like Jesus of Nazareth who was cursed in that He was hanged or crucified on a tree {cross}? Deut 21:22 and Galatians 3:13


“And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree; His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that daffier he that is hanged is accursed of God;) that thy land be not defiled: which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.”
(Deut 21:22,23 KJV) (NOTE: Jesus was very familiar with this portion of the Word of God as He was with all of the Old Testament, and when crying "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me", a cry of grief more than questioning He knew that God had to turn His back on such a curse on Christ for the sins of the whole world.)

2. Galatians 3:13. {ALL OF GODS WORDS AND WORD IS SERIOUS AND TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY WHETHER WRITTEN IN THE OLD TESTAMENT OR NEW TESTAMENT! 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.  (Galatians 3:13 NASV)}

   (1). We were cursed by the Law since striving to live by them and therefore keeping them, we knew ourselves to come far short; and therefore without real life!

   (2). Jesus in the death on the Cross became a curse in our place.

IV. Listen to Jesus seriously on a few other matters. {NOTE: Especially if you think you were not under a curse because of your failures to live up to the Law and therefore did not need for Christ to become a curse in your place!}


   (1). Deuteronomy 24:1.

   "When a man hath taken a wife (this is not necessarily the way you are cursed), and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favor in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her; then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house. And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another mans wife."   (Deut 24:1,2 KJV)


   "And it was said, 'Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of dismissal; but I say to you that every one who divorces his wife, except for the cause of unchastity, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.  (Matt 5:31,32 NASV)

   (3). Mark 10:4.

   "And some Pharisees came up to Him, testing Him, and began to question Him whether it was lawful for a man to divorce a wife. And He answered and said to them, What did Moses command you? And they said, Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce and send her away. But Jesus said to them, 'Because of your hardness of heart he wrote you this commandment. But from the beginning of creation, God made them male and female. For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, And the two shall become one flesh; consequently they are no
Volume 3: Believe and Be Baptized

longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate." (Mark 10:2-9 NASV)

   (1). Be just in judgment in that the punishment correspond with the violation; don't muzzle the ox as he treads the corn, and let a brother raise up children to his dead brothers wife.
   (2). It was written for our sakes more than for oxen in order that the worker may work with hope of reward for his works.
   (3). The elder (pastor or bishop) that works hard at preaching and teaching should receive likewise double compensation.

   (1). Your dead brothers name is not to disappear from Israel. {NOTE: Why should the eternal laws of God be so concerned about this one single name of a brother who died before he could have any children. After all the last name of the dead childless and the brother would be the same!}
   (2). According to Jesus it is more important to realize that in heaven there is no marriage, rather men are like the angels; and that men do not did who believe in God and Christ like Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, because they are still alive with the Living God! (Luke 20:28,38 and Mark 12:19) {NOTE: The real concern is that any mans name, alias himself and his real existence, not disappear from the eternal Israel of Gods real people of believing Jews and Gentiles!}

V. Listen also to a few other matters from the Apostle Paul in the Word of God!

1. Deuteronomy 27:26 and Galatians 3:10: (1) Cursed is every man that does not confirm all the laws of God by doing all of them; and (2) None can truly be justified by the Law, only by faith.
2. Deuteronomy 32:12 and I Corinthians 10:20: (1) The LORD God led Israel and their was no strange gods among them; and (2) The Gentiles sacrifice to demons not to God, and the Christian is to have no part in this worship of demons.

3-4: God, Man, and the “Son of Man”.

I. How God deals with men and with men Through Christ!

1. Some evident things about God in the Bible of Job and Psalms.
   (1). God can do everything and anything without any limitations to His power in heaven and on earth.
   (2). God knows every thought and every action of every man on earth.
   (3). God tricks the wise men in their own methods of craftiness like an adult playing with toys and children.
(4). God exalts the humble in His sight. They can be down and out and still though humble in the ways of the world not necessarily be humble in the sight of God, and it is even harder for the up and out to be humble in God's sight for they trust in their own riches or financial security.

Job

2. Job 5:13 and I Corinthians 3:19: God catches the wise in their own craftiness.

(1). Job 42:2.

"Then Job answered the LORD, and said, I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee. Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me. I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but no mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." (Job 42:1-6 KJV)

(2). Mark 10:27. {NOTE: TWO MOST IMPORTANT AND FUNDAMENTAL DOCTRINES OF ALL THE BIBLE ARE SET FORTH HERE: (1) THE POWER OF GOD, NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR GOD; AND (2) WHO THEN CAN BE SAVED SINCE IT IS SO DIFFICULT FOR A RELIGIOUS AND WELL ESTABLISHED LEADER IN SOCIETY TO BE SAVED?}

"And Jesus, looking around, said to His disciples, How hard it will be for those who are wealthy to enter the kingdom of God. And the disciples were amazed at His words. But Jesus answered again and said to them, Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. (Why, because most of them unlike Job can not say, 'Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.) And they were even more astonished and said to Him, 'Then who can be saved? Looking upon them, Jesus said, With men it is impossible, but now with God; for all things are possible with God." (Mark 10:23-27 NASV) {NOTE AGAIN: IF NO OTHER QUESTIONS ARE ANSWERED IN THIS BOOK, THE ESSENTIAL AND MOST ESSENTIAL QUESTION THAT MUST BE ANSWERED IS THAT OF THE DISCIPLES TO JESUS, WHO THEN CAN BE SAVED? AND WHERE WE START IN THE REST OF THIS BOOK TO ANSWER THAT QUESTION IS WITH THE IMMEDIATE REPLY OF JESUS, WITH THE POWER OF GOD TO WHOM NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE.}

II. God the Creator and Father observes man, men, and then testifies to men.
1. God the Creator notices that the Gentiles rage against Him and that the people of Israel imagine a vain thing and things about Him: Psalm 2:1,2 and Acts 4:24-26.

2. God the Father has decreed and testified in the Bible as well as at the baptism of Jesus in the presence of many as the voice came from heaven that Jesus of Nazareth is, was, and is His Son: Psalm 2:7, Matthew 3:17 and 17:5, Hebrews 1:5 and 5:5, II Peter 1:17, and Mark 9:7.

   "I will declare the decree: the LORD hat said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee." (Psalm 2:7 KJV)

   "And after being baptized, Jesus went up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon Him, and behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matt 3:16,17 NASV)

   (3). Matthew 17:5.
   "And Peter answered and said to Jesus, 'Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, I will make three tabernacles here, one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah. While he was still speaking, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and behold, a voice out of the cloud, saying, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear Him!'" (Matthew 17:4,5 NASV) {NOTE: What God adds in His own testimony to Jesus as compared to the transfiguration after a similar testimony at the baptism is HEAR HIM. Paul did not mean in Ephesians 4:20,21 that like Peter, James, and hundreds of others you had to be there physically as Jesus taught. What he meant was that through the help of the Spirit of God you must see and hear from yourself, personally. This is the key to who can be saved! By listening to Jesus and His words of life!}

   (4). Hebrews 1:5.
   "For to which of the angels did He ever say, 'Thou art My Son, Today I have begotten thee? And again, 'I will be a father to Him, and He shall be a Son to Me?" (Hebrews 1:5 NASV)

   (5). Hebrews 5:5.
   "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..." {NOTE: This is the first time in this Bible study of the progressive revelations of the Bible from Genesis to Malachi that we have encountered Jesus as the great high priest}. 

---

**LEARN CHRIST commentaries**  
Volume 3: Believe and Be Baptized

**Psalm 1–15**

1. God the Creator notices that the Gentiles rage against Him and that the people of Israel imagine a vain thing and things about Him: Psalm 2:1,2 and Acts 4:24-26.

2. God the Father has decreed and testified in the Bible as well as at the baptism of Jesus in the presence of many as the voice came from heaven that Jesus of Nazareth is, was, and is His Son: Psalm 2:7, Matthew 3:17 and 17:5, Hebrews 1:5 and 5:5, II Peter 1:17, and Mark 9:7.

   "I will declare the decree: the LORD hat said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee." (Psalm 2:7 KJV)

   "And after being baptized, Jesus went up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon Him, and behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matt 3:16,17 NASV)

   (3). Matthew 17:5.
   "And Peter answered and said to Jesus, 'Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, I will make three tabernacles here, one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah. While he was still speaking, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and behold, a voice out of the cloud, saying, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear Him!'" (Matthew 17:4,5 NASV) {NOTE: What God adds in His own testimony to Jesus as compared to the transfiguration after a similar testimony at the baptism is HEAR HIM. Paul did not mean in Ephesians 4:20,21 that like Peter, James, and hundreds of others you had to be there physically as Jesus taught. What he meant was that through the help of the Spirit of God you must see and hear from yourself, personally. This is the key to who can be saved! By listening to Jesus and His words of life!}

   (4). Hebrews 1:5.
   "For to which of the angels did He ever say, 'Thou art My Son, Today I have begotten thee? And again, 'I will be a father to Him, and He shall be a Son to Me?" (Hebrews 1:5 NASV)

   (5). Hebrews 5:5.
   "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..." {NOTE: This is the first time in this Bible study of the progressive revelations of the Bible from Genesis to Malachi that we have encountered Jesus as the great high priest}. 

---
“...just as He says also in another passage, 'Thou art a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.' (Hebrews 5:5,6 NASV) [NOTE CONTINUED: And we will come to this second quote in Hebrews 5:5,6 when we get in the progression to Psalm 110:6.]

(6). II Peter 1:17.

“Moreover I will endeavor that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance, For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him the holy mount. (II Peter 1:15-18 KJV) [NOTE: So that the Apostle Peter in writing for a permanent record adds his own testimony as a witness to Jesus with the witness of God the Father and that of Jesus Himself!]


"Then a cloud formed, overshadowing them, and a voice came out of the cloud, 'This is My beloved Son, listen to Him!'" (Mark 9:7 NASV)

LISTEN TO HIM, JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE BELOVED SON OF GOD!

3. God chooses men and ways less esteemed among men as far as status in order to receive Honor and Praise to His name: Psalm 8:2 and Matthew 21:16.

III. What Can God tell us about ourselves as men and women?

1. Psalm 8:3,4: When we consider the magnitude and vastness of all that God created in the Universe, how in the world can He give mind to a little man and beyond that visit man on the planet earth through the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ?

2. Psalm 8:5,6: What does God specifically think of man based on the way He created him.

   (1). God made man a little lower than the angels, and recall that this is the generic man of Genesis of male and female.

   (2). God gave honor and glory to man by creating him in His own image or likeness, and God keeps that thought pattern in mind in all His dealings with man.

   (3). God entrusted man with all the other works of His Creation, placing man in dominion over all these works of Creation.

   (4). God remembers man.

   (5). God visits man.
3. Hebrews 2:6: We must go beyond the primary level of meaning about Man to that about the Son of Man, the Lord Jesus Christ, who in Himself fulfilled all that God originally meant for man and more; and you see that in Hebrews 2:8

"Thou hast put all things in subjection under His feet. For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing that is not subject to him, But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him." (Hebrews 2:8 NASV)

4. I Corinthians 15:27. {Granted that there are many stories, many chapters, verses, and books in the Bible; but the total subject matter for the practical purposes of Christian faith can be summarized as faith in God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Bible, and Salvation. Get that and you have enough of the Bible for life. The following important passage helps to establish the present and eternal relationship between God the Father and Christ the Son.}

"The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things re put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." (I Corinthians 15:26-28 KJV)

(1). There are still some enemies such as death that has not be subjected to Christ as the Son of Man, or Christ as the Lord of heaven and earth.

(2). God the Father has ordained that all in heaven and earth be under the feet of Christ, and heaven is already there. May Gods will be done on earth as it is in heaven as more people still on earth are subjected to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

(3). God the Father did not put Himself in subjection to the Christ.

(4). After the Second Coming of Christ when everything on earth also comes under the actual Lordship of Jesus then Jesus will Himself be subjected to the LORDSHIP of the Father.

(5). God the Father may ultimately be all in all.

IV. What did God find during the time of David and before when He looked down from heaven to take a close look at man {I suspect this was and is all the time}?

1. Psalm 14:1-3: (1) God found fools who said in their hearts that there is no God; (2) He found a corrupt humanity of abominable works and an absence of doing good; (3) When He searched again among men to see if any of man understood and sought God, He found that they all had missed the essential way, found filthiness, and a lack of doing good.

2. Romans 3:10.

"As it is written, 'There is none righteous, not even one; there is none who understands, there is one who seeks for God: All have turned aside, together they have
become useless; thee is one who does good, There is not even one."  (Romans 3:10-12 NASV)  

THIS IS HUMANITY WITHOUT FAITH AND RIGHTEOUSNESS THROUGH FAITH, HUMANITY WITHOUT JESUS CHRIST!

3-5: THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS.

I. What God did for Christ the firstborn and therefore what He also does for all that will believe in Christ as the secondborns! Psalms 16-35

1. Psalm 16:8-11: God is at my right hand; I feel secure and realize that honor will be achieved; the pains of the flesh are assuaged by hope; God will not leave my soul in hell; and God will not allow His Holy One to see corruption in the grave; God will show me the path of everlasting life where in His Presence there is fullness of joy; and at His right hand there is pleasure forever.  

{NOTE: The only way Jesus could place the Father on His right hand and also be at the right hand of the Father is for the two to be facing in opposite directions which was true at the Crucifixion stashes became a curse for us!} 

2. Acts 2:25: Listen again to the witness of the Apostle Peter as he preached on the first day of Pentecost after the historical coming of the Holy Spirit in power and fullness.

"Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know this Man, delivered up by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death. And God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power. For David says of Him, 'I was always beholding the Lord in my presence; For He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken, Therefore my heart was glad and my tongue exulted; moreover my flesh also will abide in hope; because thou wilt not abandon my soul to Hades, nor allow thy Holy One to undergo decay. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; Thou wilt make me full of gladness with thy presence."  

(Acts 2:22-28 NASV) 

{NOTE: A Paraphrase on This Sermon from Peter--The Apostle Peters First Sermon was naturally on Jesus of Nazareth after he had explained what had been seen as manifestations of the historical coming of the Holy Spirit in power and fullness to take the place of Jesus on earth, Jesus immediately before having Ascended back to the right hand of God the Father. First what Peter had told them about the Coming of the Holy Spirit to take the place of Jesus with a quote and explanation from Joel 2:28-32 (Acts 2:14-21): These men who are speaking on other languages that so that all men present here can hear in their own language, are not drunk; but is that historical event predicted by the Prophet Joel. It is that at the beginning of the last days, in other words right now, God will pour out the fullness of His Spirit; and with this fullness of the Spirit will also come: (1) A more
widespread and democratic knowledge of God through the widespread presence and power of this Spirit as young and old, servant and free, men and women receive the Spirit; (2) prophecy will also become more democratic as contrasted to the Prophets in the Bible who wrote Scriptures of the Apostles of the New Testament; (3) All this will happen between this beginning of the last days and the end of time when the old earth becomes the new earth as the sun and moon are turned into darkness at the end of time; and (4) The sole method of salvation from this beginning of last days to this end of time will be that “Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” Second what Peter told them about Jesus and salvation: God the Father gave His own testimony of witness to Jesus through miracles, wonders, and signs that obviously had to come from God and which Jesus performed as well as the voice that came from heaven at the baptism and transfiguration of Jesus. God did this in your midst the midst of Israel and in the First Century all Israel well knew. Yet Israel crucified Jesus on a tree, or cross, making Him a curse in the sight of God which was really the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God as we have seen predicted in the Old Testament long before the First Century A.D. God in order to complete salvation and the testimony to His own Son raised Jesus up from the dead. You see if He was His own Son, and He was, it was impossible that death and the grave could hold Him captive. And like David wrote in Psalms as a prediction of that which was to come and as a decree from God of what was already settled in heaven that remained to be fulfilled on earth was that God would not leave Christ’s soul in hell for more than three days, that He would not allow the physical body of Christ to suffer the corrupting influence of the grave, and that as the Firstborn He would be restored to life and the Presence of God.} 

II. What God will do for humanity during the period of time from the beginning of the last days after the Ascension of Christ and the end of time!

1. Psalm 18:25 and Matthew 5:7: God will bless the merciful by giving them mercy.

Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy. (KJV)

2. Psalm 18:49 and Romans 15:9: God will spread the praise of His name and the name of Jesus among the Gentiles, another aspect of the democratic ways of God after the Coming of the Spirit in fullness.

III. Now we are in a position to understand Jesus cry of “My God, my God why hast thou forsaken me?” of Psalm 22:1 and Matthew 27:46.

1. It is to be understood in the total context of Psalm 22 which starts with the Crucifixion of Jesus and the words of Jesus on the cross in 22:1 and ends in 22:28-31 with establishment of the kingdom of Christ on earth in its fullness.

2. First we should realize that other portions of Psalm 22 relate ahead of time events about the crucifixion as they pierced the hands of Christ and as they cast lots for His garments: Psalm 22:16-18 and Matthew 27:35, also John 19:24.
3. Psalm 22:22 and Hebrews 2:12: Both He, Christ, who does the sanctifying, or setting apart of Christian in salvation, and those sanctified, that is the Christians, has the same source from the One God the Father; and therefore Jesus as the Firstborn is not ashamed to call the secondborns Christians as brethren.

4. So God the Father turned His back on Christ the Son was He was dying on the cross for the sins of the world, while Christ was being made a curse on the cross which a righteous God could not stand; and to that extent God the Father had to forsake Him for three days according to the plan that they had made in the counsels of eternity while Christ was on the cross being made a curse, and while Christ went to hell, the intermediary place after death for those who do not go immediately to heaven where He preached to the dead spirits.

IV. Who Then Will See God and Be Saved?

1. Those who are sensitive the Conscience of others as well as his own Christian Conscience, seeking their good as well as his own good: Psalm 24:1 and I Corinthians 10:26.

2. Those who have received a legally declared purity of heart through justification by faith and an inward potential of purity of heart through the daily process of sanctification, and that will also become the pure of heart with complete redemption or glorification at the Second Coming of Christ: Psalm 24:3-5 and Matthew 5:8.

3. Those who learn to love life and see longevity of life: Psalm 34:12-16 and I Peter 3:10-12.


   (1). In the crucifixion they hated Christ without a cause.

   (2). Not a bone in Christ’s body was broken like the Passover Lamb, but rather when His side was pierced out flowed blood and water, the sign of death by a broken heart.

3-6: Wisdom from God.

I. Two Kinds Response/People.

Proverbs

1. Let a man ask in faith and without a desire to consume it on his own lusts in order to get wisdom from God: Proverbs 2:3-6 and James 1:5.

Volume 3: Believe and Be Baptized

3. To turn sinner from error of ways: Proverbs 10:12 and James 5:20.
   (1). Saves a soul from death; and
   (2). Covers a multitude of sins.

4. Some do the deed of their father the devil: Proverbs 18:4 and John 7:38.

II. Some wise and unwise responses to God.

1. Those who have the knowledge of Jesus then return to worldly entanglements are like dogs returning to vomit: Proverbs 26:11 and II Peter 2:22.

2. To plan on tomorrow apart from the will of God is foolish: Proverbs 27:1 and James 4:13.


III. Making life’s decisions in terms of the terminal One Day.

Ecclesiastes

While the Prophet Solomon primarily speaks of this diminished light from aging, the consistency of the words and phrases with that of the diminished lights after the final tribulation of Jesus in Mark 13 and Matthew 24, so that as in many prophecies we naturally look for something more immediate like aging and something more distant like the final shaking of the heavens and the earth as the sun and moon will be darkened, the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven will be shaken: Ecclesiastes 12:1-3 and Mark 13:24.

Psalm 36-77

2. Then the meek will inherit the earth: Psalm 37:11 and Matthew 5:5.

3. In preparation for this new people of the new heavens and earth God has provided a body, the body of Christ, as He took away burnt offerings and sacrifices: Psalm 40:6-8 and Hebrews 10:5.

4. The unwise eats bread at the table of Christ while they lift up their heel against Him: Psalm 41:9 and John 13:18.

IV. God’s Eternal Wisdom rests in Christ.

1. God the Father, Psalm 45:6,7 and Hebrews 1:8, says of God the Son:
   (1). Your throne is forever, O God;
   (2). Rule of your kingdom is righteousness; and
   (3). You loved righteousness, hated iniquity.

2. Some statements by Christ before made on earth:
   (1). They hated me without cause: Psalm 69:4 and John 15:25.
3-7: THE GOSPEL.
I. The Time Finally came.

Psalm 70-150

4. This is the time to hear the voice of God, not hardening the heart: Psalm 95:7-11 and Hebrews 3:15; 3:7; and 4:7.

II. Some things God the Father says.
1. Of The Son You are Eternal though the earth passes away: Psalm 101:25-33 and Hebrews 1:10.
2. Of angels, ministers and a flame of fire: Psalm 104:4 and Hebrews 1:7,8.
3. To Son, Sit on my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool: Psalm 110:1 and Hebrews 1:13.
4. That Christ is a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek: Psalm 110:4 and Hebrews 5:6,7:21.

III. Believe and Speak.
2. II Cor 9:9 and Psalm 112:9.

3-8: Listening More Important Than Sacrifice.
I. Listen to God.

I Samuel
1. Love of God and neighbor is and always was in the Old Testament more important than burnt offerings and sacrifices: I Samuel 15:22 and Mark 12:33.
Volume 3: Believe and Be Baptized

2. To listen to Christ as Lord is more important than the legal requirements of the Sabbath day: I Samuel 21:1,6, Luke 6:3,4, Mark 2:25, and Matthew 12:2,3.

II Samuel

3. When you listen to God in the predictions of the Bible you have to listen twice as hard as the predictions often have double meaning—that is, a wider spectrum of meaning than immediately obvious as here where it applies to King Solomon and King Jesus: II Samuel 7:12,14 and John 7:42.

I Kings

4. Listen to God talk about His own remnant of Israel when He tells Elijah that He has reserved 7,000 for Himself that have not bowed the knee to Baal: I Kings 19:10-18 and Romans 11:4.

II. Listening Signs from the Early Prophets and Jesus.

Jonah

1. The Listening Signs for This Generation is Both Solomon, Jonah and Jesus as recorded in the Bible while in Nineveh’s generation it was the Prophet Jonah and in Jesus time it was Him the Prophet Messiah: Jonah 3:1-4 and Luke 11:29.

Joel

2. Listen to the Apostle Peter on the first day of Pentecost after Christ’s Ascension as he quotes from the Prophet Joel to explain both what happened on that day, and what would happen from this the beginning of the last days until the end of time: Joel 2:28-31 and Acts 2:16-21.

3. Listen to the Prophet Joel start the ball rolling on the prime theme of the Bible about eschatology, the One Day of the LORD: Joel 3:13, Mark 4:29, and Mark 13:24.

III. Listen to God Himself tell in the Bible to what extent the nation of Israel was and was not His chosen people.

Amos

1. Immediately after rescue from Egyptian bondage God turned away from most of Israel, giving them up to worship the host of heaven: Amos 5:25-27 and Acts 7:42.

2. God takes a people for His name from among the Gentiles: (Amos 9:11,12 and Acts 15:15-17)

Hosea

3. These same Gentiles shall be called sons of the living God: Hosea 2:23 and Romans 9:25,26.
Isaiah 1-39

4. If God had not chosen a small remnant out of Israel they would have been like Sodom and Gomorrah: Isaiah 1:9 and Romans 9:29.

IV. Listen to God Himself in His book on matters or eschatology, or last things.

1. You must first of all see the double nature of predictions as related to eschatology as when the Old Testament said, “I will call my Son out of Egypt.” (Hosea 11:1 and Matthew 2:15) (NOTE: The Son has a double meaning: (1) First it is the nation of Israel as the Son; and (2) Then it is Christ as the Son.)


3. Day of the LORD: Isaiah 2:3,12,18, and 19, and I Corinthians 14:36, II Thessalonians 2:2, also 1:10.

4. Isaiah 35:51; 61:1 and Matthew 11:5

3-9: What Happened to the Jews as The Chosen People of God?

I. Jesus taught in parables to explain what had happened to the Jews as the chosen people of God, indeed made clear that all things were spoken in parables implying that even the Bible itself is written in parables in order that only a few can understand the Authorized Semi-Public Interpretation (ASI), that is that Scripture “is of no private interpretation”.

1. Jesus told the parable of the vineyard where Israel is the nation that rejected the rightful owner, God, of the vineyard by killing His Son (Isaiah 5:1,7 and Mark 12:2 and Matthew 21:33). (This is approximately the time and place, along with the curse by Jesus of the fruitless fig tree and of the woes on Jerusalem for not accepting under His wings, that the beginning time marker started ticking to mark the three and one-half years that the Jews had left before there own cutoff predicted by Daniel, and further identified by Zechariah as the fate of two-thirds of the Jews.)

2. The OT and Jesus explain the nature of parables as such that they who hear many not understand and be converted, but Jesus told His Apostles and disciples that these parables were made for them to understand (Isaiah 6:9,10, Matthew 13:14,15, and Mark 8:18).

II. God did give all in Israel another chance in the time of Christ and for three and one-half years after His crucifixion, even with the beginning of His life, a sign—something the Jews always liked and asked for was a sign—that sign was of a virgin, Mary, with child, and the notice from God that He would be called “Immanuel”, meaning that “God is with us”, which He was at that very time in Christ—“God was in Christ reconciling the world until Himself.” (Isaiah 7:14 and Matthew 1:23)
1. "Whoever that falls on this stone (later in parts of THE MESSAGE of the Prophets we will find that God placed a stone that was a stumbling block in front of the Israel that had broken His covenants so often and so continuous, that stumbling block being the necessity of faith in the cross of Jesus) should be broken, but on whom the stone falls is destroyed (Isaiah 8:14,17 and Matthew 21:44).

2. But still Jesus calls and called "brethren" the children that God has given Him (Hebrews 2:13 and Isaiah 8:14,17) {Frank Graham, this sounds a little like the "election" of Calvinism here, although also we know the freedom of choice of Arminianism to also be here.}

3. Though the number of people in the nation of Israel throughout the years between Abraham and Christ were as the sands of the seashore in number, only a remnant of those will be saved (Isaiah 10:22,23 and Romans 9:27).

4. God early chose that His Son, the Seed, would come from the family and lineage of Abraham and King David, never changing His mind or altering His course on this decision (Isaiah 11:1-10, John 7:42, and Romans 15:12).

III. Israel had the same choice as the Gentiles, in fact the first and loudest choice, that Christ would either be a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence to them, or whoever believed in Christ and the God who sent Christ would not be ashamed.

1. If there is no life after death, let us eat, drink, and merry (Isaiah 22:13 and I Corinthians 15:32).

2. At the Second Coming of Christ death will be completely swallowed up in victory (Isaiah 25:8 and I Corinthians 15:54).

3. All Israel that has been chosen of God to be saved will be saved, that all Israel being identified earlier by Paul in Romans as the Israel of Gentiles and Jews (Isaiah 27:9 and Romans 11:27)

4. Whoever believes in Christ, Jew or Gentile, shall not be ashamed of that faith: Isaiah 28:16 and Romans 9:33, also Romans 10:11.

IV. What God did to Israel until the time of the fullness of the Gentiles is completed.


2. Meantime the Jews continued to worship God as if it was real: Isaiah 29:13, Matthew 15:8,9, and Mark 7:6,7: (1) Worshiped with lips while hearts were somewhere else; (2) Vain worship; and (3) Worship based on the teachings of men in the place of the doctrines of God.

3. God will destroy the wisdom of all these wise men according to the ways of the world: Isaiah 29:14 and I Corinthians 1:19.

3-10: The Salvation of God.
Volume 3: Believe and Be Baptized

I. God chose the time!
Isaiah 40-52

1. First, there was John the Baptist saying in effect THIS IS THE TIME: Isaiah 40:3-5, Matthew 3:3, Mark 1:2,3, John 1:23, and Luke 3:4-6.

2. It was inevitable since these things were already recorded in the Word of God that they would happen: Isaiah 40:8 and Luke 21:32,33: (1) Most to happen during Christ's generation; and (2) The rest on the final One Day of the LORD as the old earth and old heavens pass away.


II. God Himself took the initiative by sending His own Son to planet earth.


2. God is faithful but He will listen to the cries of men for salvation in a time acceptable to Him: Isaiah 45:14 and 1 Corinthians 14:25.

3. It is inevitable that every knee will voluntary now and involuntarily at the end of time bow and worship to the praise of God: Isaiah 45:23 and Romans 14:11.

III. Men will come from the four corners of the earth to worship God.

1. Men will come from north, south, east, and west: Isaiah 49:7-12 and Matthew 8:11.


3. Gentiles will come in large numbers in spite of the fact that Gods name has been blasphemed among them because of the Jews: Isaiah 52:5 and Romans 2:24.

4. Paul preached widely the Gospel of Christ where Christ was not already named in order that those who did not previously see and hear might both see and hear: Isaiah 52:15 and Romans 15:21.

IV. Who Has Believed the Reports from God? {Another way the Bible asks the question how many and who has believed the Prophets and Apostles, the book of the Bible as the Word of God and respect them!}
Isaiah 53

1. To whom has the salvation, or arm of God, been revealed: Isaiah 53:1, John 12:38, and Romans 10:16.

2. Who and how many believed the miracles of healing as Jesus took on Himself the infirmities: Isaiah 53:4,7 and Matthew 8:17.
Volume 3: Believe and Be Baptized

3. Who and how many believed when John the Baptist made the report, "Behold, the Lamb of God..." (Isaiah 53:4,7 and John 1:29,36)

4. The great report of Jesus from the cross as He is made a criminal and curse for mankind, and according to the predictions of the Old Testament: Isaiah 53:12 and Luke 22:37.

3-11: The New King of the New Israel

I. Jews and Gentiles as fellow citizens in the new kingdom.

Isaiah 54-66

1. The unmarried have more children that the married, the Gentiles have more children of God than the Jews: Isaiah 54:1 and Galatians 4:27.

2. None comes to the Father except as drawn by the Father, and all those who are taught by the Father: Isaiah 54:13 and John 6:45.


4. All the nation of Israel that is really the Israel of the children of God will be saved: Isaiah 59:20,21 and Romans 11:26.

II. Characteristics of the New King of Israel.

1. The message to Zion is that your new King comes meekly, riding on a donkey: Isaiah 61:11 and Matthew 21:5.

2. Jesus told them in Nazareth of how the Spirit of God was upon him: Isaiah 61:1,2 and Luke 4:17,18.

(1). God anointed Him to preach the gospel to the poor. {A King especially for the poor people.}

(2). God sent Him to start the release of captives, and to make provisions that the blind might be able to see.

(3). To provide freedom for the downtrodden.

(4). To make a Proclamation as to when is the Acceptable Year of the Lord (the last days) that leads to the One Day of the LORD and Lord.

3. Happiness in this new kingdom will come only to those who first mourn because of their inability to do it for themselves: Isaiah 61:1,2 and Matthew 5:4.


1. The New Citizenship found of those who sought it not or who searched not for it (grace): Isaiah 65:1 and Romans 10:20,21.

Micah

3. The Christ, the Prophet Messiah, born in Bethlehem, Micah 5:2, Matthew 2:5,6, and John 7:42, to be: (1) A ruler of the people; and (2) A shepherd of the people.


IV. The Good News of the Gospel of the Kingdom preached by messengers.

Nahum

1. How welcome across the way on the mountain is the first sight of those who come with the Gospel: Nahum 1:15 and Romans 10:15.

Jeremiah 1-30

2. Yet most do not believe the report, foolish people without the ability to see or hear: Jeremiah 5:21 and Mark 8:18.

3. God established a House of Prayer but the nation of Israel turned it into a den of thieves: Jeremiah 7:11 and Matthew 21:13, and Mark 11:17.

4. Trust in God: (1) Whoever boasts, let him boast only in God: Jeremiah 9:24 and I Corinthians 1:31; and (2) Trust only in God: Jeremiah 17:5,7 and II Corinthians 11:9.

3-12: The Living God Wants Others to Live.

I. God’s desire after His originally chosen nation of Israel has continuously broken His covenant, forsaken Him, and served other gods.

Jeremiah 31-52


2. Gods desire to walk among and dwell in His own people: Jeremiah 31:1 and II Corinthians 6:18.

II. The just, justified, or righteous must live by faith in God.

Habakkuk


Daniel

2. Kingdom of God starts out small then grows larger: Daniel 4:9 and Mark 4:32.

III. The sanctified and glorified must live by faith in God.
Volume 3: Believe and Be Baptized

1. The beginning of glorification is when see the Son of Man coming in great power and glory: Daniel 7:13, Matthew 24:20, and Mark 13:26.


3. Before the Second Coming there will be a time of tribulation in which even the heavens and earth are affected: Daniel 12:1-3 and Mark 13:19.

4. Shook only the earth before, the last time will shake earth and the heavens: Haggai 2:6 and Hebrews 12:26.

IV. Final Messages to Disciples and to All.

Ezekiel

1. To Disciples: do you not see, hear, and remember: Ezekiel 12:2 and Mark 8:18.


Zechariah


5. Disciples: will strike down the Shepherd and the sheep will be scattered: Zechariah 13:7 and Mark 14:27.

Malachi


7. The Voice of One Crying in the wilderness "NOW": Malachi 2:10 and Matthew 11:10 and Mark 1:2.

3-13: “Believe” from the Letters of Paul Continued.

17. I Corinthians 1:21. As you come to the chapters on I and II Corinthians, you will see how major these two books are in the writings of Paul and in the Word of God. It is in these revelations from God to the churchmembers at Corinth that Paul did his major work on how to be a believer and churchmember, how to practice church-membership; and many of the Pentecostal problems we have today, especially that of the unsound doctrine and pride of extrabiblical revelations, Paul dealt with long ago if these itching ears teachers and preachers would stop listening to themselves giving a word and word and praise from God and listen to the original and only Word of God. The world has never known God through any wisdom but the wisdom of God; and although it may seem foolish to go back to the original message of the Apostles and Prophets as the only message in spite of all these young and bold Bible teachers who
would give you some new words, it is still the only message by which God saves those who believe it!

18. I Corinthians 3:5. These ministers today with a word from God are deceiving you in order to gain your respect for them. Unlike Apostles like Paul in their writings from God through whom you came believe, they want you to think of themselves as more than just ministers; they seek awe from you as to what God has given them uniquely among all ministers.

19. I Corinthians 11:18. This is "I believe it" from Paul related to the rumors that he has heard about divisions in the church. What would, or does, Paul think today?


21. I Corinthians 14:22. Have you ever heard a churchmember talk in a tongue before unbelievers? No, they always do it before believers to try to impress other believers with how religious and special they are. {By the way most of the tongues of the Bible are real languages, the tongues were given in NT times so believers could communicate with unbelievers. There, no doubt, are rare cases like Paul refers to his own experience, where some can speak in the language of heaven; but we really have few, if any Apostle Paul's today!}

22. I Corinthians 15:2. Paul preached the Gospel to us through his writings; we received the Gospel through the writings of the Bible; and we stand on the assurance of our salvation based on that Gospel, most often as recorded in a letter from the Apostle Paul.

23. I Corinthians 15:11. If you want some good statements of faith, you can find it in these "believe" and later "baptism" verses that are recorded at the end of chapters. Square your faith and practice with these statements of faith, "so we preach and so you believed."

24. II Corinthians 4:13. If this is the only "believe" verse in II Corinthians, it makes you wonder what the book is about. Well, read that chapter to follow. A clue is found in this verse and the larger context, that "we have the treasure of the Gospel and the rest of the Bible in earthen vessels". We would not like many itching ears teachers today with an extrabiblical word or revelation from God attract the attention to the speciality of the vessel over the message. We believe in the Bible, and we speak Bible--that is sufficient, none other messages are needed. We are reminded of this by the same "spirit of faith" that is in us as was in the OT Prophets and the Apostles like Paul.

25. Galatians 2:16. You will find as you come to the chapter on Galatians that it is the Gospel of the One Baptism. We that believe in Jesus have been justified in the sight and in the decisions of God by faith.
Have you ever asked yourself the question about the seven ONEs of Ephesians 4:4-6, the great summary of major beliefs of the Bible, why one salvation is not mentioned in there with “one faith”, “one baptism”, etc. The reason is that the “baptism” mentioned by Jesus in the Great Commission and the “baptism” fully developed by Paul in Romans, is the baptism of salvation. Unfortunately, or fortunately we will see as we come to look at baptism as a contemporary parable, we always think of baptism as water baptism. Well, that is good, and that is exactly the way it was when Jesus started His ministry in Palestine with the baptism by John the Baptist. John, considered, the last of Old Testament Prophets, and consistent with the water baptism of the Old Testament, had a ministry of preparation for Jesus centered around repentance and water baptism. This will become clearer in this chapter.

Contemporary baptism is a Drama Baptism based on the two baptisms that must follow it in order to be an act of obedience and in order to be dramatic on what it represents: first in the background of Drama Baptism must come the Baptism of Jesus--Jesus told of that baptism in Mark 10:35-45--a baptism of death, burial, and resurrection; and second in the background of Drama Baptism must come a personal change in life--the same personal change Jesus speaks of in the Great Commission of “believe and be baptized”--whereby there is a radical inward change of life similar to that of which the Apostle Paul wrote in Galatians 2:20 whereby “we are crucified with Christ (initial salvation with repentance and
fa\th\), nevertheless we live \{initial salvation with faith and 9 month new birth\}; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me \{new birth\}; and the life which I now live in the flesh \{continuing salvation in sanctification\}; I live by the faith of the Son of God \{adoption\}, who loved me \{reconciliation\} and gave His life \{redemption\} for me.

4-1: Baptism in the Old Testament.

Since "baptism" literally means a "physical process" there are many kinds of baptisms mentioned in the Bible, including in the Writing Prophets. In fact the most important baptism for salvation--the "baptism spoken of my Jesus in the Great Commission of "believe and be baptized"--let me call it "baptism of salvation" for now and I will explain it later, is mentioned in the Writings of Jeremiah and Ezekiel. {You will have trouble believing that such a distinctively Christian doctrine as "baptism" is taught in the OT if you have not come to see the NT as not a replacement of the OT, but rather as both a clarification of the OT in the light of the life and teachings of Jesus, and of course the death; and as a special Bible of Gospel for the Gentiles.

In the verse we look at from I Corinthians 10:1-4 below, there is a national baptism being spoken of, a baptism of the nation of Israel if you would. Have you ever wondered how the nation of Israel could be a chosen nation of God, and yet almost all of the children of Israel in the wilderness were denied by God "eternal rest". Yes, of the first generation of the children of Israel called out of Egypt, none were saved except Moses, Aaron, Joshua, and Caleb, and all the children under 20 years of age. \{The only difference there is that it is at a nation level so that the prediction is made of the time of Christ when the whole nation of "selfs" will be baptized.\} Consider as one example of the many different usages of the word "baptism" in the Bible, you have a "baptism into Moses in the cloud and the sea" in I Corinthians.

"Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ. But with most of them God was not well pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness." (I Corinthians 10:1-5 NJKV)

Exegesis: (1) all of our forefathers, Paul said, experienced the physical blessings from God of rescue from Egyptian bondage and personally witnessed the miracle of passing through the Red Sea on dry land; (2) all the children of Israel had a baptism "into Moses"--hardly sufficient for salvation as into
Moses and not into Christ--which here is a baptism by an immersion in the cloud and the sea; (3) all of the children of Israel, at this point after Mount Sinai you would have to call them both a “congregation” and a nation, in the wilderness wanderings for 40 years would partake of the physical blessings of food and water from God; (4) they even drank “spiritually” of the Rock of Christ--they drank but not hard enough and not long enough as constantly they were working on the more difficult task of developing “a evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God”; and (5) this national baptism was not sufficient for salvation as God was not well pleased but with a few, their bodies were scattered in the wilderness rather than being allowed in the Promised Land and a new generation--all of those under 21 years of age--would have 40 more years in the wilderness of faith testing, and most significantly according to the book of Hebrews they were not allowed to enter into God’s eternal rest of heaven. You will recall from the treatment in the book of Hebrews that the bottom line of this is that almost all that came out of Egypt, because of their unbelief, were not allowed to go into the Promised Land nor allowed to go to heaven. They all saw these miracles and works of God but not all believed. Now, you will notice the wording related to the cloud and the sea, "under the cloud" and that is called a baptism into Moses and "passed through the sea" which is also called a baptism into Moses. Perhaps this one example from the OT as made clear in the NT will open your mind to the fact of the many types of baptism in the Bible, in order that we can proceed with Paul on the most significant of all baptisms for salvation, the baptism of salvation. And just to mention a few by way of a preliminary introduction: there is Holy Spirit baptism, world baptism, Christ baptism, self baptism, and water baptism. The Holy Spirit baptism [one of the most abused Bible doctrines in belief and practice by those called Pentecostals] which happens to all Christians when they believe, it is generally called the new birth experience in the Bible, is what I am referring to here as salvation baptism. It can best be introduced by I Peter 3:21.

"The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,;) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ...” (I Peter 3:21 KJV)

This baptism is described as "not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God". Parenthetically, you will notice that to put away the filth of the flesh, immersion is required; but the baptism of which the Apostle Peter is writing, has nothing to do with water baptism by immersion, or water baptism period, it is baptism however that does save. What is the baptism that saves? Would you think that it is the same as the message of the Great Commission since Jesus gave that commission in order for disciples all
Volume 3: Believe and Be Baptized

over the world to experience salvation, “believe and be baptized”! That is the baptism that saves, and it is a different baptism from water baptism. What saves is: "the answer of a good conscience toward God". It is a response on your part and on my part, and we will continue to talk about it first on the national level as a prediction in Jeremiah and Ezekiel and then on a personal level as the fulfillment started after the Ascension of Christ. After Jeremiah and Ezekiel, and when we get back to this passage of I Peter 3:18-22, I want to develop it under 4 figures of baptism: first, World Baptism, as the passage mentions how the whole world except for eight souls was covered and destroyed with water; second as Christ Baptism as the Bible calls the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ for our salvation a "baptism"; thirdly, Self Baptism, as even as Christ died, was buried, and arose, we over ourselves are to experience a death, burial, and resurrection--more precisely in the Bible this is called repentance and the new birth; and lastly Water Baptism, as the Bible commands us to be immersed in the water as a command of obedience to the example of Christ and as a figure or representation of what has already happened spiritually to the self. (That will preach, right!)

4-2: The 4 figures of baptism of I Peter 3:18-22.

Okay, I think we have enough background from the predictions of the Writing Prophets, to go into the real thing that happened during the time of Christ and of His apostles, in particular we will focus around the Apostle Peter and the book of I Peter as found in 3:18-22. Can I read it one more time, this time in the total context; and as I do so please look for the 4 figures of baptism: world baptism, the baptism of Christ, baptism of self, and water baptism.

"For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, who formerly were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the day of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. There is also an antitype which now saves us, namely baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him." (I Peter 3:18-22 NJKV)

1. The Baptism of the World. There is always so much interest in who and where Christ preached to the souls in prison that I will deal with it up front. Many of you know that the doctrine of the Mormons is that Jesus during the three days between death and resurrection came to the land of the United States and preached to the American Indians. However, the real context is
Volume 3: Believe and Be Baptized

that He went to Hades, the place in between heaven and hell, and preached to all the souls of the world that were destroyed during the flood. The context also speaks of the patience and longsuffering of God with the people of the world during the forty years that Noah preached and prepared the ark for the great flood that destroyed the whole world. The whole world was baptized with water, and that flood of water resulted in the salvation of only 8 souls! {It is interesting how in the BIBLE AS HISTORY that Werner Keller tells of the archaeological discovery of the ark setting on mount Ararat. Well, the biblical story of the flood, of course, is recorded in Genesis 6.} Can you conceive of a world today that has so far drifted from the Bible in emphasis that it automatically thinks of “baptism” in terms of only what happens to an individual as they are immersed before a local church or sprinkled. {Of course sprinkling can in no way be considered any form of baptism since baptism literally means immersion. Parenthetically, perhaps that is part of our problem: since the most important baptism of the NT is a spiritual immersion inside the individual believer as they believe, and since the change in many individuals is more like a sprinkling change that an immersion change, we have superficial salvation in many cases instead of real salvation.} In order to stop the process of always automatically thinking of baptism in terms of what happens to a person in the local baptistry, can you conceive as a beginning a “world baptism”. Surely, you know that can not take place in your local church baptistry. So already you have opened the doors of your mental logic, to consider that beyond world baptism, there are three other distinct meanings of baptism in I Peter 3:18-22.

2. The Baptism of Christ is a figure of world baptism for salvation. Look again at the text and context of the verse above from I Peter 3. What you find there is a “baptism which saves us”; and since you know the consistent message of the Bible to be that salvation can come for the world only through Christ, then baptism here is just the Apostle Peter’s way to talk about a kind of baptism that is the salvation provision for the world. You also see this in the “by the resurrection” of Christ, knowing that this kind of baptism, alias salvation, comes through the death and resurrection of Christ. Is your brain starting to get with the Apostle Peter, and the Holy Spirit through Peter? Now, this by far does not mean that all the world is saved by this kind of baptism. Even as in John 3:16 where God so loved the world and as God gave His Son for the world and still an individual in the world must “believe” in order to receive this baptism of Christ for the world, so also the world baptism only applies with individual “believe”. You begin, I hope, to see a summary of the Bible and in particular the 14 letters of the Apostle Paul around the subject of “Believe and Be Baptized” It is only another sign of how far our doctrines have drifted from the Bible of the Apos-
tles, that we tend to think of baptism as only what happens in the baptistry. That is a form of baptism, but only one of the four baptisms. {Actually there are five baptisms if you allow for the false doctrine of the Pentecostals where they get a baptism, they claim, of the Holy Spirit after the baptism of salvation; and which most generally, they believe, leads them to talk in tongues. In reality, many of the problems that Paul dealt with in the church at Corinth, and which is recorded in I and II Corinthians, centers around the kind of self-centeredness of a group of people who think they have special wisdom, that the Word of God came to them only, or that the Word of God came out of them; and this folly of unsound doctrine is what has lead us to the common false practice of false Bible teachers today who claim to receive special revelations from God. You know what I mean, those who say “God told me” or “God gave me”. You would think that they are a Pope or a President of the Mormon Church who also claim when they speak to speak special revelations from God.}

3. The Baptism of Self is a figure of Christ’s baptism. You must see in the little parenthetical expression of I Peter 3:18-22, the “namely baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God)”, that the kind of baptism is one that takes place inwardly in the individual. It is NOT the physical water coming in contact with the outward flesh in order to make it clean. This baptism gets to the internal conscience: this baptism allows the soul and spirit of the believer to get a good answer to God; and this baptism is what comes automatically as a person truly believes. That is exactly what Mark is saying in Mark 16:16: “He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.” (NKJV) Why is a person not condemned if they are not baptized, since the second part of the verse says that they are condemned if they do not believe. Well, it is automatic: even as the inward change by God through the Spirit, so drastic as to be called “baptism” in the Bible, comes automatically with “believe”, so a failure to believe automatically prohibits the corresponding inward change.

4. Water baptism is a figure of inward baptism and the baptism of Christ. Yes the water baptism that takes place in the church baptistry is one of the 4 main baptisms of the Bible, in particular of I Peter 3:18-22. You remember it was this kind of baptism that was an essential part of the ministry of John the Baptist; and also recall that Jesus as He was baptized in the baptistry of the Jordan River, stated that this kind of baptism was done by Him as an example for others, and as an act of obedience. {This very act of obedience implies that it is a work that can be done by the individual believer; in no way related to salvation because salvation comes by “grace only”, and “not of
{any} works, lest any man should boast".}

Yes, baptism in the baptistry, at least when done by immersion, represents two historical and spiritual facts that come before it: (1) Another kind of baptism that Peter calls the world baptism of Christ—that is, salvation by the crucifixion and resurfacing of Christ—the provides for the world a baptism of salvation when accepted individually by belief; and (2) An inward change that has already occurred inside the believer.

4-3: National Baptism in Jeremiah.

A good Jeremiah introduction to this "national baptism" which later I will relate to salvation baptism is in Jeremiah 24 with the parable of the two baskets of figs. Here is what God showed to Jeremiah as recorded in Jeremiah 24. Two baskets of figs were set before the temple in Jerusalem after Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon, took the king of Judah and many others captive to Babylon.

"One basket had very good figs, even like the figs that are first ripe: and the other basket had very naughty figs, which could not be eaten, they were so bad. Then said the LORD unto me, What seest thou, Jeremiah? And I said, Figs; the good figs, very good; and the evil, very evil, that cannot be eaten, they are so evil. Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel; Like (another figure like world baptism and water baptism) these good figs, so will I acknowledge them that are carried away captive of Judah, whom I have sent out of this place into the land of the Chaldeans for their good." (Jeremiah 24:2,3,5 KJV)

This is like the parables Jesus told, then explained later to His disciples. God explains it to Jeremiah, then Jeremiah in turn through his book explains it to us. In fact, shortly before His crucifixion as recorded in the Gospels, Jesus compared the nation of Israel to a fig tree which would not yield fruit, and told additional parables and teachings on eschatology that numbered the days of salvation for Israel in a completion of the abominations of desolation of Daniel. Jesus weep over Jerusalem and Israel, a chosen place and a chosen people since Abraham; but when God promised to bless the seed of Abraham, it was singular seed representing only Christ Himself, and shortly after the crucifixion of Christ only approximately 100,000 Jews were allowed to be saved, then the nation was cut off, probably until the new Jerusalem of heaven on earth. Then just like Jesus would tell a parable to the whole multitude then take the disciples aside and explain it, God explains the parable to Jeremiah and to us. "Again the word of the LORD came unto me, saying..." (Jeremiah 24:4 KJV) So that you get the impression that Jeremiah show the two baskets before the temple at the time of Captivity, then after pondering on it for a while--like the disciples--were given the explanation. Notice God had delivered them into captivity for their own good. Recall that Jeremiah for years had preached submission to Nebuchadrez-
zar, king of Babylon, because that was the way God had planned it. Much like when God sent Joseph and the while family of Israel down into Egypt during the famine, it was for their own good. Okay, the promise and the prediction starts next.

"For I will set mine eyes upon them for good, and I will bring them again to this land: and I will build them, and not pull them down; and I will plant them, and not pluck them up. And I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the LORD: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto me with their whole heart." (Jeremiah 24:6,7 KJV)

You can not find a better description of the new birth than this "heart to know" God of Jeremiah, especially when you consider the amplifying verses of Jeremiah with the promises to both take away the stony heart and to put a new heart in His people. {Have this group of people become the Gentiles as well as the Jews. Yes, the Gentiles more than the Jews after the initial period of Acts where so many Jews were converted, then during the time of the Apostle Paul, cut off by and large with a few exceptions. \{This is the bottom line of the abomination of desolations of Daniel. Desolations from the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem, yes; desolations as the people had to flee the invading Roman Army of General Titus in 75 A.D, yes; but the desolation of all desolations was that Jews would be cut off as the chosen nation of God for salvation, while still allowed to exist as a nation, and given as usual the function as custodians of the oracles of God.\} This is what I like to call "salvation baptism". God giving them a new heart, a heart that knows God, a whole heart that knows God, and they truly become a people of God personally as more than a nation, and God is truly their God in the full sense of the word. Once again when we take a closer look at the passage of I Peter 3:18-22, I will show how this is the equivalent of the "not putting away of the filth of the flesh but the answer of a good conscience toward God"; it is the new birth; it is the baptism into Christ with His death, burial, and resurrection; it is repentance and faith; and it is what I like to when discussing I Peter 3 to call "self baptism". {Really I think I should say baptism of self, because it is not something that you can do for yourself.\} It must be your answer of a good conscience to God, but only God can give the new birth. However, I am sure that you want to know the end of the story about figs. The good figs were the people of Judah that were taken captive to Babylon, the bad figs were the ones that remained in Judah. Now, I am not sure exactly how God separated them in order to deliver the good figs into the hands of Babylon, and to keep the bad figs out. I am sure it related somewhat to what God had told them through Jeremiah, and their obedience to that decision.
"And as the evil figs, which cannot be eaten, they are so evil; surely thus saith the LORD, So will I give Zedekiah the king of Judah (remember when Nebuchadrezzar took king Jehoiachin and others to Babylon, he placed Zedekiah over the people left in the land), and his princes, and the residue of Jerusalem, that remain in this land, and them that dwell in the land of Egypt: And I will deliver them to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth for their hurt, to be a reproach and a proverb, a taunt and a curse, in all places whither I shall drive them. And I will send the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, among them, till they be consumed from off the land that I gave unto them and to their fathers." (Jeremiah 24:8-10 KJV)

Notice that God has always tried to purge the people that are called by His name, the bad from among the good whether you call them figs or wheat. (Of course, after the time of Christ He started doing things differently, said leave the chaff among the wheat, in other words leave them alone, and the separation would come at Judgment at the end of time instead of continually as in the Old Testament times.) He has always desired a small group or nation, if you will, of dedicated believers. That was part of the passage of I Corinthians 10:1-12. Let us expand what we looked at to the larger context.

"Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ. But with most of them (notice that God was displeased with "most of them", most of the people named as the people of God)...But with most of them God was not well pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness. Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted. And do not become idolaters as were some of them. As it is written, 'The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.' Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell (and Numbers 25:9 indicates there were additional deaths afterwards); nor let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents; nor murmur, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed by the destroyer. Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the ages have come. Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall." (I Corinthians 10:1-12 NJKV)

I like this figure of speech. Paul is saying that a person or group of persons, in this case the church at Corinth, can be so far out of it mentally and spiritual as to think they are standing up when in reality they are flat on the floor. When I come back to the 4 figures of baptism of I Peter 3, I would compare it to per-
sons thinking that their head is above water— that they are treading water or floating— when in reality they have sunk under the water!

4-4: More on “Baptism of Self” as Predicted in Ezekiel.

You see what God was telling Jeremiah back in Judah about this new heart, what I like to call the baptism of self, he was also telling Ezekiel who was already in Babylon captivity. This kind of consistency and comparing scripture with scripture is part of what gives us confidence that the Bible of 66 books is the Word of God.

"Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will even gather you from the people, and assemble you out of the countries where ye have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel. And they shall come thither, and they shall take away all the detestable things thereof and all the abominations thereof from thence. And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; {ah, a new spirit, so that you begin to see that the one new heart is also a new spirit and also begin to see that this could be such a change in the inward self as to call it the "baptism of self"}; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, (this would be more of the change of self as the old sinful heart of stone is removed, repentance), and will give them an heart of flesh: (a heart that is practical to live out the inwardly changed newness) That they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God. But as for them whose heart walketh after the heart of their detestable things and their abominations, I will recompense their way upon their own heads, saith the Lord GOD." (Ezekiel 11:17-21 KJV)

It should be mentioned at this point that we know that even among the people that were restored to the land of Israel after Captivity, only a remnant of the remnant received the new heart. We see that in the last book of the Old Testament, the book of Malachi; and we will come to that book in a later chapter. And then we also know that even during the life of Christ, only a minority of Israel turned to faith with a new heart in Christ. In fact, the nature of the nation of Israel as Paul tells us in the book of Romans changed dramatically: (1) the real Israel or real children of God became more Gentiles than national Jews; and (2) the kingdom of Christ became more a larger, selected entity among all peoples than on a dedicated piece of land. (We will get into this latter aspect more in the book of Daniel where the prediction is made of the kingdoms to come after Captivity. If time and pages do not permit in this volume 3, then please read volume 5 on “The Message of the Writing Prophets”.)
CHAPTER 5  Gospel in Isaiah

Matthew quotes from Isaiah approximately 17 times. Paul in Romans and Hebrews quotes from Isaiah approximately 17 times. A coincidence, I doubt it, Paul like Jesus planned ahead. And of course those 17 quotes of Matthew from Isaiah are primarily from Jesus Himself. Paul, I think, wanted to follow the example of Jesus who quoted often from the Prophet Isaiah; however, Paul did not want to go beyond His Master Teacher, the Lord Jesus Christ. And you will be surprised to know that Paul, the frequent quoter of OT Scriptures in most of his 14 books, only quotes from Isaiah in Hebrews and Romans. {That sounds like a plan also, right! Whether the Holy Spirit gave Paul that plan, Jesus gave Paul that plan in Saudi Arabia, or Paul developed that plan when back at Tarsus after His conversion and time with Jesus in Arabia, is not nearly as important as it is that we see that this is the way the Bible is!} Now, why do you think that Paul would quote from Isaiah only in Hebrews and Romans? The answer is also straightforward. Paul before conversion on the road to Damascus was a lawyer of the Hebrew nation; and since the law of the nation was the religious law of the OT, this meant he was primarily an expert on the OT law. Paul was before conversion also among that famous group of religious leaders, in fact one of the foremost of them, known as the Pharisees, who unlike the other group, the Sadducees, believed in a body resurrection from the dead. In short, Paul knew the OT Scriptures well, but only on the surface like many in the academic community today. After conversion and after time with Jesus in Arabia and during the so-called 7 silent years at Tarsus, Paul had to reread the OT in light of what he had learned from Jesus. And since salvation was something that he had just experienced and something that he wanted to explain to others, it would seem
logical to start with salvation in Isaiah; so we would ask ourselves the question of internal evidence in the Bible, is the book of Isaiah a book on salvation? Really, is the book of Isaiah a book about the Gospel? We can easily and quickly answer that question by a brief look at the 17 times that Jesus quoted from this Prophet of Prophets.

5-1: The 17 quotes from Isaiah in Matthew.

1. Isaiah 35:5-6 and 61:1 is quoted in Matthew 11:5. Actually here in Matthew, Jesus more paraphrases Isaiah 35:5-6 and 61:1 than referring to it as quote, but the wording makes clear the source as Isaiah. John the Baptist, in prison and asking if Jesus was really the Messiah as he had spoken, would recognize these words from Isaiah immediately. The "Gospel" you find in 61:1 in the Hebrew equivalent of "good tidings", and the similarity of the healing acts of Jesus concerning the blind, lame, and deaf of both Isaiah 35:5-6 and Matthew 11:5 are obvious.

   a. Matthew 11:5: “The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them.”

   b. Isaiah 61:1,2: “The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, because the LORD has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound…”

   c. Isaiah 35:5-6: “Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb sing. For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert.” {Notice the eloquence of Isaiah with the same thoughts.}

The context of Isaiah 35 leaves little doubt that Isaiah is a book of salvation with such words as “He will come and save us” (35:4b); and that Isaiah is announcing the same Gospel of the kingdom of God as John the Baptist and Mark with the words of “A highway shall be there, and a road, and it shall be called the Highway of Holiness.” (35:8). {We recognize that the “Highway of Holiness” will preach; and one of the most encouraging aspects of it besides the obvious connection to Romans, the subject of which is “righteousness by faith”, is that whoever walks this road, though a fool, will not look foolish.}

And I am sure you recognized how Jesus back at His hometown of Nazareth and when in the synagogue on the Sabbath day was given the book of Isaiah, chose to read from Isaiah 6:1,2. Luke per the written instructions of Paul in a parchments of OT quotes it directly and in entirety. Luke prefaces this quote from Jesus with the words “And He {Jesus} was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He {Jesus} found the place where it was written” (Luke 4:17), and concludes the quote from Isaiah with the words “Then He closed the
book *(Isaiah)*, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down.“ (Luke 4:20) Jesus
told His hometown, “Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.” (Luke 4:21)

It should be noted that all of Isaiah 61:2 is not in the quote of Luke 4:18,19,
although the reference in your Bible may say “Isaiah 61:1,2”. Either Jesus did not
choose to get into the “day of vengeance of our God” of Isaiah 61:2, stopping with a
“proclamation of the acceptable year of the LORD”, which is most probable, or per
the instructions from Paul in a parchment for Luke, Dr. Luke chose to leave out the
other parts of the verse. This latter was also done commonly by the Gospel writers
as you will see by a comparison of the four Gospels in a good harmony like A.T. Rob-
ertson’s. After all, it is not possible to quote all of the OT in the NT. However since
Robertson references Isaiah 2:18,19 with Isaiah 55:5-6 and Isaiah 6:1,2 as being
quoted by Jesus in Matthew 11:5, I am sure that Robertson intended that the Day of
the Lord, most generally a day of vengeance, be equated with the Gospel of glad tid-
ings. *(But you will find that Robertson was greatly influenced like most funda-
mentalists by the kingdom concepts run amuck of Darby and Scofield.)* As to
whether Isaiah intended the two be equated remains to be seen in our study. There
are several factors, besides the context of Isaiah, Romans, and Hebrews, that must
be considered: (1) often in OT prophesy the valleys and the mountains get intermin-
gled in the first few sweeps like in Daniel, then separated with the more detailed
sweeps; and (2) there is a lot of internal evidence in the OT that both good and bad
things were included in the Day of the LORD in the thinking of the Hebrew people,
as to whether God and the Prophet of God intended it that way is another matter.
In some cases they could have simply been recording a history of the thinking of the
people.

2. If we would seek to find from the NT a prime theme of Isaiah *(by the way always
the best way to learn the OT)*, we might briefly look at the first quote from Isaiah
(Isaiah 1:9) which is found in Romans 9:29.

   a. Romans 9:29: “And as Isaiah said before:  “Unless the LORD of Sabaoth
   *(of Hosts)* had left us a seed, we would have become like Sodom, and we would
   have been made like Gomorrah.”

   b. Isaiah 1:9: “Unless the LORD of hosts had left to us a very small remnant,
   we would have become like Sodom, we would have been made like Gomorrah.”

You will recall how when God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah by fire and over the
protests of Lot, after Lot failed to find one righteous person in the those large cit-
ties, there was zero remnant left; and the Prophet Isaiah looking into the future capt-
vity of Israel by first the Assyrians and then the Babylonians, where only a
remnant would return in the Restoration on Ezra and Nehemiah from Captivity, had
in mind both a physical and spiritual “very small remnant”. The book of Malachi
makes it clear that only a small spiritual remnant of the physical remnant that
returned to Palestine experienced salvation; and of course Paul, appointed by Christ
to make it clear what would happen to both Jews and Gentiles as far as salvation was
concerned, always stressed “seed” in the singular as contrasted to the larger size of
a remnant, even a remnant of the remnant of Malachi. You will find in our study of Romans that the seed is singular for Christ as Paul explains the Gospel that was preached to Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3 and Romans 4); that the seed is some cases as in descriptions of a large nation from Abraham can be like the sands of the seashore; and lo and behold that seed can be more of the Gentiles than of the Jews.

5-2: A Remnant of Israel Saved, Romans 9-11.

While we might consider the Gospel (you know how Romans is often considered the Gospel according to Paul) and the Gospel of Salvation the prime theme of the book of Romans (even of Hebrews with a thrust more for the Jews), a necessary sub-theme of that would be “what happened to the nation of Israel as the originally chosen people of God?” That sub-theme is also answered in Hebrews as well as in Romans, as you will remember how Paul explains in Hebrews how most of the chosen nation of Israel to come out of Egypt fell in the wilderness, the fall being both from eternal rest and of a home in Palestine. Of course, you might say that God in the 80 years in the wilderness--40 with the first generation and 40 more with the second--God was really making an actual nation of His chosen people built around Moses, Aaron (of course Moses and Aaron did not enter the promised land), Joshua, Caleb, and all the young people under 21 years of age; and certainly you would have a point there. Regardless, it behooves us to do some exegesis right here and now on the “remnant of Israel” from Romans 9-11, starting with the four quotes and Paul’s interpretations in Romans 9:22-33. (It is always difficult to study Paul’s letters in an outline form with divisions as the argument is most general a whole argument; and by the way when we say Paul’s interpretation, what is really meant is the interpretation from the Holy Spirit, the same interpretation Jesus gave Paul in Arabia, and the same as the ASI described in the Preface of this book.)

1. Paul formulates a minor conclusion in Romans 9:22,23: Much of the recorded history of Israel in the OT is summarized as a test of the patience, longsuffering, and the wrath of God toward a people prepared for eternal destruction (it appears that Paul has already written Hebrews on the great falling away of the people of God in the wilderness); and the rest of the story is God’s riches placed on the vessels of mercy (vessels is a key word for the destroyed ones and the recipients of mercy) which are prepared for eternal glory.
   a. These vessels of eternal destruction and eternal glory are both Jews and Gentiles; and
   b. The perspective is what God has done, or the election and justice of God that is previously developed in Romans 9; and
   c. It is an time and eternity perspective in these verses as well as in salvation in Romans and the total Bible—that is, God planned it beforehand, both the destruction and the mercy for His glory. When Paul discusses what has happened
to the people of God, it has the perspective of God looking back on what has already happened after the end of time, which is the perspective of God anyway.

2. Paul quotes in Romans 9:25,26 from Hosea 2:23 and Hosea 1:10 to show how God called Jews and Gentiles to be "My people". I think it is obvious from the context of these two books, Romans in the NT and Hosea in the OT, that we can distinguish between the "children of Israel" and the "chosen nation of Israel", many of whom fell in the wilderness, and the category of "My people" of God who experienced and continue to experience salvation. Further God in His Word has chosen another phrase to call His real elect, and that is "sons of the living God" (Romans 9:26 and Hosea 1:10).

3. The Prophet Isaiah warned of what would happen in the future of the nation of Israel, after Israel cutoff the Messiah and according to the abominations of desolation of Daniel, how the nation would grow in number and diminish in numbers for salvation; and Paul quotes from Isaiah 10:22,23 in Romans 9:27-28.

   a. The children of Israel as a nation will grow, according to Isaiah, to number like the sands of the seashore (and even as God promised Abraham to make of him a great nation);
   
   b. Only a small number, called a remnant, would actually experience salvation;
   
   c. There is a work of salvation among Israel, which Isaiah calls "the work" that God will cut short (we must go back to the context of Isaiah 10 to look in more detail for THE WORK to see if is the equivalent of the 70 weeks of Daniel that Israel has left to make reconciliation); and
   
   d. The Lord will make a short work upon the earth and of the earth, and we must recognize perhaps the most detailed description of the destruction of the earth of the whole Bible in Isaiah.

4. Paul quotes again from Isaiah (Isaiah 1:9) in Romans 9:29 to the extent that the nation of Israel would have been seedless like Sodom and Gomorrah had not God left them a small remnant called "seed".

5. You know how Paul likes conclusions and to be understood. "What shall we say then?" (Romans 9:30) What we shall say is that Israel pursued righteousness in their past history and did not attain it, and the Gentiles did not previously pursue righteousness and have attained it. The reason is that the Jews unlike the Gentiles did not pursue RIGHTEOUSNESS BY FAITH.

6. Paul says that the Jews stumbled at the stumbling stone as predicted by Isaiah in Isaiah 8:14 and 28:16. It was not that the Jews were not warned what could happen; they were told of both the stumbling away from salvation and the stumbling stone required for salvation; and they chose to ignore the message of their own Prophets.

   "Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and rock of offence, and whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame." (Isaiah 8:14; 28:16 and Romans 9:33)
5-3: From “The Bible in Context”, Two Sections from chapter 3.
Rather than to reinvent the wheel, and since we have that awesome work of an out-
line of the total Bible in chapter 3, we will utilized two of the 12 sections that out-
line the Bible that are on Isaiah. Those are entitled:

IX. What Happened to the Jews as the Chosen nation?

X. The Salvation of God

With these two sections do we not only get a summary of what the book of Isaiah
is all about, but also we get other Old Testament quotes related to the same sub-
jects outlined with them.

What Happened to the Jews as the Chosen Nation?

I. Jesus taught in parables to explain what happened to the original people of God.
   1. Jesus told the parable of the wicked vinedressers with Israel as the nation
      who rejected the rightful owner and killed His Son, Isaiah 5:1,7 and Matthew
   2. Jesus quotes from Isaiah to explain parables and the nature of Bible under-
      standing itself, and in doing so explains what most of Israel of His day could not
      understand about salvation, Isaiah 6:9,10 and Matthew 13:14,15 and Mark 8:18.

II. God as predicted in Daniel and as reinforced in Isaiah was giving Israel one last
    big chance with the Messiah, the sign would be of a virgin with child and that the
    child would be called "Immanuel" for "God with Us", Isaiah 7:14 and Matthew 1:23.
    {I hope you see how this is outlining Isaiah for us with its primary subjects
    and subject, and leading us into Romans and Hebrews.}
    1. Whoever in the world falls on this stone shall be broken {alias salvation, and
       the salvation of meekness, repentance, and faith}, and on whomever this stone
       falls is destroyed {ah, the key is the stone---Christ, and salvation in Christ
       with a righteousness by faith}, Isaiah 8:14,17 and Matthew 21:44.
    2. But Jesus called and calls "brethren" the children that God has really given
       to Him, Isaiah 8:14,17 and Hebrews 2:13.
    3. Though the number of people in the nation of Israel throughout the years
       between Abraham and Christ were numbered like sand on the seashore, only a rem-
       nant of those would be saved, Isaiah 10:22,23 and Romans 9:27.
    4. God early chose that His Son would come from the family of Abraham and
       King David, the real "seed", never changing along the way in history His mind or His
       intentions, Isaiah 11:1-10 and John 7:42 and Romans 15:12.

III. Israel up until the seventy weeks of Daniel had the same choice as the Gen-
    tiles that Christ would either be a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence to
    them, or that whoever (Jew or Gentile) believed in Him and the God Who sent Him
    would not be ashamed of that belief.
    1. If there is no life after death, in other words no “not being ashamed of
       faith”, let us eat, drink, and be merry for tomorrow we die and cease to exist, Isa-
Volume 3: Believe and Be Baptized

And in that day the Lord God of hosts called for weeping and for mourning, for baldness and for girding with sackcloth. But instead, joy and gladness, slaying oxen and killing sheep, eating meat and drinking wine: 'Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!' Then it was revealed in my hearing by the LORD of hosts, surely for this iniquity there will be no atonement for you, even to your death, says the Lord God of hosts.” (Isaiah 22:12-14)

And in the light of Paul's interpretation of this passage from Isaiah, which is really God's and the ASI, this "no atonement" can easily be interpreted as no good resurrection from the dead for Israel except for the remnant.

2. At the Second Coming of Christ death will be swallowed up in victory: Isaiah 25:8 and I Corinthians 15:54.
3. All Israel that was chosen to be saved shall be saved: Isaiah 27:9 and Romans 11:27.
4. Whoever believes in Christ, Jew or Gentile, shall not be ashamed of that faith: Isaiah 28:16 and Romans 9:33, also Romans 10:11.

IV. What God did to Israel until the time of the fullness of the Gentiles is completed.

2. Meantime the Jews continued to worship God as if it was real: Isaiah 29:13, Matthew 15:8,9, and Mark 7:6,7.
   (1). Worshiped with lips while hearts were somewhere else.
   (2). Vain worship.
   (3). Worship based on the teachings of men in the place of the doctrines of God.
3. God will destroy the wisdom of all these wise men according to the ways of the world: Isaiah 29:14 and I Corinthians 1:19.

The Salvation of God.

I. God chose the time!

1. First, there was John the Baptist saying in effect THIS IS THE TIME: Isaiah 40:3-5, Matthew 3:3, Mark 1:2,3, John 1:23, and Luke 3:4-6.
2. It was inevitable since these things were already recorded in the Word of God that they would happen: Isaiah 40:8 and Luke 21:32,33.
   (1). Most to happen during Christ's generation.
   (2). The rest on the final One Day of the LORD as the old earth and old heavens pass away.
II. God Himself took the initiative by sending His own Son to planet earth.
Volume 3: Believe and Be Baptized


2. God is faithful but He will listen to the cries of men for salvation in a time acceptable to Him: Isaiah 45:14 and I Corinthians 14:25.

3. It is inevitable that every knee will voluntarily now and involuntarily at the end of time bow and worship to the praise of God: Isaiah 45:23 and Romans 14:11.

III. Men will come from the four corners of the earth to worship God.

1. Men will come from north, south, east, and west: Isaiah 49:7-12 and Matthew 8:11.


3. Gentiles will come in large numbers in spite of the fact that God’s name has been blasphemed among them because of the Jews: Isaiah 52:5 and Romans 2:24.

4. Paul preached widely the Gospel of Christ where Christ was not already named in order that those who did not previously see and hear might both see and hear: Isaiah 52:15 and Romans 15:21.

IV. Who Has Believed the Reports from God? Isaiah 53

1. To whom has the salvation, or arm of God, been revealed: Isaiah 53:1, John 12:38, and Romans 10:16.

2. Who and how many believed the miracles of healing as Jesus took on Himself the infirmities: Isaiah 53:4,7 and Matthew 8:17.

3. Who and how many believed when John the Baptist made the report, "Behold, the Lamb of God..." (Isaiah 53:4,7 and John 1:29,36)

4. The great report of Jesus from the cross as He is made a criminal and curse for mankind, and according to the predictions of the Old Testament: Isaiah 53:12 and Luke 22:37.

5-4: The New King of Israel, Isaiah 54-66.

And since we did not get the last and important chapters of Isaiah under the two subject, we will have to go to a third, which if you look again at chapter 3 on Isaiah 54-66 is entitled "The New King of Israel". The New King of Israel would become King of the Kingdom of God, a King for both Jews and Gentiles; and the children of Israel had the same opportunity as a nation to accept Him during the life and death of Jesus on this earth as did anyone. In fact, more opportunity; because they personally saw Him and heard Him with their own ears.

I. Jews and Gentiles as citizens in the new kingdom.

1. The unmarried have more children that the married, the Gentiles have more children of God than the Jews: Isaiah 54:1 and Galatians 4:27.

2. None comes to the Father except as drawn by the Father, and all those who are taught by the Father: Isaiah 54:13 and John 6:45.
Volume 3: Believe and Be Baptized


4. All the nation of Israel that is really the Israel of the children of God will be saved: Isaiah 59:20,21 and Romans 11:26.

II. Characteristics of the New King of Israel.

1. The message to Zion is that your new King comes meekly, riding on a donkey: Isaiah 61:11 and Matthew 21:5.

2. Jesus told them in Nazareth of how the Spirit of God was upon him: Isaiah 61:1,2 and Luke 4:17,18.

   (1). God anointed Him to preach the gospel to the poor. {A King especially for the poor people.}

   (2). God sent Him to start the release of captives, and to make provisions that the blind might be able to see.

   (3). To provide freedom for the downtrodden.

   (4). To make a Proclamation as to when is the Acceptable Year of the Lord (the last days) that leads to the One Day of the LORD and Lord.

3. Happiness in this new kingdom will come only to those who first mourn because of their inability to do it for themselves: Isaiah 61:1,2 and Matthew 5:4.


1. The New Citizenship found of those who sought it not or who searched not for it (grace): Isaiah 65:1 and Romans 10:20,21.


3. The Christ, the Prophet Messiah, born in Bethlehem, Micah 5:2, Matthew 2:5,6, and John 7:42, to be:

   (1). A ruler of the people; and

   (2). A shepherd of the people.


IV. The Good News of the Gospel of the Kingdom preached by messengers.

1. How welcome across the way on the mountain is the first sight of those who come with the Gospel: Nahum 1:15 and Romans 10:15.

2. Yet most do not believe the report, foolish people without the ability to see or hear: Jeremiah 5:21 and Mark 8:18.

3. God established a House of Prayer but the nation of Israel turned it into a den of thieves: Jeremiah 7:11 and Matthew 21:13, and Mark 11:17.

4. Trust in God.

   (1). Whoever boasts, let him boast only in God: Jeremiah 9:24 and I Corinthians 1:31.

   (2). Trust only in God: Jeremiah 17:5,7 and II Corinthians 11:9.
5-5: 16 more Quotes from Isaiah in Matthew.
Since we covered one quote from Isaiah in Matthew, Isaiah 35:5,6 and 61:1 (in Matthew 11:5, remember more a paraphrase than quotation, and a summary by Jesus for the imprisoned John the Baptist), we have only 16 of the 17 quotes to briefly summarize. If we check our outline of the whole Bible, that is 3 of the 12 sections of that outline, we will find a topical or subject outline for most of those remaining 16 references.

1. Jesus told the parable of the wicked vinedressers with Israel as the nation who rejected the rightful owner and killed His Son, Isaiah 5:1,7 and Matthew 21:33, and Mark 12:2. And while this does not get us all the way to the beginning at Isaiah chapter 1, it does start with a very important subject in Isaiah 5, the subject of the Bible as a giant parable where some are allowed to understand and other are not allowed to understand.

2. Jesus quotes from Isaiah to explain parables and the nature of Bible understanding itself, and in doing so explains what most of Israel of His day could not understand about salvation, Isaiah 6:9,10 and Matthew 13:14,15 and Mark 8:18.

3. God as predicted in Daniel and as reinforced in Isaiah was giving Israel one last big chance with the Messiah, the sign would be of a virgin with child and that the child would be called “Immanuel” for “God with Us”, Isaiah 7:14 and Matthew 1:23.

4. Whoever in the world falls on this stone shall be broken {alias salvation, and the salvation of meekness, repentance, and faith}, and on whomever this stone falls is destroyed {ah, the key is the stone---Christ, and salvation in Christ with a righteousness by faith}, Isaiah 8:14,17 and Matthew 21:44.

5. But Jesus called and calls “brethren” the children that God has really given to Him, Isaiah 8:14,17 and Hebrews 2:13.

6. Though the number of people in the nation of Israel throughout the years between Abraham and Christ were numbered like sand on the seashore, only a remnant of those would be saved, Isaiah 10:22,23 and Romans 9:27.

7. God early chose that His Son would come from the family of Abraham and King David, the real “seed”, never changing along the way in history His mind or His intentions, Isaiah 11:1-10 and John 7:42 and Romans 15:12.

{I hope that you are beginning to see that almost all of the Bible outline on the three important subjects of what happened to the Jews, the salvation of God, and the new King of Israel come from Isaiah. How might we then summarize Isaiah on the Bible, and hence the primary theme of Isaiah with a summary of these three subjects? Gospel of the King and the Kingdom perhaps.}

8. If there is no life after death, in other words no “not being ashamed of faith”, let us eat, drink, and be merry for tomorrow we die and cease to exist, Isaiah 22:13 and I Corinthians 15:32. Maybe you did not also know that to be in the Prophet Isaiah. It is in Isaiah’s pronouncement of the destructive doom of the Old
Jerusalem. And in the light of Paul's interpretation of this passage from Isaiah, which is really God's and the ASI, this "no atonement" can easily be interpreted as no good resurrection from the dead for Israel except for the remnant.

9. At the Second Coming of Christ death will be swallowed up in victory: Isaiah 25:8 and I Corinthians 15:54.

10. All Israel that was chosen to be saved shall be saved: Isaiah 27:9 and Romans 11:27.

11. Whoever believes in Christ, Jew or Gentile, shall not be ashamed of that faith: Isaiah 28:16 and Romans 9:33, also Romans 10:11.

12. God gave them a spirit of slumber until the time of the fulness of the Gentiles is complete: Isaiah 29:10 and Romans 11:8.

13. Meantime the Jews continued to worship God as if it was real: Isaiah 29:13, Matthew 15:8,9 and Mark 7:6,7.

(1). Worshiped with lips while hearts were somewhere else.

(2). Vain worship.

(3). Worship based on the teachings of men in the place of the doctrines of God.

14. God will destroy the wisdom of all these wise men according to the ways of the world: Isaiah 29:14 and I Corinthians 1:19.

{And wow, doesn't the Bible make a lot more sense when you study it as a whole, and in the context of the whole!}

5-6: Matthew from the "Prophets and Apostles" Appendix.

While we have listed above 14 quotes of Isaiah in the NT, not all of these are from the Gospel of Matthew. It is necessary to look at the complete Appendix, developed in volume 1 on the "Prophets and Apostles" and repeated at the end of this volume, in order to see all the quotes in the NT from Isaiah. You will notice that Isaiah is listed in Table 10 of this Appendix. Matthew is shown in red in the section outline above so that we find in our subject outline, we have included 5 of the 16 needed quotes from Isaiah in Matthew in order to get a better feel of Jesus on Isaiah for our continued study of Hebrews and Romans; and copying the first and second columns from Table 10 of the Appendix, respectively the Old Testament book, chapter and verse and the "Gospel Established" column, which is Matthew, we have the following Isaiah and Matthew. To the right of those two columns is added one for the subject of the quote to assist in your memory and Bible study.
### Gospel Proclaimed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OT Passage</th>
<th>Quoted By</th>
<th>Matthew Passage</th>
<th>Subject of the Quote from the OT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Isaiah 2:18,19</td>
<td>Jesus</td>
<td>11:5</td>
<td>the blind, lame, and deaf--signs for John the Baptist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isaiah 5:1ff</td>
<td>Jesus</td>
<td>21:33</td>
<td>parable of wicked vinedressers who kill Son</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isaiah 6:9,10</td>
<td>Jesus</td>
<td>13:14,15</td>
<td>hearing and not hear lest they be converted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isaiah 7:14</td>
<td>Matthew</td>
<td>1:23</td>
<td>a virgin with child, Immanuel for God with Us</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isaiah 8:14</td>
<td>Jesus</td>
<td>21:44</td>
<td>falling on stone breaks, stone falls on destroys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isaiah 13:9,10</td>
<td>Jesus</td>
<td>24:29</td>
<td>shaking of stars, sun, and moon = Day of the LORD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isaiah 29:13</td>
<td>Jesus</td>
<td>15:8,9</td>
<td>worship in vain, for doctrines commandments of men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isaiah 40:3</td>
<td>Matthew</td>
<td>3:3</td>
<td>voice crying in the wilderness, John the Baptist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isaiah 40:8</td>
<td></td>
<td>17:5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isaiah 42:1</td>
<td></td>
<td>3:17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isaiah 42:1-4</td>
<td></td>
<td>12:18-21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isaiah 49:12</td>
<td></td>
<td>8:11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isaiah 53:4</td>
<td></td>
<td>8:17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isaiah 56:7</td>
<td></td>
<td>21:13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isaiah 61:2</td>
<td></td>
<td>5:4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isaiah 62:11</td>
<td></td>
<td>21:5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Some selected NOTES from Matthew and Isaiah.

1. **Matthew, also being from Nazareth like Jesus, is the only one of the NT writers who quotes from “the prophets” on how Jesus would be a Nazarene. I wonder why? This is found in Matthew 2:23, but it can not be found as to which Prophets it is quoted from as obviously it is not in our Canon of 39 OT books.**

2. **Although in Matthew 11:5 as previously discussed, Jesus is making a reply to the question of John the Baptist who begin to doubt about Jesus as Messiah when in prison, and in answering does summarize in paraphrase form the words of Isaiah 2:18,19; however as also previously discussed it is Dr. Luke under the supervision of Paul who quotes all of Isaiah 2:18,19 as no doubt Jesus did as He read from this portion of the book of Isaiah at His hometown in Nazareth.**

3. **Even as in Isaiah 5:1 and following and Matthew 21:33 and the total context and harmony of the four Gospels you must see Jesus as disgusted and weeping over Jerusalem and Israel, oft making comparison between the nature of the nation as a fruitless fig tree and as wicked vinedressers who would kill the owner of the vine-**
A good summary of the attitude of Jesus toward a city and a nation once selected as the chosen of God is given in Matthew 23:37-39.

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! See! Your house is left to you desolate: for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!'" (Matthew 23:37-39 and Psalm 118:26)

And if you don't see in this "Your house is left to you desolate" both a Curse on Jerusalem and Israel placed previously on them by God and echoed by Jesus and a similarity to the abominations of desolation of Daniel, I think you are missing something in your Bible study.

5-7: Gospel of the King and the Kingdom.

We would be lead by our outline of the total Bible to believe that Hebrews and Romans can legitimately be called the "Gospel of the New King and the Kingdom". I am sure when Paul wrote the letter to the Hebrews he had in mind many different things for the readers even as since it is a souped up version of the synagogue address that he delivered in every Roman city all over the world which also in the delivery had many distinct messages for different kinds of Jewish believers and nonbelievers, most of whom were church members; but when you consider Hebrews and Romans from the perspective of the total message of the Bible, which Paul would also have done as the chief editor chosen by the Ascended Christ, then the contribution to the total Bible message would be centered around the Gospel of the King and the Kingdom. Granted as a stand-alone book of the Bible to be studied the book of Romans is the definitive book on the Salvation of God under the key phrase "Righteousness by Faith", even these subjects support a thesis of the Gospel of the King and Kingdom as a prime subject; and granted as a stand-alone book the book of Hebrews has the grand themes of Christ as the Great High Priest, on the priesthood of believers of all believers, and is the definitive book of the Bible on the "Falling Away", so also the famous "priest of the Most High God" (Hebrews 7:1), Melchizedek, of the book of Hebrews who is the example of Jesus Christ as a Great High Priest who sits at the right hand of God to "ever make intercession for our sins", is a King of Salem as well as a priest. This High Priest argument, of course, appealed more to the Jews of the first century synagogues than to us; however, we certainly do appreciate the work that the Risen and Ascended Christ now performs at the right hand of God the Father where He always makes intercession for our sins. That is the work of a priest, the only priest, and the only intercession we need between God and us for our sins; but I would remind you that Jesus only has that access to God the Father as a Priest because He is there at the right hand of God in a position as King.
“Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. Now this is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man.” (Hebrews 7:25; 8:1, 2)

We should note now two things: (1) that “sanctuary” or “tabernacle” of Christ, certainly you will admit to be the same as the total body of Christ, the church, is approximately the same as the kingdom of Christ; and (2) when Jesus obtained a more excellent ministry than Abraham, than Melchizedek, and than Moses, it was as the Minister of a better covenant built on better promises, the new covenant based on a righteousness by faith with a corresponding baptism when the laws of God are written into hearts and minds, what we flippantly call the new birth, sanctification, and glorification. Remember that Paul was a lawyer of the Hebrew nation before conversion; and in his synagogue addresses even as in the letter of Hebrews, he makes the legal arguments of Jesus as the Great High Priest after the order of similarity to Melchizedek, Jesus as the perfect High Priest without sin although tempted like as we are while on earth, Jesus as the Minister of a New and Better Covenant which would work, unlike the old covenant that was weak through the flesh, because a new spirit would be put in persons through the new birth, Jesus as the new and better tabernacle with the new and better way into the Holy of Holies of God’s very innermost presence (at the right hand of God the Father) made possible by the better blood than of bulls and goats, the blood of Christ.

“how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.” (Hebrews 9:14)

5-8: And Baptism.

And by the way, this “cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God” is the One baptism of the Bible. It is the “be baptized” of “believe and be baptized” from Mark of the Great Commission from Jesus. It is the same water baptism that the Apostle Peter writes of in I Peter 3:21, 22. As you read it below notice that both Paul in Hebrews 9:14 and Peter in 3:21 mention “conscience” in this baptism which immediately tells you that it is something that takes place in the inward man, and how that both mention an internal cleansing that is not like an outward shower of water.

“There is also an antitype (the death of the whole world by world wide water baptism is the opposite of salvation or the One Baptism) which now saves us -- baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has
gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him.” (I Peter 3:21,22)

This is critical to the title of the book, more importantly it is a significant passage of the Word of God spoken by Peter not to make a lawyer-like argument but rather as an assumption of obvious truth. Let us pause to do an exegesis of these two verses.

1. The prime thrust of the passage starts in 3:18 with a reference to how Jesus Himself was put to death in the flesh and made alive by the Spirit, just like we say from Scriptures that water baptism symbolizes the death and burial of Jesus. Remember how we discussed in the Drama Baptism by water of a believer, there are the two baptisms in the background, first the Crucifixion Baptism of Jesus as He experienced death and resurrection, then our own Crucifixion Baptism with our crucifixion with Christ, “nevertheless we live”--our own death and burial through repentance and faith and our own “believe and be baptized” as the living spirit works in our spirits.

2. Jesus during the 3 days in the tomb went and preached to the spirits of Hades, those who died in unbelief during the Flood of OT times not having a good opportunity to hear the Gospel, and how that Noah with 7 other souls being saved by water (actually they were saved more precisely by floating on the water, the water was from this perspective more for the salvation of 8 souls than for the destruction of the whole world) is an “antitype” that “now saves us”. “Antitype” is an opposite type so that even as the Drama Water Baptism of believers is a symbol but the opposite type of the Baptist which saves, so also the Water Baptism that saved Noah and 7 other souls is the opposite of the Water Baptism which killed all others.

3. The main Baptism, the type of all types and the type to which all anti-types are compared, of which Peter writes, and which Peter defines here, is “the baptism of salvation”. It has nothing to do with a physical cleaning, or shower, from water. It is internal; it is a matter of an exercise of freedom of choice from the individual conscience; and of course “the answer of a good conscience toward God” implies that it is an answer in the proper direction—that is, the answer of the “believe and be baptized” from Jesus.

{Just remember that the Apostle Peter learned to practice the use of parables like his Master, Jesus; and how Jesus taught with a quote about parables from Isaiah, that all spiritual things—all things of the Bible—are taught in parables. Primarily this means that a parable is a simple common place and typical life story which illustrates a much greater truth of God, but also spiritual things are given in the Bible in a manner that only certain part of the public can see, hear, understand, and be converted. This is the ASI previously explained.}

5-9: The “Baptized into Christ Jesus” of Romans 6.
The Apostles always give a consistent message on the one baptism since they got it from Jesus. Like Peter writes above in I Peter 3:21,22 even so does the Apostle Paul write in Romans 6:3 and following in that famous chapter on the one baptism. {Recall how likewise it was the Apostle Peter who told us that Paul was writing Scriptures of the Word of God in the same category of Word of God like the OT Scriptures.}

"Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death." (Romans 6:3)

Is Paul talking about the Drama of Believer’s Water Baptism here? Well, it could be included in the background this time, but in the foreground is the similarity of what happens inside a believer to the death and resurrection of Christ. It is like in Galatians 3:20, in the “crucified with Christ” summary of the one baptism; and I hope that you have observed that even as Galatians gives us a summary of the one baptism of Romans 6, so also the very book of Galatians is a summary of the book of Romans.

“I have been crucified with Christ; 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 gave Himself for me.” (Galatians 2:20)

1. While we could go ahead and develop the one baptism of Romans 6, from 6:3-10 almost independent of the lawyer-like argument that Paul starts and to a certain extent concludes in Romans 6; but in all fairness to the total context of Romans and of the Word of God, the lawyer-like argument of Paul, which starts in Romans 6:1 and 2 with the lawyer like question and answer from Paul of “shall we continue in sin that grace may abound”? (6:1) and the answer of “how can we continue in what we have already died of”.

2. We looked in Romans 6:3 of a definition of the one baptism, and what else could “baptized into Christ Jesus” be but the one baptism of the Bible and of Ephesians 4, as being also a baptism into the very death of Jesus Christ Himself.

3. In this one baptism “we were buried with Him through baptism unto death” (6:4), in order that like Jesus was raised from the death of this grave by the power of God, we likewise by an inward power of God were raised to live a new life.

4. I like the New King James here in Romans 6:5 with the usage of the word “united”. We are “united together {us and Jesus, isn't that a pleasant uniting} in the likeness of His death.” And that uniting with Jesus in death demands that we are also united in His Resurrection.

5. The lawyer continues with a further explanation of the one baptism with “knowing this”: “our old man dies with Him”; in fact, “our old man was Crucified with Him” (6:6); and in fact this happened for the specific reason that we might be ridden of that old man of sin. {You can see Paul here in Romans, where he...}
Volume 3: Believe and Be Baptized

quotes and relies heavily on the OT warming up for the busting out of the seams of books like Ephesians, etc. where he will develop the concept of the new creation in Christ.)

6. There is a certain freedom of this one baptism in that we are no longer the slaves or victims of sin. (6:6b) The individual who really died with Christ, repented, believe, and was baptized by the inward Spirit in the new birth, “has been freed from sin.” (6:7)

7. “Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him” (6:8), another statement of the one baptism in other words; but now the emphasis is more on the new life in Christ.

8. More definition from the lawyer in 6:9 with a “knowing that”: Christ can only die once even as Christ can only be raised from the grave once. (You have in Hebrews 6 a similar argument to be treated later like a focal point for the commonality of the Gospel of the King and Kingdom in Hebrews and Romans.)

9. Christ died for the sins of the world, once and for all; and when you consider what Christ and God gave up, even temporarily to make that sacrifice, once and for all is enough! The life that He lives, Christ lives for God (the same message of Romans 6:10 is there for us!). And that message is: Reckon yourselves to be dead to sin and alive to God through the Lord Jesus Christ. (6:11)

5-10: The Doctrine of Baptisms and One Baptism of Hebrews 6.

(Do you think that we put up with a lot of Paul’s “lawyer-like” personality quirks in order to get the truth of God out of His arguments? Certainly, as God uses personalities of men like Paul, Amos, Isaiah, Peter, and John in the writing of His Book just as He used them in their original preaching; and what we get from Paul in the 14 books which he personally wrote and the three which he sponsored makes it very worth it. Perhaps we will understand it better if we have the chance in eternity for a few hundred years to meet Paul in person and discuss the Bible.)

Even as Paul knew personally the argument of “a veil over the eyes in the reading of Scriptures” of Romans since though a lawyer of Scripture He had failed to see Christ until the conversion on the road to Damascus, so also in Hebrew when Paul reprimands the Jews of the synagogues of how they “ought to be teachers” instead needing someone to teach them again the “first principles of the oracles of God”, he also recalled how he thought himself a teacher before he truly learned the first principles. Likewise in Romans 2 when Paul almost seems unfair to the Jews who “rest on the law and make your boast in God, and know His will, and approve the things that are excellent”, confident as a guide to the blind and as a light to the darkness, an instructor of the foolish and a teacher of babes (already in the language you see the similarities between Hebrews 6 and Romans 2, almost as from the
same format), finally leading Paul to quote from the OT in Isaiah 52:5 and Ezekiel 36:22 how because of the Jews “the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles”. (And once more you see how we can treat Hebrews and Romans as one Gospel, right now the Gospel of the King and the Kingdom, even as we were surprised to find that all of the OT quotes of Paul from Isaiah are in Hebrews and Romans. As if to say, I have quoted sufficiently in Hebrews and Romans from Isaiah, so that there is nothing more to quote; and when I stop quoting and start writing based on the conclusions of the earlier 10 books before Ephesians, then I will make it simple and clear without quotes but based on the same conclusions. Such is the case with the one baptism of Ephesians 4:4-6, and likewise the other ONEs of one body, one Spirit, one hope of the Christ calling, one Lord, one faith, and one God and Father of all. And I hope at some point to make clear two things about the methodology of Paul, no doubt directed by the Ascended Christ, in his work as chief editor of the NT: (1) the first ten books written like Romans and Hebrews were heavy in OT quotes, petering down in quote density to the writing of Ephesians and the other last four books from the pen of Paul; and (2) Ephesians is a summary of the teachings (doctrines) of the first ten books and therefore also of the OT, some of which you will also see in the parallel of Colossians, also in Philippians and Philemon.)

Now, we need to continue on the One Baptism of Hebrews 6:4-6 which is introduced with the need to be teachers of the first principles of the oracles of God (remember the one advantage Paul developed in Romans of being a Jew was that they were chosen to be custodians of the oracles of God, an obligation that this Hebrew of the Hebrews took very seriously and very personally), also introduced with an introduction in 6:1-2 of what the first or "elementary principles of Christ" are. We must take heed to this list in order to see how far in our preaching, teaching, and in our books on doctrine that we have departed from the First Principles of the Word of God as dictated in the Word itself. I recall how in a Second Baptist Church in a large Arkansas city when designated to teach a youth class with adult leaders present, how after I had gone strictly down through the book of James, almost word for word, one of those adult leaders asked the question, "Is that Baptist doctrine?" My...my... and that was years ago before we of the SBC and the kingdom of God in America got deeply into the Falling Away, long before the time did come when "they will no longer endure sound doctrine"; and all I can say them and now is that if it is part of the first principles of the Word of God that is far more important than any emphasis that have over the last several hundred of years become known to some as Baptist Doctrine. You know, we need to listen to the Apostle James again on faith and works; we need to listen to the Apostle Paul again on both the Security of the Believer and the Falling Away. If you do not understand both fundamental teachings of the Bible, then it will seem incongruous to you at first that the strongest advocate of all in His Apostolic writ-
ings of the Bible, even of the Prophets, was the Apostle Paul on both the Security of the Believer and on the Falling Away. It is the Apostle Paul who made clear in II Thessalonians, though often ignored by Baptists and others, that the Falling Away must come before the Second Coming. There is no way you jump from now to the Second Coming with a passing through the Falling Away; and it was the Apostle Paul who identified how the time will come when it is almost futile to "preach the word" as church members become intolerant of sound doctrine.

The first principles of the oracles of God (the Bible, the Word of God) are listed with the present emphasis we will make on the "doctrine of baptism", readily admitting as we have already that there is a plurality of baptisms which by the way does not include the so-called baptism of the Holy Spirit which takes place after salvation and which is the grossly unsound doctrine of the Pentecostals and other charismatics, another group of itching ear teachers that have become famous during this time of the Falling Away, and a good example of how it comes "out of their own desires" in order that (1) they draw attention to themselves and inflate their own egos in worship services; and (2) they desire an emotional experience that is instant proof of salvation and that will last them all week until the next worship so that they will not have to put out extra effort to shown the works of belief. Those other first principles are: repentance from dead works (and already we are into the one baptism), faith toward God, laying on of hands (if there was a little more of the laying on of hands in the commissioning of teachers and preachers, we no doubt would not have the horrendous proliferation of weird and itching ears Bible teachers that we have today made possible because of the toleration of the American Democratic Faith), resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. Paul says, we don’t want to lay the foundation again of those first principles, which can be summarized by the One Baptism, because we want to go on into Advanced Bible Doctrines. And then like in Romans 6, he identifies the One Baptism in terms again of the Crucifixion of Christ.

“For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame.” (Hebrews 6:4-6)

I hope you noticed in the wording the Falling Away which is one of the primary subjects of the book of Hebrews. In fact, in my LEARN CHRIST commentary, volume 4 on “Christ, Paul, and the Falling Away", I treat the doctrine of the Falling Away largely from the book of Hebrews. I see the book of Hebrews to be a book on the first Falling Away of the Hebrew children in the 40 years of their wilderness wanderings, to have many warnings to present day believers not to do the same—in other words to “beware, lest their be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God”; and the reader is encouraged to read that volume. However
beyond in the Hebrews 6:4-6 passage is the mention of the Falling Away, you should also notice the exact working of "crucify again for themselves the Son of God". That is not a coincidence; but is a careful wording based on the way the Word of God was originally written. Anyone who crucifies Jesus a second time does it only in their own puny lives and in their own puny little mind, but when the ego that has not died in Christ in initial salvation as it should have therefore becomes a legend in their own mind, it can seem that they are crucifying Christ a second time if they think they can fall away and then be renewed. The bottom line of this teaching as in all the rest of Hebrews and of Paul and Jesus on the Falling Away and the nature of the new birth is that they who fall away have not been truly saved in the first place. While they may have had a "baptism of the Holy Spirit" in the words of the Pentecostals, or many such baptisms, they have not had the one baptism of which Jesus commissioned in the "believe and be baptized"; they have not experienced if they fall away, the one baptism of Romans 6 where with Christ they die and live to a new life; they have not experienced the nine month new birth of Jesus in John 3 which like physical birth requires approximately nine months; and they have not experienced the One Baptism of Ephesians 4:4-6, the same one baptism of the many baptisms of Hebrews 6.
CHAPTER 6

“Kingdom” in the New Testament

The title above we will temporarily borrow from a combination or two or more of the 12 major subjects in our outline of the Bible, although in the course of the development of this chapter on Hebrews and Romans we may desire to modify it somewhat. I hope, at least, it is no surprise to you that we are treating in this chapter, the book of Hebrews and Romans as almost one Gospel according to Paul, the first with an emphasis for the Hebrews and the second with an emphasis for the Gentiles.

6-1: Where we Have Found Similarities in Hebrews and Romans.
I think you have come to appreciate the similarities between the Gospel in Hebrews and Romans, even as to the Gospel in Isaiah, as we have amassed the passages of such similarity, a short reminder of which is listed below.

1. Our last discussion of the One Baptism arguments of Hebrews 6 at the end of the previous chapter where Crucifying Christ only once is part of the One Baptism, and how similar that is to a similar lawyer-like discussion of Romans 6 where death and resurrection are only once. Of course, the Bible admits and presents many baptism as “doctrine of baptisms” in Hebrews 6:2, while finally coming based on the extensive arguments of Hebrews and Romans to the One Baptism, an equivalent for salvation, of Ephesians 4:5.

2. Paul’s criticism, critical but something he also had experienced, in Romans 2 of the Jews in arrogantly claimed to be teachers to the world while they blasphemed God, is similar to the babes in Christ that should be teachers of the first principles of God of Hebrews 5 and 6.
3. Based on the total internal evidence of the Bible, and this evidence to anyone who will put in the effort to check it, both Hebrews and Romans rely very heavily on quotes from the two large books of the OT, Isaiah and Psalms.

4. We are still startled by the fact that although in most of Paul’s books, he quotes from the Old, most heavily in the first ten, he quotes from Isaiah only in Hebrews and Romans. Does that tie Hebrews and Romans together as a sufficient commentary or interpretation on salvation in Isaiah, or Isaiah period.

5. In the 12 major point outline of the whole Bible, three of those 12 are dominated by Isaiah as quoted in Hebrews and Romans. In other words, approximately one-fourth of the Bible story, when you look at the total in topical outline form based on the sequencing of the OT books, is covered by a combination of Isaiah leading into Romans and Hebrews. Perhaps we should call this chapter, “The Gospel of Isaiah according to Hebrews and Romans.” You recall those three headings: (9) The Salvation of God; (10) What happened to the Jews as the chosen people of God; and (11) The New King of the New Israel.

And we will find many more such similarities as we get into the details of Hebrews and Romans in this chapter. (And to think that some academics and falsely called scholars simply because they have a Ph.D. or Th.D. and belong to the Jesus Seminar—unlike the definition of scholarship as in Emerson’s “The American Scholar”, these foolish victims of men’s wisdom while ignoring the internal evidence of both books, deny that the Apostle Paul wrote Hebrews based on his address to the Jewish synagogues, or that Paul wrote it at all. How foolish! And I hope that I can be used by God to show once again how “the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God”)

6-2: Methods of the Making of History by God.

When we say that “God works in marvelous ways, His wonders to perform” we are saying that we do not comprehend completely the way and ways that God works through history, one of those most significant ways is in the guidance that God performed in the writing of the Book of 66 books called the Bible. I think you are coming to appreciate how little we have previously understood of how the Ascended Christ in Arabia chose Paul to be chief editor of the NT, writing 14 of the 27 book of the NT and sponsoring with endowed manuscripts 3 more; and beyond that, Paul being personally aware of his own role as a prime custodian in the nation of Israel entrusted as custodians of the oracles of God, used many academic and lawyer-like tricks (these are tricks in a good sense of the word since they were under the inspiration and guidance of the Holy Spirit of Christ, on the way from God and Christ), in his methodology of writing. There is not only good evidence that during those so-called 7 silent years at Tarsus, and you know Paul recently converted and on fire with the Gospel and the instructions from Jesus in Arabia not to be the idle type, not only listed a manuscript or manuscripts
for all the Old Testament quotes to be included in the NT, but perhaps even wrote
the major body of most of the 17 books. Also included in the manuscripts would be
the testimonies of Peter and James to the life of Christ. You see, this is one reason
that I had treat seriously the efforts of Bishop Ussher or any other "scholar" to
date the writings of the letters of the Apostle Paul. They tend to confuse between
original writing, editing, distribution, and publication. It is far better to sequence
the 14 letters from Paul in terms of the most numerous quotes from the OT coming
down to a summary of the first ten in Ephesians; and with Colossians, Philippians, and
Philemon a change from quoting to paraphrasing of the rest of the Bible, his own
Scriptures and those of the OT and of other Apostles. It is maintained that this
was his major job, far beyond the significance of even his missionary journeys which
we can now see in hindsight. In other words, Paul through the Bible has influenced
far more people than the Gentile world of the Roman Empire of whom he touched a
few.

You will have to admit that Paul was quite secretive and subtle about his mythological
in the writing of Scriptures; but after all the early Christians were enemies of the
State, and any thing written by them, especially by an Apostle, would be considered
as subversive. The Roman Empire and government, even the religious leaders of the
Jewish people who killed Jesus, would not be sympathetic to the prime contribution
of the Jewish people as custodians of the Oracles of God. Like Jesus said, what one
of the prophets of the OT did the Hebrews not persecuted. The writings of the
Word of God were never popular, except briefly during a short revival, among the
people of Israel. And further more, why would the Apostle Paul add to his own
defence as an Apostle of Jesus, out of due time, the additional burden that Jesus
placed on him as a chief editor of the NT. Furthermore why would he need to tell
the people, perhaps only Peter who bore testimony to the fact that Paul wrote Scrip-
tures hard to understand, what he was doing during the 7 silent years at Tarsus. He
did ask Timothy to go by Tarsus to pick up the book and manuscripts with a cloak for
winter, and to ask Timothy to bring Mark who was profitable to him for the ministry
{the ministry is obvious that as chief editor and since he is about to be a mar-
tyr, Paul needs John Mark to write the rest of the Old Testament quotes in a
Gospel of Mark and Luke, who is still with him, to write Luke and Acts--you see
Paul would have recorded in a lawyer-like fashion a log of the missionary jour-
neys}. Besides, if the Roman opposition knew the plan of God and the plan given to
Paul by Christ for all of those 17 books to come together as a NT Canon, with the 39
books they quoted from of the OT, then go beyond the Empire in influence and time,
they would have--like those who claim to be gods should--work more diligently to
destroy both the letters and the plan. (I am not even sure that Satan, the prince
of this world and the power of supernatural destruction, knew the potential for
good and the Gospel that the letters would have as they came together as a
Bible, a Canon of Old and New Testaments. That is, until at least more
recently, say within the last three hundred or so years as he like all has seen
the Bible go in written form, with the Gospel, to every nation in the world; and it is through the tares of the churches and the kingdom, both academics and non-academics, that he has increasing waged spiritual terrorism as the enemy, as Jesus told in the parable of the tares and wheat, that has put the tares in the field of the kingdom.) It is out now; and Satan through teachers with “itching ears” is heaping up a vast fortress and army of tare-teachers to give the other tares what they desire as they become intolerant of sound doctrine, and to deceive, if possible, even the elected wheat of God. And if you can not, based on the parable that Jesus told and explained on the tares and the wheat, see that Satan is the enemy that puts the tares of spiritual terrorism in the churches and in the larger kingdom, then you have missed a deep, Biblical understanding of the Falling Away, and this probably means that you have even neglected completely the doctrine of the Falling Away as part of the Bible. Certainly, your preachers and teachers have neglected it!

I am going to make another hypothesis here that we will test in the coming chapters; and this is that a thread of continuity to what Paul wrote, and in what he passed on to John Mark and Dr. Luke, is centered around the word and concepts of the “kingdom of God”. Granted that while “kingdom” is not a dominant word of the writings of Paul like “believe”, “righteousness”, “faith”, law, works, and even “baptism” and “doctrine”, it is a persistent word like a thread that runs throughout all of his 14 books. Well really, the word “kingdom” per se is only in 9 of the 14 books from Paul: Romans 14:17 where the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; I Corinthians 4:20 where the kingdom of God is not in words but power; I Corinthians 6:9 where the kind of sinners including the unbelievers are identified as those who can not inherit the kingdom of God; 15:24 where Christ delivers up the kingdom of God to the Father in order that the Father might be all in all; 15:50 where flesh and blood only without the prerequisite 9 month new birth can not inherit the kingdom of God; Galatians 5:21 where any Gentile that does such things so identified by the Apostle, and recognize as works of those without the salvation personal experience, do not have any inheritance in the kingdom of God, with or without a Falling Away or any claims of a re-crucifixion of Christ like the false doctrine of Methodists of falling from grace {and perhaps this is one reason Baptists have been scared away from the Bible doctrine of the Falling Away}; Ephesians 5:5 where those who have not properly learned Christ, by hearing Him personally and being instructed by Him personally, have not inheritance in the kingdom of God; Colossians 1:13, of course being a parallel of Ephesians, where God has translated or conveyed us into the kingdom of “the Son of His love”; Colossians 4:11 where some of Paul’s only fellow workers in the kingdom of God are listed (by the way, if we had time in this commentary, and the time for the proper research, the many names that Paul lists in his books would be another subtle way, especially when cross referenced from book to book and with Acts, to show consistently in the writings of Paul--of course, immediately we see the importance of John Mark,
the cousin of Barnabas, and how he is to be welcomed even though the first
churches knew of his desertion during the first missionary journey; and of
course, good ole faithful Dr. Luke is mentioned also as always with Paul, and
how Paul honored by making him the author of two books of the NT, Luke and
Acts); I Thessalonians 2:12 where church members there are encouraged to walk
and live worthy of the God who called them into His kingdom and glory; II Thessalo-
nians 1:5 where a similar argument is made of being worthy of the kingdom of God,
something that surrounded by tares in our present day kingdom and churches, we
also must heed, making some efforts to separate and disassociate ourselves from
such enemies of Christ in the churches; II Timothy 4:1 where the twin encourage-
ments to "Preach the Word" are made--first because of the inevitability of Jesus
Second Coming and Second Appearance to Judge the living and dead, called at "His
appearing and His kingdom" (while Jesus established His kingdom as the kingdom
of God while on the earth the first time, it will become obvious as He rules as
King over that kingdom at the Second Appearance); II Timothy 4:18 where Paul,
facing trial and execution knows that God will according to His will and plan either
preserve Paul as He has done many times previously and as recorded in the book of
Acts, or God will make sure that the real Paul is “preserved” for God’s "heavenly
kingdom"; Hebrews 1:8 where God at the same time He announces Jesus as His Son,
telling all the angels to worship Jesus as such, tells about the scepter of Christ’s
kingdom, a scepter of righteousness--explaining that as a habit of Jesus whereby He
loves righteousness and hates lawlessness; Hebrews 11:33 is more the secular use of
the word kingdom, like many of those in the book of kingdoms of Daniel, where men
and women of faith, the many witnesses of acts of faith that surround us like a
cloud, subdue "kingdoms"--of course, the major reference to which Paul would be
speaking as a lawyer extremely familiar with his own nation’s history would be the
kingdoms conquered by the Israelites after they developed during 80 years suffi-
cient faith to subdue, also perhaps the victories of Saul, David, and Solomon; and
finally in Hebrews 12:28 where "we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken"
when the whole earthly kingdom and universe of earth and sky are completely shaken
at the end of this age. By way of summary, we would have to say that the kingdom of
God and of Christ was always in the mind of Paul; and knowing that Jesus teachings
had thorouigh covered the concepts of the kingdom, except for what the Apostle
John would add later in Revelation, almost left alone a thorough definition of the
kingdom, except in what he left for John Mark to write Mark and Dr. Luke to write
Luke and Acts, and what in many cases was based on the OT quotes that Paul left for
them.

6-3: Last Word on the “Kingdom” from John in the book of Revelation.
We should be excited to know the bottom line of the Bible about the "kingdom of
God and of Christ" in the book of Revelation. Surely with the emphasis on Revelation
on “last things” or eschatology, it will be talking about the finalized form of the king-
{Aren't you also curious to see whether it will be called in Revelation, the kingdom of God or the kingdom of Christ?} If we were to try to trace the development in the Bible of the kingdom of God concept, of course we would look to Daniel and the book of Psalms. It is Daniel, the statesman of Babylon and Persia, who presents the rise and fall of major kingdoms like Persia, Greece, and Rome; but primarily establishes the kingdom of the "Son of Man" {a favorite name for Christ} in its finalized form, "Then to Him {the Son of Man coming with the clouds of heaven} was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages shall serve Him." (7:13,14)} With the establishment of the everlasting kingdom {the word of Daniel is “dominion”) which shall never pass away (7:14), we see the kingdom of God in its ultimate and finalized form, the same form we know from I Corinthians 15 to be where Christ delivers the kingdom to God the Father in order that God may be all in all. Can the book of Revelation really go further than that, or does the Ascended Christ and the Apostle John desire to go beyond that in Revelation since there has to primarily be a message of comfort and encouragement for those undergoing the Great Tribulation. {The Great Tribulation, that period of Matthew 24 foretold by Jesus, as a time that none of the elect would survive except by the shortening of God, was in the first few centuries, but the Final Tribulation, both of which have some similar characteristics, is near the end of the age during the Falling Away, a tribulation that is as much natural, and on all inhabitants, as the universe disintegrates, as the Holy Spirit is withdrawn from the earth allowing Satan to be loosed, as the power of the holy people is completely shattered, and of course, the believing wheat will suffer mentally and spiritually as the love of the many tares waxes cold and sin abounds.}

1. For the Apostle John like Paul, the "kingdom of Jesus Christ" (Revelation 1:9) was an assumption like water, bread, or light. When John identifies Himself, His location, and what happened to him in exile on the isle of Patmos, he does so as "I John, both your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ" because he preached the Word of God and gave the testimony of Jesus. John as those to whom he wrote were companions in the tribulation, something of which during this period it would be impossible to ignore since they were hunted down, tortured, and killed like animals; and at least equal with the tribulation was the concept of the kingdom, here called the kingdom of Jesus Christ. {Of course we also know it to be the kingdom of Christ way back in Daniel, although Son of Man is used instead of Christ. However we know during the life and teachings of Jesus on earth about the kingdom, from Jesus it was primarily the kingdom of God; and by the way Jesus also often referred to Himself as the Son of Man.}

2. Okay since in the next we jump to Revelation 11:15, and we know that to record the most end of all end events, we expect to see the kingdom in finalized
form, wondering whether it will be called the kingdom of God or of Christ. \[\text{It is almost the same since inevitably according to II Corinthians, Christ will turn the reign all over to God the Father.}\] And indeed what we do see here, in settled form although still in our future, is the very act of the kingdoms of this world being turned over to the “kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ”. \[\text{Notice that both are mentioned, and that this is at the sounding of the final and seventh trumpet!}\]

3. When we come to look at kingdom in Revelation 12:10, it is the “kingdom of God”, in other words already delivered by Christ to the Father; and you must appreciate the time scale jumps in these last few chapters of Revelation. It is more like the time perspective of God Himself where the future and past intermingle, where something already settled in heaven is as good as settled on earth, and one day is a thousand years and vice versa, and what is happening in heaven or has happened intermingles with earth. Satan and His angels war with Michael and His angels, the end result is that Satan and His angels are cast out of heaven. Recall that at the beginning of chapter 12 the war is announced between the seed of the woman and Satan, the same war predicted in Genesis 3:15 where Satan bruises the heel of Christ and Christ bruises his head, a war that continues until the end of the age; but the victory of the kingdom of God and “the power of His Christ” is assured at the very moment of the Crucifixion as this act cast down Satan, along with the work of the angel Michael in heaven, from day and night being an accuser of “our brethren”.

4. The reference to kingdom in Revelation 16:10 is in the middle of the final disintegration of this earth, with judgments of the fifth bowl of darkness and pain, where the kingdom of the beast becomes a kingdom of darkness.

5. In Revelation 17:10 the mention of kings and kingdom is an earthly and secular matter, initially for 10 kings or Caesars of Rome, of course called Babylon for any large and wicked city; but which in the final sweep of time, must be other large and wicked cities of the world. And 17:17 is similar with the awesome warning that the kings of these kingdoms are under the control of God in that He in order to fulfill His own purpose as the Great Maker of History, has put in their hearts and made them of one mind to give their kingdom to the beast, Satan, until the fulfillment of all the end time words of God.

First Words from Jesus on the Kingdom of God as Paul guided Luke to Write. Matthew, where kingdom is mentioned 54 times, or Luke where kingdom is mentioned 44 times \[\text{(and this would be very close like Mark to the direction of Paul)}\] could be chosen to clarify the teachings of Jesus on the kingdom. We will take a quick look at Luke since his writing was also under the guidance of the Apostle Paul. In Luke 1:33 the same angel Gabriel sent to Daniel was sent to Nazareth and to the virgin Mary to announce the birth of Jesus, about Whom Gabriel said: \(1\) He will be great; \(2\) He will be called the Son of the Highest; \(3\) the Lord God will give Him the throne of
His father David (you know we must later look at Psalms from David to see about this kingdom of David since we know all too well that Jesus refused to set up a secular throne in Palestine exactly like the secular throne of David); (3) He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and (4) “of His kingdom there will be no end.” In Luke 4:5 we are astounded that Satan has the power to take Jesus up on a high mountain and “in a moment of time” show Him all the kingdoms of this world; in 4:43 it is the “kingdom of God” which Jesus says that He must preach to all cities since that was the very purpose for which God sent Him (this is interesting, preach not the gospel of the kingdom of God as Mark begins, but to PREACH THE KINGDOM OF GOD, and how much preaching of the kingdom of God do you hear today? You hear church, you hear denomination, but no kingdom of God--how strange the way our Gospel has drifted from the preaching and teaching of Jesus Himself, it must be part of the Falling Away); in 6:20 Jesus pronounces the blessing on the poor in the Sermon on the Mount as they are the unique recipients of what, “the kingdom of God”; in Luke 7:28 we see how there was a definite change in the kingdom of God between the last OT Prophet, John the Baptist, and during the teaching and preaching of Jesus like here where He says that even “the least in the kingdom of God” is greater that this among the greatest Prophets--simply because something has happened on earth with the presence there of Jesus (the least or last in the kingdom have become greater than the greatest of the Old Testament, no doubt in benefits); afterwards in 8:1 Jesus went into every city and village preaching the “glad tidings” of what, “the glad tidings of the kingdom of God” {can we not again today regain the preaching and teaching of these same glad tidings of the kingdom of God, even using that word over church or denomination, instead of this current assault heaped up on our ears by the vast throng of itching ears Bible teachers}; in 8:10 Jesus teaches in parables for the Semi-Public as He wants us to know “the mysteries of the kingdom of God” {do you really and sincerely think that there is any less need in this day of vast churches and denominations for us to know the mysteries of the kingdom itself, you see we must wonder about some of these churches and denominations, especially during the Falling Away, but we know the kingdom of God to be of God and of Christ, Amen!}; in 9:2 we read what Jesus sent out the 12 disciples to do, (1) “preach the kingdom of God”, and (2) heal the sick {can we as disciples today preach anything less: you know somehow we have a concept of historical evolution which tells us falsely that we have so developed in our denominations, that we no longer need to act like Jesus and the disciples--that we have gone beyond that, and that is a large lie from Satan}; in Luke 9:11 that is what Jesus did, He spoke to the multitude about the “kingdom of God” and healed the sick; in Luke 9:27 we have a visual of the kingdom of God, something is going to happen on this earth and during the time Christ is here that will truly mark the real beginning of the kingdom of God on earth, a time in which the least can become greater than the greatest, and since Jesus a few verses before is talking about His death and
resurrection, that must place us in the same time zone; and of course, we are some-
what led astray when the verse just before that speaks of the Second Coming since
now we know that none of these disciples have lived long enough to see the Second
Coming---so we wait and look for more in Luke and the rest of the Bible on the king-
dom of God, suspecting, of course, that the reference is to the Coming of the Holy
Spirit in great power and glory on the first day of Pentecost after the Ascension,
the beginning of the last days and the real time on earth when Satan was bound by
the presence here in a large way; in Luke 9:60 called another disciple beyond the 12
telling him to "go and preach the kingdom of God", so that so far we have Jesus
preaching the kingdom of God, the 12 apostles sent out to preach the kingdom of
God, and now additional disciples sent out to preach the kingdom of God---at some
point we must identify, and I hope Paul like in so many other things on the details of
doctrine will help us there, what exactly do you preach when you preach the kingdom
of God---in other words, we want an outline of the kingdom of God; in Luke 9:62, the
preaching of the kingdom of God is more important than attendance at funerals or at
preaching funerals; Luke 10:9, 11 as Jesus teaches 70 disciples what to do tells them
also to heal the sick and to tell the people "the kingdom of God has come near you",
so that we know the kingdom of God to be very close---we have progressed from Old
Testament Prophets the last of which was John the Baptist, to nearness now of the
kingdom, and to those who will see the kingdom of God on the first day of Pentecost
after the Ascension with the initiation of 3,000 new members into the kingdom; in
Luke 11:2 we now what the way we are taught by Jesus to pray that the "kingdom of
God" has not yet come, "thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in
heaven", and that the coming of the kingdom of God in the fulness on earth can not
be done until the will of God is done by every remaining soul; in Luke 11:17 it is a ref-
erence to a characteristic of every kind of kingdom, secular and spiritual, in that if
it is divided against itself it can not stand; in Luke 11:18 Satan also has a kingdom,
unfortunately his kingdom of tares is less divided than the kingdom of God where
the tares grow with the wheat ("the children of this world are wiser than the
children of light"); in Luke 11:20 the kingdom of God has actually come upon Jesus'
generation to the extent that Jesus uses "the finger of God" to cast out demons; in
Luke 12:31 we are to seek first and by way of priority over things, the kingdom of
God, and by the way God's righteousness (so I think we have a real key to how to
preach the kingdom of God, by preaching God's righteousness, and something we
know especially in Romans, even in Hebrews, that Paul did very well); in Luke
12:32 Jesus tells His children not to fear as it is the pleasure of God to give us the
kingdom--and this is far more we must note than spiritual, no doubt alluding to some
of the benefits of the new kingdom in the new earth under the new heavens and with
at least visits to the new Jerusalem; in Luke 13:18 Jesus tries to get us closer to an
understanding of the kingdom by talking about what it is like--it is like the small
mustard seed that grows into a large tree; in Luke 13:20 another likeness to the
kingdom, like leaven hidden in a much large measure of meal which it leavens all of; in
Luke 13:28 you see the kingdom of God as where Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the Prophets are now and will be when those listening die have the opportunity to see them but not be with them; in Luke 13:29 men will come from the east and west to sit down together in the kingdom of God after the end of this age, but also during the time when believers pass away like as Abraham and the Prophets; in Luke 14:15 someone not identified mentions the blessing of breaking bread in the kingdom of God, and I am afraid it is Judas Iscariot, since Jesus quickly tells the parable of the Great Supper where many are invited and make excuses not to come and then the invitation goes out to compel the general public to come in—no doubt, the first that are personally invited are the Jews and the second that are compelled at the Gentiles as we know from Daniel, and Jesus explanations, that shortly after the Messiah was cutoff, Israel was also cutoff; in Luke 16:16 we have another major division of time like that of John the Baptist as the last Prophet and the least in the kingdom greater than John, in that the two divisions now are (1) the time of the law and the prophets right up until John and (2) the preaching of the kingdom of God from that time on with everyone pressing to get into the kingdom of God; and in Luke 17:20 the Pharisees asked a very good question as to “WHEN THE KINGDOM OF GOD WOULD COME?” Jesus’ answer should help us! “The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, ‘See here!’ or ‘See there!’ For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you.” (Luke 20, 21)

In Luke 18:16 identifies two characteristics of future members of the kingdom of God: (1) they all have certain child like characteristics in the sense of being led around by God and Christ, or we might say shepherded or even Lorded over; and (2) they all must have the same kind of faith of a little child, trusting and simple and without reservations. In Luke 18:24 it is hard for the wealthy to enter the kingdom of God because they trust in their riches more than in God; in Luke 18:29 those who lose relatives and land and houses for the kingdom of God in this life shall receive more of them and also eternal life in the life to come; in Luke 19:11 Jesus tells a parable of the “minas” (sometimes called talents) to counter what the people of Jerusalem thought about the kingdom of God, “because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately”; and again Jesus is telling the Jews, especially the Jerusalem over which He wept, that the minas given to them shall be taken away and given to the Gentiles with the bottom line of “those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them” (19:27) to be slain before Christ.

In Luke 21:10 as near the end of the life of Jesus draws near and the time allowed for teaching except for the 40 days of appearances after His resurrection, we would expect that if the teachings of the kingdom of God are that important, Jesus will tell us much more; and indeed we do come to many of the eschatological teachings of Jesus, first in 21:10 of the more immediate secular kingdom against secular kingdom which will continue to the end of the Age, then in 21:31 a time for
disciples to know that the kingdom of God is near (of course in the sense of the Second Coming of Christ), those signs like the fruit of the fig tree have previously been identified by Jesus as the sun darkened, the moon, the stars, chaos and distress between nations with the shaking of heaven and earth, second in 22:16 during the Lord’s Supper that Jesus will no longer eat of the Passover until the kingdom of God is fulfilled.

“When the hour had come, He sat down, and the twelve apostles with Him. Then He said to them, With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I say to you, I will not longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.” (Luke 22:15,16)

The key word is “fulfilled” for the kingdom of God which although inside us now is completed at the Second Coming of Christ. Of course, it keeps get fuller and fuller and nearer and nearer during the life of Christ, with the three thousand saved in a single day on the first day of Pentecost after the Ascension, and on through the thousands of years until today, no doubt the growth of which will be slowed down during the Falling Away as the power of the holy people is completely shattered, and there will be a period of refinement; but I am sure, some measure of continued growth event though the Holy Spirit is withdrawn from the earth, the only remaining Holy Spirit being in the heart of believers, however after the Second Coming as all believers are gathered by the angels across the universe, there will be a vast multitude that no man can number of kingdom members.

What did we miss of Luke on the kingdom? Luke 22:29 where the 12 apostles {a slight modification, of course, after Judas fell by transgression} will each receive a kingdom like Jesus does from God. They will sit on 12 thrones judging the 12 tribes of Israel at the time when the first shall become last, and vice versa, the least the greatest, and vice versa. Beware, you TV performers of taking for yourselves the great places in the kingdom, and you of large churches and denominational leadership, beware of taking the first places, you just very well can be in the kingdom of God not only a castaway tare but also the least and the last. And the Joseph of Arimathea, a council member of the Sanhedrin, a just and good man, who dissented in his vote to put Jesus to death also provided a tomb for the body of Jesus is identified by Dr. Luke as a man who “was also waiting for the kingdom of God” (23:51)

6-5: Checking the OT quotes in Luke for the concept of the Kingdom.

We know that the primary influence Paul would have on Dr. Luke in the writing of Luke would be in the manuscripts left him, and there primarily in a listing of OT quotes to be included in his version of the Gospel. Just before we pass from Luke to Acts, we should also briefly check the OT quotes in Luke for what concepts could legitimately be in the mind of the people from the OT when Jesus taught them. We already know from the start of Luke with the announcement of the birth of Jesus by
Gabriel to Mary that the kingdom of Jesus would have no end. \{By the way we already know from the book of Revelation that "dominion", also from Daniel, is an alternative word for kingdom, and we should consider others.\} If we look through the Tables of the Appendix, our OT book outline of the Bible, checking for Luke references.

1. The everlasting covenant of God with Abraham that included the land of Palestine for the Jews forever in Luke 1:67-73 and from Genesis 17:7. Although they broke the covenant with God, and besides the several captivities as temporal punishment were banned for the kingdom of God shortly after the cutoff of the Messiah, the covenant of the land remains theirs both through time and primarily after the Second Coming with the 12 apostles shall rule there over the 12 tribes. We have here a prophecy by Zacharias, father of John the Baptist \{if John the Baptist was the last OT Prophet then Zacharias was the next-to-the-last\}, as he was filled with the Holy Spirit, and as we would expect with other words this will give us much insight into the concept of the kingdom of God. (1) The Lord God of Israel, about Jesus and John the Baptist, has visited and redeemed His people; (2) God raised up a "horn of salvation" from the house of His servant David; (3) God since the world began spoke through His holy Prophets that "we" should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all who hate us \{we do not now yet as to how much Zacharias understood of the enemies, of the real people of God, and of the real nature of the kingdom\}; (4) God is going to perform the "mercy" promised to our fathers, to remember His holy covenant \{and surely Zacharias must have had in mind how the Prophets had changed the nature, at God's instructions, to include Gentiles and to include a new inward heart to fulfill righteousness\}; (5) Being delivered from their enemies, they might serve God in righteousness and holiness before Him all the days of our lives \{so certainly Zacharias knows enough of the OT to recognize the benefits to be eternal, perhaps also that the real enemies are sin, Satan, death, and separation from God\}; (6) Zacharias points to his son John as the last Prophet of the Highest who will precede the Lord and prepare His way to give knowledge of salvation \{that has to include the kingdom if it gives knowledge of salvation, also of righteousness\} to His people, and by the remission of sins; and (7) guide their feet in the way of peace, certainly that peace is the way of the kingdom.

2. Luke and Jesus quote from Isaiah 6:9, "seeing they may not see and hearing they may not hear", after Jesus explains that only disciples are to understand the deepest secrets of the kingdom, called "mysteries": and only the secrets in that God had not made it fully known.

3. Certainly a King requires a kingdom, but to what extent were the multitude of disciples that Luke writes about in Luke 19:38 correct is saying because of the mighty works they had seen, "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the LORD!" And they must have been right because some of the Pharisees called from
the crowd for Jesus to rebuke His disciples, Jesus replied that if they were silent the stones themselves would cry out.

4. The stone which the builders rejected, selected by God as the chief cornerstone, Jesus quoted from Psalm 118:22, could be a chief cornerstone of a kingdom as well as of a temple. If we look in the context of Psalm 118:22, David does mention "nations", "gates", and the nation of Israel.

5. While neither king nor kingdom are mentioned in Luke 20:42,43 as Jesus quotes from Psalm 110:1 in order for the LORD God with the Lord Jesus to sit on an implied throne there has to be a kingdom for both, and when God through David and with the repeat of Jesus says that He is going to make the enemies of Christ a footstool, that of course implies a rule, reign, and a fulfilled kingdom.

6-6: The “Kingdom” in Acts and from Paul to Dr. Luke.

Kingdom in Acts is found only 8 times, but I think that we will find those 8 very informative.

1. For example during the 40 days after Jesus’ Resurrection and before His Ascension what do you think Jesus talked to the apostles about; yes, “speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God” (Acts 1:3).

2. The Apostles never gave up in wanting Israel to be restored as a kingdom, asking Jesus as recorded in Acts 1:6, “Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” We don’t know what Jesus thought, only what He said, two things: (1) it is not for you to know the time and the seasons, only the Father, and I think that perhaps the place of Israel in that kingdom was not for them to know either, although they already knew that the 12 apostles [I think Paul really took the place of Judas as the twelfth Apostle more than Matthias] would rule over the 12 tribes; yet they were asking for more than that, they were asking for a restoration of Israel to a kingdom like David ruled over and on this earth; and (2) they would receive empowerment from the Holy Spirit to witness to Jesus over all the earth. [I wonder if Jesus did not decide that very moment to call the Apostle Paul to make clear the full implications of the kingdom of God.]

3. We have a unique opportunity for a precise definition of the preaching of things concerning the kingdom of God (Acts 8:12) in Samaria, because before this summary statement there is a description of the preaching of Philip there. Let’s see, what Philip the evangelist preached was: (1) the word (8:4); (2) Christ (8:5); and (3) the healing which he practiced like Jesus said in the Great Commission would happen.

4. Saul and Barnabas on the first missionary journey and at Derbe where "they preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples" (14:21,22) went back to the cities of their journey like Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch where they strengthened the souls and exhorted them to continue in the faith centered around the
teaching, “We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.” Thus the entrance was for the future though still within us, and the way of entrance was through many tribulations. It reminds one of the teaching of Jesus about the narrow way that leads to life eternal, the way few go, and the broad and easy way that leads to destruction with the many which go that way.

5. Well, things concerning the kingdom of God must not be quick and easy; because Dr. Luke tells us in Acts 19:8 how it took Paul 3 months, on his second missionary journey, to reason and persuade the synagogue there “concerning the things of the kingdom of God”. Some were hardened and did not believe, further they spoke evil of “the Way”. Paul took the disciple from the synagogue to a certain school of Tyrannus where Paul taught for 2 years, all of Asia, Jews and Gentiles, hearing “the word of the Lord Jesus.”

6. When Paul called the Ephesian elders to Miletus for a Pastor’s Conference, what he wanted them to remember was his preaching of the “kingdom of God” (Acts 20:25) as he told them that they would see his face no more. And once again we have a more detailed description from Paul himself to the pastors of Ephesus on what that preaching was in the account of 2):17-38: (1) the way Paul lived was part of his preaching, serving the Lord with all humility and with many tears and trials caused by the plotting of the Jews; (2) Paul kept back no teaching or doctrine from them, teaching publicly and from house to house; (3) preaching repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ to both Jews and Greeks; (4) chains and tribulations await him in Jerusalem; (5) Paul wants to finish his race with joy, not counting his life dear to himself; (6) Paul wants to finish “the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus” (and what do you think that ministry might include, the instructions in Arabia received from Jesus Himself?); (7) Paul declared the “whole counsel of God”, being therefore innocent of the blood of all men; (8) the Holy Spirit has made these pastors “overseers” of the flock, and they are to take heed to that flock and to themselves; (9) they are to “shepherd” the “church of God”; (10) the church of God is that which Jesus purchased with His own blood; (11) Savage wolves will come in among them and the flock, scattering the flock; (12) Also men will rise up from among the flock who speak perverse things; (13) These men will speak these perverse things in order to draw disciples after themselves; (14) Watch and remember how for 3 years Paul warned everybody night and day with tears; (5) Paul commends the brethren to God and to the word of His grace; (6) this word and grace are able to build them up and to give them an inheritance among all those who are “sanctified”; (7) Paul did not love money and did not covet anyone’s silver and gold or their clothing; (8) with his own hands Paul provided for his necessities and for the necessities of those with him; (9) Paul showed by example and in every way, by laboring, that you must support the weak--indeed, this is the cup of water of Jesus that Paul took seriously; and then quotes to that extent from Jesus (10) that it is more blessed to give than to
receive; and (11) Paul knelt down and prayed with them. We are in for exciting things as we look into Hebrews and Romans for these things pertaining to the kingdom, and with OT quotes, for we see that the preaching of the kingdom involved much more than thought at first.

6-7: Our Bible Outline on the Gospel of the King and the Kingdom.
Indeed, I think after this preliminary context of the Bible on the kingdom, especially in the teachings of Jesus, we are really to get into the teachings of the Apostle whose ministry it was to make things clear based on the Old Testament, and whose ministry it was to personally write 14 out of 27 of the NT books, sponsoring 3 others. We will do it in much the same manner that the Apostle Paul started his research for those books during the 7 silent years at Tarsus where he recorded on parchments all the OT quotes that he would later include in books. Of course, we have that body in our total Bible book outline of the Appendix, but now we focus largely on where Paul quotes from the OT in Hebrews and Romans. We found a large bulk of that was in the 3 out of 12 topical outline based on the book outline, and previously decided that for now that can be summarized as the Gospel of the King and the Kingdom. Those three sections of the topical outline are included here for further development and expansion. {You will also recall that the topical outline comes from chapter 3. The three sections are actually treated and continued in the next chapter, “Gospel of the King and the Kingdom”, primarily from Romans and Hebrews.}

6-8: “Believe” in the Letters of Paul Continued.
26. Galatians 3:6. The necessity of salvation of baptism by faith is not new in the New Testament. In the Old Testament Abraham believed God, and that belief before there was any written law or religious practices was counted by God as righteousness. That is the primary way Abraham has become the father of many nations. We Gentiles need faith in God like Abraham had! As a matter of fact so do almost all of the Jews.

27. Galatians 3:22. You didn’t think of the Bible as placing a confinement or restriction or binding on our lives. Yes, it confined us under sin; so that the Bible like a schoolmaster might bring us to faith in Christ for salvation, not trusting in corrupt selves as a way of salvation; the promise of faith in Jesus Christ, given to Abraham, and to all who believe becomes a God-preferred method of salvation.

28. Ephesians 1:13. You trusted in Jesus when you heard the word of truth; you recognized this as the good news or Gospel of your salvation, and “having believed” you were sealed in the one baptism “with the Holy Spirit of promise”.

29. Ephesians 1:19. We who believe have not begun to tap the resources of the one baptism, the full extent of the greatness of God’s power toward us. Put that in your Biblical statement of faith.
30. Philippians 1:29. Even as I and II Timothy can be called the presentations of bad church behavior with many human frailties of church members and unsound doctrines mentioned, so Philippians can be called as you will find in the chapter on Philippians, the letter of good church behavior. You have been given two privileges as a churchmember if indeed you are a member of the Assembly of Christ written in heaven: (1) to believe in Christ; and (2) to suffer for Christ.

31. I Thessalonians 1:7. You know the books of Thessalonians to be about last things like the Second Coming and what must come before that on the world scene in the Falling Away and a visual of the son of perdition, the even more horrible prospect of what will happen in this world with the rising tide of the flood of the mystery of godliness as the Holy Spirit is withdrawn from the world scene. All these things inspire us like the churchmembers at Thessalonica to become examples of all those who do believe!

32. I Thessalonians 2:10. Paul was concerned about the way he, Timothy, and his companions behaved among those who believe, another example for churchmembers where the most violated scripture of all the Bible is generally, “do not think of yourselves more highly than you ought to.”

33. I Thessalonians 2:13. Down in their heart listeners to itching ears Bible teachers today, if Jesus is already there as the Word of God is effectively working in those who believe, they know that the word is not from God. Popularity will not cut it in this day and time of the Falling Away. Instead we work to be heard and read by a few, a remnant of the remnant if you would, who have that effective working inside. To write a best-seller testifies to the curse of popularity and the Falling Away of “the time will come (has come) when they will not endure sound doctrine”.

34. I Thessalonians 4:14. Here is another good statement of faith for your beliefs: we believe that believers should not sorrow for the death of loved ones like unbelievers as we have faith to believe, according to the Bible, that even as Jesus died and rose again as a foundation for the resurrection for others, that God will bring with Jesus as His Second Coming those who have gone to sleep in the faith of Jesus. Comfort one another at funerals with these words.

35. II Thessalonians 1:10. In that great Day of the Lord, at the Second Coming of Jesus, God takes vengeance in fire on (1) all those who do not know God and (2) all those who do not obey the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. The worse part of that punishment is to be forever banished from the presence of God and from all the glory and benefits of His power. At that Day, God comes in Jesus to be glorified among all His believing saints.

36. II Thessalonians 2:11. Your statement of faith must include some realities about the extent of the Falling Away among churchmembers. Among those who do not believe the truth truly, and they are many, there is strong delusion.
CHAPTER 7  

**Gospel of the King and Kingdom: Romans and Hebrews**

---

7-1: Our Bible Outline on the Gospel of the King and the Kingdom.

Indeed, I think after this preliminary context of the Bible on the kingdom, especially in the teachings of Jesus, we are really to get into the teachings of the Apostle whose ministry it was to make things clear based on the Old Testament, and whose ministry it was to personally write 14 out of 27 of the NT books, sponsoring 3 others. We will do it in much the same manner that the Apostle Paul started his research for those books during the 7 silent years at Tarsus where he recorded on parchments all the OT quotes that he would later include in books. Of course, we have that body in our total Bible book outline of the Appendix, but now we focus largely on where Paul quotes from the OT in Hebrews and Romans. We found a large bulk of that was in the 3 out of 12 topical outline based on the book outline, and previously decided that for now that can be summarized as the Gospel of the King and the Kingdom. Those three sections of the topical outline are included here for further development and expansion. *(You will also recall that the topical outline is found in chapter 3.)* The three subjects were respectively: (1) what happened to the Jews as the chosen people of God?; (2) the salvation of God; and (3) the New King of Israel.


In this section we look particularly about this subject in Romans 1-3 & Hebrews 1-6. *(We can never appreciate how much better the new covenant and the new sanctuary is than the old, how much easier it is for the children of Jesus not to fall like the children of God in the wilderness, until we see how much better our*
Before we proceed deep into Romans and Hebrews guides by the 3 sections of the topical outline of the Bible, we need to determine how much Isaiah and God through Isaiah put in that book in the first place. In other words we need to both get a total feel for the subject content of Isaiah and make ourselves a simple outline. Isaiah is the most quoted prophet in the New Testament, and I think you have already noted some of its eloquence as compared to Jesus in Matthew. John Oswalt writes of Isaiah in the NEW INTERNATIONAL COMMENTARY, "a revelation of the inevitable conflict between divine glory and human pride, of the self-destruction which that pride must bring, and of the grace of God in restoring that destroyed humanity to himself." And you can see how Paul would get a similar total message from reading Isaiah at Tarsus with the blinders removed, then writing notes for Romans 1 on the downward spiral of civilizations as "they knew God, but honored Him not as God", and of how "God gave them up to a reprobate mind to do that which is inconvenient". And also it was a similar pride of the Jews of Romans 2 that led them to blaspheme God all over the world; and that would guide Paul in Romans 3 to prove that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (it is here in Romans 3 that you will find quotes from Isaiah and Psalms, and of how the name of God is blasphemed among the nations is a direct quote from Isaiah 52:5, also from Ezekiel 36:22.) Do we then have an outline heading for Romans 1-3 which also correlates with Isaiah, and which might be called something like “Divine Glory, Human Pride, and Self-destruction”, Romans 1-3? And if so where would we have a similar section in Hebrews? In a way, the whole book of Hebrews apart from Jesus as the High Priest is the story of the falling away of the Hebrew children in the wilderness because of unbelief, so that in order to narrow down to the cause in pride, and based on Isaiah, we must look at Hebrews more carefully. For example, can we find the word “pride” per se in Hebrews when we look at a complete concordance? No, pride is more an individual sin than labeled as a national sin in the Bible, but certainly in Hebrews 3 the “going astray in their heart” of the Hebrew children in the wilderness is an equivalent of national pride. Hebrews does not outline 1-3 like Romans, the first 2 and 1/2 chapters must be considered a positive and straightforward presentation of the Son of God as King (although King is not mentioned, the concept of reigning, dominion, and subjection is there) with His kingdom (called His assembly) with a challenge to a faithfulness from the children of Jesus comparable to the faithfulness of Jesus Himself; then in 3:7-15 that awesome condemnation by God after He tested His original children in the wilderness that “they shall not enter My rest”. (Hebrews 3:19)

Hebrews 4:1-13 cautions present day children of Jesus not to fall into the same hardness of heart, and "hardness of heart" would be an equivalent of pride, and more. You no doubt have noticed that the great subject of Jesus as High Priest with the supporting lawyer-like arguments from the OT and Paul start in 4:14-11, and continue in 6:13 thru 8:6. The little interlude between 5:12 and 6:12 would be
the equivalent of the Jewish chastisement of Romans 1-3, although the focus on Hebrews is less general here, being directed to the contemporary Hebrews, as you would expect, where Paul delivered his synagogue message. Therefore:

I. Divine Glory, Human Pride, and Self-destruction (Romans 1-3 and Hebrews 5:12-6:12)

1. The de-evolution of civilizations that start off with a knowledge of God then without thought and honoring of God spiral downward to the point that God gives them over to a reprobate mind, Romans 1.

2. Because of the history of the Jewish people and how they let God down, they blasphemed the name of God throughout the Gentile world, Romans 2. They claimed God to be there God, and indeed He was at one time, but by their lack of faith in God, what happened inevitably to their nation was the blasphemy of the name of God. We might briefly look at this in the context of the book of Isaiah, Isaiah 52:5; and what we find is by the mention of both the bondage in Egypt and the captivity in Assyria that the other nations of the world are saying, “God is the God of Israel and yet He can not take care of them”, thus causing the name of God to be blasphemed among the Gentile nations. Indeed God could take care of them, and God did take care of them during the short periods when they kept the old covenant with Him, so that the real culprit was not a lack of power and love in God but rather in an “evil heart of unbelief” in the children of Israel. Exactly what God had in mind is found in Ezekiel 36:22, where in captivity God through the Prophet Ezekiel promises a restoration of Israel to their own land.

“Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying: Son of man, when the house of Israel dwelt in their own land, they defiled it by their own ways and deeds (there, obvious is how it all started, during that approximately 1000 years in Palestine, or whatever it was called at the time, they defiled the land “by their own ways and deeds, and in a minute God is going to tell us through Ezekiel that the restoration of them to their land is going to be in order to protect His own name--of course, we know that He needed to get them there for Christ to be born, likewise another way in which He promoted and protected His own name)…”

“…to Me their way was like the uncleanness of a woman in her customary impurity. {pretty crude example but we get the picture}

“Therefore I poured out My fury on them for the blood they had shed on the land {now, we get the bloody picture}, and for their idols with which they had defiled it. {Israel actually defiled the chosen land of God, and I don’t know if I will ever understand why God loves that particular land so much} The fury of God on the land in two ways: (1) the innocent blood of their own people and strangers in the land that they unjustly spilled on the land; and (2) by setting up places in the land for the worship of the idols. Does God care more about the land than the peo-
ple? No, I don’t think so; it is only that He blesses and curses the land and the
people at the same time, and that He does it based on the good and bad behavior
of the people. You must see in idols a violation of the first commandments of God,
and mistreatment of the people as the violation of the rest of the ten command-
ments!

HERE IS WHAT GOD DID AND NOBODY ELSE, because He only is the Great
Maker of Nations and History--“So I scattered them among the nations, and
they were dispersed throughout the countries; I judged them according to
their ways and their deeds.”

“When they came to the nations, wherever they went {the northern kingdom of
Israel was scattered into Assyria and the southern kingdom of Judah was
taken captive into Babylon and Persia}, they profaned My holy name--when
they said of them {okay here it comes, exactly how Israel blasphemed the
name of God and what Paul back at Tarsus read for later writing of Romans},
‘These are the people of the LORD {what a sorry looking lot, the nations were
saying}, and yet they have gone out of His land.’ {We must acknowledge that
land as God’s in a special way even though we now Israel to have been cutoff
from God shortly after they cutoff the Messiah.}

“But I had concern for My holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned
among the nations wherever they went. Therefore say to the house of Israel,
‘Thus says the Lord God: I do not do this for your sake, O house of Israel,
but for My holy name’s sake {don’t forget at any time that Jesus was the seed
and the namesake of God the Father}, which you have profaned among the
nations wherever you went.” {Paul certainly did not exaggerate when he
skirted over this with one short versel} “And I will sanctify My great name,
which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their
midst; and the nations shall know that I am the LORD,’ says the Lord God,
‘when I am hallowed in you before their eyes.’” {when any of the children of
God are living in such a way as to bring glory to God, God is hallowed in the
eyes of the people and nations around them}

3. The Son of God and His children of the house of God and the assembly, His
ministry as High Priest, and how those present children could fall away from the
living God as the children of Israel did in the 40 years of wilderness wanderings,
Hebrews 1-8:6.


(2). The children whom God gave to Jesus, Hebrews 2:10-5:11, and the provi-
sion of a competent High Priest to keep those children as faithful as Jesus was
faithful in the carrying out of His obligations to God.
(3). It is a worrisome sign when the Hebrews can not be real spiritual teachers, having the need to look again at the first doctrines of God, Hebrews 5:12-6:12. It comes close to being a blasphemy of the name of God of Romans, Isaiah, and Ezekiel. We know the famous saying, “if you can't do, then teach”; well, the equivalent of what God is saying and God through Paul is, “if you can't teach then you can't do!”

4. There is none that can claim to be righteous, Jew or Gentile, for “all have sinned and come short” of what God meant for humanity, Romans 3.

7-3: Appendix OT Book Outline of the Bible on Romans 1-3 and Hebrews 1-6. {By the way you know Paul and how his lawyer-like arguments run on and on across chapters and verse, remembering also that the chapters and verses came much later and were not part of the original manuscripts; there will be serious overlaps, and an outline is only for our convenience to somewhat isolate the subjects in order to eventually get at the same truth. What I am saying is that there are many ways to outline Romans and Hebrews as you know, and as I have done in previous commentaries. And these are not efforts to impress you with the complete Bible outlines that have been made during the writing of Bible commentaries over the last 20 or more years, but just to allow both of us to benefit from the Bible research of the past.} Recall that the OT book outline of the Appendix is different from the Topical Bible Outline of chapter 3 primarily in that the OT quotes of the Appendix outline relate more to the Gospel. Of course, expect a lot of overlap as both outlines came from a complete outline of the OT in the NT arranged in a most probable outline of OT books. While you will notice that in our Bibles, the major Prophets regardless of historical periods are grouped together, likewise the minor Prophets, and the literature of praise and poetry, so on and on. Well, in the outline of the OT quotes, the controlling column of their location in the OT, runs from Genesis to Malachi in a more probable historical sequence. It was from this top outline, generated in my original ONE Commentaries, that a topical outline was developed, and based on that outline, of the Bible. {That is the one you see in chapter 3.} Now, the Gospel outline of the appendix, likewise has the more historical sequencing; however, the quotes are less and more selective in that they center around the Gospel in the Old and New Testaments. However, you must see from your Bibles that there is not a large difference between the total message of the Bible and the Gospel of the Bible. It is only that the Gospel in the Old and New Testaments is a subset of the larger total story of the Bible. Scanning through those 12 tables of the Appendix from Genesis to Malachi, we find that Romans 1-3 and Hebrews 1-6 are found 17 times: (1) Hebrews 1:5 from Psalm 2:7 with Matthew 3:17 and Luke 9:7; (2) Romans 2:6 from Psalm 8:4-6; (3) Romans 3:10 from Psalm 14:1-3; (4) Hebrews 2:12 from Psalm 22:22; (5) Hebrews 1:11 from Psalm 42:1; (6) Hebrews 1:8 from Psalm 45:6,7 {notice by the way how most of
these quotes stand-alone; that is only in Hebrews and Romans, and if it were not for the life and writing of Paul, we would never have had the Christian interpretation of those OT quotes, that is not the ASI, but that is one of the major reasons Jesus called Paul to the ministry; (7) Hebrews 3:15 from Psalm 95:7,8; (8) Hebrews 3:7 from Psalm 95:7-11; (10) Hebrews 1:7 from Psalm 104:4; (11) Hebrews 1:8 from Psalm 104:8,9; (12) Hebrews 1:13 from Psalm 110:1 {and can’t you just see Paul at Tarsus reading through the book of Psalms as listed above from say 44 to 95 and 110 making notations on a research manuscript for later incorporation into letters, then checking them off as they were included, but finding in prison that he had some that still needed to be utilized to write three additional books of the Bible, one for John Mark and two for Dr. Luke, perhaps even one for the Apostle John}; and (13) Hebrews 5:6 and Hebrews 7:21 from Psalm 110:4--and here we must briefly pause since we have an obvious overlap between Hebrews and Romans much like those that were mentioned at the beginning of chapter 7.

What is so significant about the subject of Psalm 110:4 that Paul would duplicate his efforts by quoting the same verse in both Hebrews 5:6 and then in Hebrews 7:21? First, we should look at Psalm 110:4, and perhaps even in the larger context of Psalms.

“The LORD has sworn and will not relent, you are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.” (Psalm 110:4)

Melchizedek is introduced in Genesis 14:18 where as king of Salem, also the priest of the Most High God, he brought out bread and wine to Abraham, blessed Abraham, and then received tithes of Abraham. And I hope you have certainly seen the importance of children of Jesus not falling away like the children of Israel in the wilderness because the children of Jesus have the High Priesthood of Jesus. He was in all points tempted like as we are yet without sin; He was declared to be the Son of God by God Himself and made higher than the angels with the angels as His ministers: He was appointed by God to reign at His right hand with the large haul plan of putting all His enemies as His footstool {it is difficult to know whether to call this the long haul or not since while it was long in history from before the Creation of the earth and man through all the sins and ups and downs of the chosen people of Israel, through the kingdom of Jesus which He made obvious on earth, through the great commission of believe and be baptized being carried across the earth, to the Falling Away; however, eternity is so much longer than those thousands of years that in an eternal perspective it may not seem like a long haul}.

And the last four quotes in Romans 1-3 and Hebrews 1-6 are: (14) Hebrews 2:13 from Isaiah 8:17; (15) Romans 2:24 from Isaiah 52:5; (16) Hebrews 5:33ff from Isaiah 66:1; and (17) Romans 1:17 from Habakkuk 2:4.
Volume 3: Believe and Be Baptized

7-4: 17 Old Testament Quotes in Romans 1-3 and Hebrews 1-6.

This will have to be a Rapid Subject Scan of those 17 quotes from the OT in Romans 1-3 and Hebrews 1-6. It would require far too many pages of this commentary to list those seventeen passages from both the Old Testament and Romans and Hebrews. Instead I will read through them in New Testament sequence, first Hebrews and then Romans (the most probable order of writing for Paul or at least original development as the book of Hebrews is obviously his synagogue address), with the total context scanned in order to get first a gist of the OT context, then a gist of the NT interpretation by Paul, and lastly a summary of the gist of both. Perhaps you as a reader with your Bible at hand would like to do the same thing. After all, this commentary, volume 3 of the LEARN CHRIST commentaries is considered to only be a study guide to the Bible. Each must read and study the Word of God for himself!

1. Hebrews 1:5 and Psalm 2:7. (By the way does it sort of surprise you that a beginning quote in the first chapter of Hebrews, would also come from one of the first chapters of the book of Psalms, like Paul was reading through Psalm and made a note for the beginning of a book of Hebrews.)

   (1). A gist of Psalm 2:7 and the context: Although we do not know for sure when the “today” was that God made the decree that Jesus was His only begotten Son, we know at least it had to be before creation of the universe since Jesus was there as the mediating cause (John 1), but we know also from the context of Psalm 2 that God has already decreed all the nations as Jesus inheritance and the ends of the earth for His possession. This, without a use of the word king except to mention the kings of the earth who had best kiss the Son while they can, is an inheritance of kingship and an everlasting kingdom as you see from such words as “He shall break them with a rod of iron” and “He shall dash them to pieces like a potter’s vessel” (Psalm 2:9) While we do not see that yet, and did not see it when Jesus refused to fight during His first life on earth; we will see it when He comes again, not so much with fighting but rather in the use of the forces of nature as the old universe disintegrates and in the use of the angels to gather all humanity for judgment at the Second Coming. (You remember how the angels will gather the sheep and the goats, separating them, the tares and the wheat separating them; and then Jesus will pronounce the group judgment. I am sure the angels based on the roll call of the book of life in heaven have studied and taken there assignments before they deploy to the four corners of the earth.)

   (2). A gist of the ASI of Hebrews 1:5: the context is that Paul shows how much greater Jesus is than the angels, amassing one quote after another from God decreed Him begotten and His Son from Psalm 2:7 to the Father and Son relationship of II Samuel 7:14 to the call for the angels of God to worship Jesus of Psalm 97:7 to how serious even the angels are as ministers of fire of Psalm 104:4 to Jesus as the King of the Kingdom of Psalm 45:6,7 with a scepter of righteousness to a
reminder that how Jesus was there as part of Creation in Psalm 102:25-27 right up to domination with His kingship and kingdom as all enemies become His footstool of Psalm 110:1. {Did you notice how that also generally progresses through the book of Psalms, and by the reading of Paul, from Psalm 2 to Psalm 110 with only a few minor permutations that Paul found necessary in order to present the arguments like a lawyer that he was.}

(3). A gist of both summarized: As great as is the subject of Jesus, His Kingship and His Kingdom, Paul knows that Christians can read this for themselves in the OT, but what he wants to do for us is to show how that is in order "to minister for those who will inherit salvation" (Hebrews 1:14), wow! It is of course, a very introduction to the book of Hebrews and to the message that he delivered to the Jewish synagogue [I guess their favorite word was Hebrews] all over the Roman Empire. You do not need to fall away as the Hebrews did in the wilderness as you have so much more going for you with the angels as ministers, with Jesus as your perfect and competent high priest at the perfect position on the right hand of God to make intercession always for your sins, with the perfect new covenant and the perfect new tabernacle, and with so many examples of faith for you like a large cloud of witness. How can you lose, if you beware of a possible "evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God". You can get a "god" whom you can deceive yourself and your church into thinking is the real God, a God unlike that of the Bible and of Jesus, that allows whatever you want; but he or it is not the living God like Phillips warned in "Your God is too Small". {In this day and time a "god", not living except inside contemporaries, has been made of conscience--I do what my conscience tells me to do--which accuses and excuses like it should, but imperfectly; and that American conscience with the weight of the American Democratic Faith has been placed as a substitute for the living God.}

2. {Since we effectively covered all those quotes of Hebrews 1 above, we will pass on to Hebrews 2 and following.} There are 3 great quotes in Hebrews 2 with some greater ASI: Psalm 8:4-8 in Hebrews 6-8 where the glory, praises, and dominion of man over the works of creation are saluted--a work that is still incomplete in that "now we do not yet see all things put under him" (Hebrews 2:8b), so that we know the promise of that is still to come in Hebrews; Psalm 22:22 in Hebrews 2:12 where Jesus establishes an assembly where He praises the name of God before His chosen brethren (that is an assembly and worship service where we would like to be when Jesus praises God as we are in the congregation, but that is one of the main points that Paul is making--we are, we are in the assembly of the firstborn that Paul comes to in Hebrews 12, and that is what we have come to as we have gone through the truth of the 12 chapters of Hebrews); and third Isaiah 8:17, 18, and II Samuel 22:3 in Hebrews 2:13.
“And again: ‘I will put My trust in Him.’ And again: ‘Here am I and the children whom God has given Me.’” (Hebrews 2:13 with Isaiah 8:17,18 and II Samuel 22:3)

3. That is a good introduction to Hebrews: here we are, us and Jesus, and that is exactly what Paul encouraged Jews with night and day when he had the opportunity. It either is or can be, You and Jesus! It is also a good introduction to Hebrews and Romans as the Gospel of the King and the Kingdom as the King is introduced here as the Reigning Son of God, and the kingdom is introduced as us, the children of Jesus. What exciting things remain for us to see in Hebrews of how through Jesus, and under the plan of salvation from God, we mortals who have been ordained to have dominion over all the things of the earth, will ultimately have all these things put under us. This in Hebrews is truly the equivalent of Romans 8 and the thought that “all things work together for good for those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose”. (Romans 8:28)

7-5: “Man Dominions” of Hebrews and “all things work together” of Romans.

In particular we look at the similarities of the man dominions of Hebrews with the all things work together for our good of Romans. I think we will find some of those same things of Jesus, God, and the Holy Spirit, predestination, foreknowledge, and the calling working together for us in both Romans and Hebrews; and this is another overlap, perhaps even a major focus point between Hebrews and Romans.

1. First we look at the similarity of thought of Hebrews 2:8-18 and Romans 8. Obviously when in Hebrews 2:8 Paul quotes from David to the extent that God has “put all things in subjection under his feet” (and you recall how the first commission of God to man was to have dominion over all His other works of Creation), then immediately saying after the quote to the extent THAT WE DON'T SEE IT THAT WAY YET, and that you immediately suspect that what we do not have dominion over is death, sin, and eternal life which before Paul discusses those very things in Hebrews 2:14-18, he must show in the context how Jesus and Us have come together, “I and the children whom God has given me”. Hebrews 2:14 mentions how that Jesus as He accepted this oneness with us, partaking of flesh and blood, was able to establish dominion over (1) the power of death; (2) over the fear of death which held humanity in bondage that prevented real victory over the earth and the things of the earth; (3) over the devil himself; and (4) over sins in that Jesus Himself with that full identification with man also became “propitiation for the sins of the people” (2:17); and (5) provided help in the temptations that come this way on earth.

7-6: Now, how similar is that to Romans 8?

In other words what are “the all things” of the "all things that work together for our good" of Romans 8? God gave the first commission to man to have dominion over the earth at the moment of the creation of man as recorded in Genesis 1:26.
“Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. . . . Then God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’” (Genesis 1:26,28)

And God renewed that first commission to man by way of Noah after the Flood as recorded in Genesis 9:1,2.

“So God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them: “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth. And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be on every beast of the earth, on every bird of the air, on all that move on the earth, and on all the fish of the sea. They are given unto your hand.” (Genesis 9:1,2)

This first commission is echoed with different words in Psalms 8:4-6 as quoted in Hebrews 2:6-8, and we especially see that with the last words of that quote, in the “And set him over the works of Your hands”, amplified by the following sentence of “You have put all things in subjection under his feet”. There is an astounding significance to the way the argument flows by Paul in the rest of verse 8 as Paul explains “put all things in subjection under his feet” (and you hear Paul talking in the same kind of wording as of II Corinthians 15 where all things are put in subjection under the feet of Christ, but excepted is God the Father), but as yet we do not see all things put under Man. We stop to wonder whether Man Himself or the Son of Man, the Lord Jesus Christ, is going to do this; for we know that immediately Paul launched back off into Jesus: made a little lower than the angels when coming to earth, like man is a little lower than the angels; and for suffering and death in order that Jesus might taste death for “everyone” (2:9) God, the argument continues, chose the method of bringing “many sons to glory” to make Captain Jesus, the captain of their salvation, perfect through sufferings. (2:10) Jesus calls them “brethren” because He and they “are all of one” (2:11), Jesus is the He who sanctifies and they are the sanctified. The children partake of flesh and blood (2:14), Jesus shared in the same; that through death He might destroy him, the devil, who had the power of death (we often think of Satan or the devil as the prince of the power of the air, seldom do we stop to think of him likewise as controlling the power of death); and release the brethren from the fear and bondage of death (2:15).

“Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.” (Hebrews 2:17,18)
The real question is that in all of the rest of Hebrews, and also where else in the whole Bible, is there a repeat of the argument of the second half of 2:8b, based on the quote of 2:8a. First, we will check for the key words of “subjection under his feet” of 2:8b. The only close similarity we find in Hebrews is in 12:9 where the subjection is of the children to God the Father, who like earthly fathers chasten us, but the Heavenly Father to make us partakers of His holiness. However, we do in Romans 8:18,19 see a similar argument from Paul of passing from a lack of dominion over all things on the earth to a dominion over death and sin. {It is only complete in considering all the way from 5:12 through 8:39.}

“For I consider the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. {Rather than from the perspective of all men trying to have dominion on the whole earth, it is a more a present time start with the sufferings of this earth--which could be close to the things not overcome--and then progressing all the way to the glories that shall be revealed in our future of eternal life, of course which we most generally call "glorification".} “For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly awaits {and certainly you can see in this reference to creation some of the first great commission to have complete dominion, though now it is an inward thrust, an eager expectation} for the revealing of the sons of God.” {You can not miss how the brethren here become also the sons of God, much like Jesus.} And this is consistent with the Apostle John.

“But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God {we also like the KJV of “sons of God”}, 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 1:12,13 NJKV)

7-7: Some Definitions in Romans 4-8 and Hebrews 7-12:2.
Definition of Righteousness by Faith, Peace, and the New Covenant, and New Sanctuary, Romans 4-8 and Hebrews 7-12:2. The argument above of Romans 8:18,19 continues all the way to the “all things work together for our good” of 8:28 in the following manner: (1) the whole creation was subjected to futility by God, but by God in hope, and it is that whole creation that will be delivered from the bondage of corruption {you see the similarity of the Hebrew argument of under dominion instead of over it} into a glorious liberty of the children of God {of course you see the children of Jesus that are called brethren and which Jesus identifies of Hebrews in this}; (2) the whole creation together--the earth, the man, the woman, the animals, the plant life, and the forces of nature--like a woman in birth pangs “groans and labors” (8:22) right up to this very moment of time of the life of Paul, and the assumption is that will continue in time until the end of the age {by the way talking of more of the similarities between Romans and Hebrews, we have here in the “whole creation groaning and laboring with birth pangs” a similarity to Hebrews
12:25-29 where the whole heaven and earth will be shaken; and also by the way, what shall we receive in that passage of Hebrews but “a kingdom which cannot be shaken” (12:28); (3) we that have the firstfruits of the Spirit (the new birth, of course is the firstfruit, the process of Christlikeness called sanctification is the continuing fruit, and the final fruit is the glorification when we shall be like Christ for we shall see Him as He is) also groan inwardly like the rest of creation groans as we look forward to the complete redemption of our physical bodies; (4) The Holy Spirit helps us during these strugglings and makes intercession for us; (5) Jesus in touch with the Spirit makes intercession to God for our sins. Now, these are all the things that work together for the good of those who love God and are the called according to His purpose. For this point, and in 8:28-30 it progresses passes from (1) the purpose of God to (2) the foreknowledge of God of those whom He would call from before the foundation of the earth to (3) the predestination of God for those called to be conformed to the image of Christ, Christ the firstborn and the others His brethren sounding again like Hebrews to (4) the Christian calling with the hope of the one calling to (5) the legal justification in the sight of God to (6) the glorification.

NOTE: We are in the process of receiving a kingdom, although within us now and can not be seen as it is in heaven, can not be shaken like this old earth and heaven will continue to shake until disintegration, because this kingdom of God and heaven and which will be lowered from earth to heaven is unshakable, much like God Himself.

1. From this point of harmony between Hebrews 2:8-18 and Romans 8:18-39, we can proceed backwards through the rest of Romans 8, then 7, then 6, and then 5:12-21 thru the argument developments of respectively (1) Sonship through the Spirit, the adoption; (2) freedom from inward sin; (3) freedom from the law; (4) slavehood to sin or to God; (5) death to sin and alive to God; and (6) death in Adam and life in Christ.

(1). We are the Sons of God if we are led by the Spirit of God, Romans 8:12-17.

(2). Freedom from the condemnation of God if we live according to the Spirit instead of according to the flesh, Romans 8:1-11.

(3). Jesus Christ will deliver us from this body of sin and death, Romans 7:13-25.

(4). Another dominion that has been overcome is that of the law, Romans 7:1-12

(5). From a slave to sin to a slave to righteousness, Romans 6:15-23.

(6). The One Baptism by which we are baptized spiritually into the death and resurrection of Christ Himself, Romans 6:1-14.

2. Again working backwards to cover all of Romans 4-8, we go from 5:12-21 as the last part of the above through the rest of 5:1-5 on how faith triumphs over trouble, after considering the short passage of 5:6-11 where Christ died for the
Volume 3: Believe and Be Baptized

ungodly; then to 4:9-25 where Paul makes another legal argument, this time of how Abraham was justified before circumcision; and then right up to 4:1-8 on justification by faith.


Since we have discussed “believe” more than “baptism” in the chapters since chapter 4 on BAPTISM, this would be a good point at which to look at all the references in the New Testament where “baptism” is used. The word in the King James Version is found 23 times in the New Testament, and it is easily grouped into several major divisions.

1. The Baptism message from John the Baptist, both a water baptism and an immersion (baptism) in repentance before water baptism.

   (1). Matthew 3:7. When John the Baptist saw Pharisees and Sadducees, the religious leaders of the day, coming for his baptism (s), he called them “vipers” and told them to bring to the water baptism a prerequisite of “fruits worthy of repentance.”

   (2). Matthew 21:25. (also repeated in Mark 11:30 and Luke 20:4) When later some of these same religious leaders, this time the chief priests and elders, questioned the authority of Jesus to deliver His teachings, asked them whether the “baptism of John” had the authority of being from heaven or from men.

   (3). Mark 1:4. (also repeated in Luke 3:3) You have in this verse the two distinct baptisms of John, not unlike the two baptisms into Jesus of water baptism with a prerequisite baptism of salvation: (a). Water baptism, “John came baptizing in the wilderness”; and (b) Baptism of repentance, “and preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins”. Since there is some repentance in real faith and some faith in real repentance, you would have to say that the two baptisms of John the Baptist were almost the same as the two baptisms from the Apostles. However, where there is any element of doubt such as Paul encountered in believers who had only know the two baptisms of John, then they were more carefully instructed on salvation and then baptized.

   (4). Luke 7:29. There were cases of people, like the tax collectors, who having participated in the two baptisms of John the Baptist, were doubtless saved in that they “justified God”, those two baptisms having, Jesus taught, come from God; and there were the opposite cases of the Pharisees and lawyers who rejected “the will of God for themselves” by rejecting the baptism of John the Baptist.

   (5). Acts 1:22. This baptism of John was as much a part of the Gospel of Jesus Christ that an Apostle selected to take the place of Judas Iscariot must know about as well as all that Jesus did and said in the presence of the disciples, from that beginning time of the Gospel until the Ascension, and witness of the Resurrection.
(6). Acts 10:37. We must be careful that those who know only the baptism of repentance of John, sorrow for sins toward God, know also the baptism of faith of the Gospel. What is most important again, is not the two water baptisms, but the inward baptism of both repentance and faith. The Apostle Peter does in this verse in telling what has just happened in Israel make a fine point of distinction between “the preaching peace through Jesus Christ” and the start of that preaching that God gave Jesus “after the baptism which John preached”.

(7). Acts 13:24. You can also see in the early preaching of the Apostle Paul in Antioch in Pisidia that fine point of distinction between before the coming of Jesus, when “John first preached before His coming the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel”, and the point in history after that when Jesus made His public appearance to John and Israel, where the message of John became more that he was not the Christ but the Christ came shortly after Him. In order to participate in the One Baptism of salvation, it is important to know both repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ; and then water baptism is to be an enacted sermon and act of faith in a work that comes behind it. And then if there was any question as to whether that one baptism of salvation actually happened in the individual because they did not hear all the words of faith necessary for that salvation to happen, then after they really hear and believe, let them be baptized again. Baptism by water and immersion is so easy; and while it has nothing to do with salvation, it should be done properly and only after sufficient faith baptism.

(8). Acts 19:1-5. When Paul rebaptized disciples at Ephesus, it was after they admitted that they did not receive inwardly the Holy Spirit which always comes with the One Baptism. In other words, it was obvious that there was no real salvation in their life. Unfortunately, the Pentecostals in just one of their major departures from sound doctrine—and they have many similar violations of Scripture as given in I and II Corinthians all generated by a unjustified pride in the uniqueness of their church membership such as “the Word came out of them”, “the Word came to them only”, “everyone has a song, a prophecy, or a word”, worship that draws attention to themselves, has an uncertain sound and breeds confusion, and a speaking in tongues which are not really languages, always of questionable motivations--have run amuck with a baptism for salvation and then a second blessing baptism of the Spirit. No, the consistent message of the Bible is that the One Baptism of Salvation is also an immersion of the Holy Spirit, most often called the new birth. Of course, the work of the Spirit does continue through the many years, however not instantaneous, as He works to make the believer more Christ-like. In all these cases sound doctrine dictates: first comes the Baptism of Salvation, and then comes Water Baptism.
2. Jesus used the word "baptism" for immersion to refer to the blanketing of persecutions that would come to His faith in rejection and crucifixion, which also would be the type of immersion that the Apostles would have.

   (1). Matthew 20:22 and 20:23 (also repeated in Mark 10:38 and 10:39 and Luke 12:50) refer to this kind of baptism of the cross and suffering that the Apostles would share with Him.

3. The Baptism of Salvation, the One Baptism.

   (1). Romans 6:4. As Paul's great treatment and definition of the One Baptism in Romans 6 and Romans before he refers back to it in Ephesians as the One Baptism, and where by the way as discussed in this commentary where all the great basic doctrines of the Bible are mentioned as "ONEs" and where there is not One for salvation. There is no need, that is the One Baptism. Read Ephesians 4:4-6 and then come back to Romans 6 to define the one baptism. Well, here is some of it: (1) when we are "baptized into Jesus" we are baptized into the death of Jesus--another way Paul says this in Galatians 2:20 is that "we are crucified with Christ". How are we crucified with Christ? When we go down into the river or the baptistry to be immersed, or even when we have a nudge to start speaking in tongues? No, how can we be crucified in water or speak tongues in water! (2) Even as Christ was raised from the dead by the power of God, so are we in the new birth raised by the power of God to walk the style of a new life.

   (2). Ephesians 4:4-6, the Great Major Doctrines of Faith. Ephesians is a condensed summary of all the 10 letters that Paul wrote before it with the great truths, teachings, and doctrines of the Christian Faith, and Ephesians 4:4-6 summarizes in turn Ephesians.

   "There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." (Ephesians 4:4-6)

   Is there only one baptism in Scripture; certainly not, there is only one major baptism that exceeds all the others in importance because it is the salvation of God.

   (3). Colossians 2:12. In this similar language of Romans 6, "buried with Him in baptism"--by the way the message of Ephesians is also repeated in Colossians, so that Colossians like Ephesians is a summary of the first 10 books including Romans--you have a comparison of this salvation not only in terms of a one baptism but also for emphasis in terms of a "circumcision without hands". Even as the one baptism is a baptism without any words and any hands, so also is the one baptism like an inward circumcision where no hands works on the flesh and there is no work on the flesh. You are reminded again of Peter's statement about "not the putting away of the filth of the flesh"--in other words no water involved in this baptism--but rather the inward answer of a good conscience toward God. So much of this distor-
tion of water baptism as part of salvation, or as necessary for salvation, has come from the desire of church leaders, primarily at first the Catholics and then the Episcopalians and Lutherans and Anglicans and now the church of Christ and even others, to have control over and a part in your salvation. Do not let them!

(4). Hebrews 6:2. This talks of the "doctrine of baptisms" (plural for baptisms) in such a way as to visit up to the realities of many baptisms in the Bible; but also in such a way with "doctrine", the singular, to note how they are related. Does this allow for any such deceptive thing as a "baptism in the Spirit", so called by the Pentecostals, which comes after the one baptism of salvation and even after water baptism. No! However it does allow as you read the context of the rest of Hebrews for a complete immersion in the Spirit over a period of time which most generally in Scripture is "sanctification"--a life long process--most often referred to, especially in Ephesians, as a growth into the full stature of Christ. The problem with these Pentecostals is that they want sanctification instantaneously; they want to have the pride of a second blessing as unique Christians beyond what others have as they like the Gnostics gain a spiritual knowledge not possessed by other church members; and they want instant and easy evidence that they are the real children of God. {You see that over and over in I and II Corinthians.}

(5). I Peter 3:21. You saw the exegesis of this in chapter 4 in this famous Scripture from the Apostle Peter of how the One Baptism is not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, therefore having nothing to do with water baptism. Well, not nothing; they are related as one doctrine of many baptisms to the extent that the opposite of salvation, the immersion of the whole world in a flood, is related to the one salvation.
As people ignore the Bible and religion today, they tell you either "it is so confusing as there are so many religions and denominations and competing churches", or they tell you, "it is hard to understand the Bible since there are so many interpretations and interpreters." That are right! And it will only get harder as we get further into the Falling Away that must comes before Jesus, for the number of Bible teachers with itching ears will grow like a fortress around church members to both give them what they want and in order to protect them from sound doctrine; and simultaneously with that will come among churches and denominations an intolerance toward sound doctrine {if you doubt this, please read II Timothy 4:3,4}. If you think it is bad now, wait until we are further into the Falling Away, about the time that some Muslim leader in the Middle East becomes obvious as the son of perdition of II Thessalonians, also the third of the kings from the north of Daniel. If you think the last words of II Timothy 4:4 sound bad when most of the kingdom and most of the local churches turn completely away from truth and turn into fables, it is more awesome to consider first the teaching of Jesus that "sin will abound as the love of many waxes cold and second that Daniel forecasted long ago that during that period of the Falling besides Satan being loosed to ride on that vast wave of lawlessness and sin, that as the Holy Spirit is withdrawn {Paul in II Thessalonians} the "power of the Holy people will be completely shattered" (Daniel 12:7)

Sometimes we must wonder if it is still worth it to "preach the word" in season and out of season, since increasing the churches seek Bible teaching according to their own desires, heaping out the ministers who do not concentrate on that and on com-
forting them that they are the elect of God, while they are heaping in the itching ears teachers that will do those two things, although sometimes subtly. {Have you ever seen and heard of so many Bible teachers. On the radio a few months ago, as the pastor of the FBC Dallas bemoaned that nothing spiritually had happened in that church for years, also had the courage to make the statement that “goodness, there is no shortage of Bible.” And unfortunately we can spend a lot of time listening to and reading ABOUT the Bible, rather than getting to the spiritual understanding of the Bible. We are much like the religious leaders of Jesus’ and Paul’s time who even thought they were teachers of Scriptures, yet had not come to understand fundamental Bible doctrines.} Even Paul seems to imply in his second letter to the evangelist Timothy that he had better preach as much as he can because the “time will come will they will not endure sound doctrine”; but like at Corinth, during the second missionary journey of Paul, Jesus in a vision at night spoke to Paul after there he experienced “opposition and blasphemy” (Acts 18:6), telling him “I have many people in this city”. It reminds us of how Elijah in the warfare against the King, Jezebel, the majority of the people of Israel, and the prophets of Baal as they sought his life, had to be assured by God that “I have reserved seven thousand in Israel” who have not bowed to Baal or kissed him. (I Kings 19:18) Surely this was at least 5% of the people of God in Israel who remained faithful, so that surely in Dallas, in the Southwest and the Bible belt, and the nation we have at least 5% in churches and outside of churches who will listen to sound doctrine. Of course, it is significant that the Apostle Paul had not found those faithfuls in either the synagogue or in the home of Crispus nor did Elijah find them anywhere in Israel during his times of discouraging battles; but nonetheless God and Christ Themselves say that they were kingdom members; and today, even if not in the churches, denominations, and those vast meetings elsewhere we do not find people of God, we know they must exist. You know, it seems that increasing the United States, while official Christian and definitely dominated by the American Democratic Faith, has retreated (the opposite of real revival) to be like the times of Jesus and Paul, even like the times of the Old Testament when there were a lot of false prophets and teachers and when the true Prophets of God like Jeremiah and Ezekiel were ignored and opposed. Jesus Himself wept over the most religious city of all time, Jerusalem, and during a time when religion was the law of the nation of Israel based on Scriptures, saying, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her” (Matthew 23:37)

Anyway for the few who will listen, and surely we must still tell the whole counsel of God like Jeremiah though no one listened, the way of skill in understanding is the prime subject of the book of I Corinthians. That skill in understanding the Bible is called spiritual wisdom as contrasted to the wisdom of the world, what we would call the wisdom of the academics--the PhD’s, ThDs, colleges, and seminaries; and while I am a strong believer in real scholarship like Emerson advocated in his
essay "The American Scholar", true scholarship is hardly promoted or achieved with
the passing out of pieces of paper; and muchless is such a highest piece of paper the
sign of spiritual wisdom on the Bible as you can readily see by checking the list of
such who have signed up for the Jesus Seminar.

8-1. Our Bible Outline of chapter 2 and 3 on I Corinthians.
As you go back over the topical bible outline of chapters 2 and 3, going from the top-
ics of I to XII and from Genesis to Malachi, looking of course for I Corinthians, you
will find often such words as "understanding", "wise", and "wisdom". These as back-
ground for our study and in order to justify the gist of I Corinthians as "spiritual
wisdom", we briefly list them below.

1. While Paul in I Cor 15:45 is emphasizing the difference between the first Adam
and Christ the second Adam, also the difference between the natural and the spiri-
tual body, the first man from earth and the second from heaven, he also contrasts
the living soul and the living spirit. {While it is not immediately clear from this topi-
cal statement in the Bible outline that "Wisdom on the Gospel" is in progress here, it
will be clear as we look at the context of I Corinthians itself in this chapter.}

{Same on this one except it is part of Paul’s development of “Wisdom on Mar-
riage". This is also something not likely to be heeded today in churches or out-
side churches, as we have not yet learned to admit and confess guilt on God’s
pattern for marriage without become a rebel against the very will of God on
marriage. In other words, it is not the end of the world if you have divorced;
but you must admit to God and confess to God that you have committed this sin
against His teachings, and then simply go on from there with a fresh slate as
believers must do for all the sins in their lives! Denying that the clear Bible
teachings are so will not get it, as Jesus reinforced the original concept God
had for marriage in Genesis and Paul does it again here in I Corinthians:  what
you really do is become part of the world wide rebellion against the will of God.
You might even consider that you are a “tare”, placed in a church by Satan.
Definitely part of the Falling Away as you rebel against the sound doctrine (alias
sound behavior) of Bible marriage, as you desire and seek a pastor who will
overlook that rebellion; and you also will find in that rebellion the correlation
with a heart waxing cold toward Jesus, the Bible, and God as this sin of rebel-
ion grows with you!}

2. So serious is this matter of joining with God that the Bible considers when a man
has a relationship with a harlot that he becomes one body with her (I Cor 6:16).

3. Deuteronomy 32:12 and I Corinthians 10:20: (1) The LORD God led Israel and
there was not to be any strange gods among them; and (2) The Gentiles sacrifice to
demons not to God, and the Christian is to have no part in this worship of demons.
(This is actually part of the point of Paul on “Wisdom about the Falling Away” and on
sexual immorality, that is with the proper exercise of spiritual wisdom on con-
science; and the actual quote of that context is from Exodus 32:6 in I Corinthians 10:5-8.

“But with most of them God was not well pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness. Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted. And do not become idolaters as were some of them. As it is written, ’The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.’” Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell....” (I Corinthians 10:5-8 and Exodus 32:6)

{Actually the incident of sexual immorality was a Acacia Grove where “the people began to commit harlotry with the women of Moab” recorded in Numbers 25, and Numbers tells us that “24,000 died” (25:9); but you know how sometimes the numbering is different depending on whether it is only men, or men and women, or men, women and children; but what is the difference is 1,000 out of 24,000. The bottom line is that God killed them through a plague immediately after one of the men took a Midianite woman to his tent in the presence of the whole assembly.}


{And now we have come to the point in the topical outline, to the start of the wisdom literature with Job, Psalms, and etc. where we are getting into the “wise” of this world, their wisdom, and which set a background or starting point for Paul to develop spiritual wisdom and understanding. Remember that during the second missionary journey Paul had an extensive ministry among the Greeks, a dominant aspect of their culture being a seeking after wisdom, at Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, and Corinth; and at Athens, just before Corinth he preached “in the midst of the Areopagus” (Acts 17:23) noting how “very religious” they were, and even showed some of their cultural wisdom by quoting from one of their poets, “For we are also His offspring” (Acts 17:28).}

4. I Corinthians 15:27. Granted that there are many stories, many chapters, verses, and books in the Bible; but the total subject matter for the practical purposes of Christian faith can be summarized as faith in God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Bible, and Salvation. Get that and you have enough of the Bible for life. The following important passage helps to establish the present and eternal relationship between God the Father and Christ the Son.

“The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things re put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.” (I Corinthians 15:26-28 KJV)
Volume 3: Believe and Be Baptized

(1). There are still some enemies such as death that has not be subjected to Christ as the Son of Man, or Christ as the Lord of heaven and earth.

(2). God the Father has ordained that all in heaven and earth be under the feet of Christ, and heaven is already there. May Gods will be done on earth as it is in heaven as more people still on earth are subjected to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

(3). God the Father did not put Himself in subjection to the Lord Jesus Christ.

(4). After the Second Coming of Christ when everything on earth also comes under the actual Lordship of Jesus then Jesus will Himself be subjected to the LORDSHIP of the Father.

(5). God the Father may ultimately be all in all.

{While you do not find wise, wisdom, or understanding here, you do find death and eschatology; and it is part of the passage on “Wisdom about the Gospel”, the end of the Gospel including glorification, or the resurrection body; and you just can find as little on the Bible on the latest of last things than this important passage where Christ delivers the subdued kingdom to God the Father in order that the Father may be all in all.} This is also an important doctrine that we sometimes overlook! And in keeping also with the message of I Corinthians 15:26-28 above, we think of the complete dominion by man over earth by overcoming death and sin of Hebrews, likewise the benefits of the Christian calling of Romans 8 previously discussed. By the way, the passage is also another good example of the kingdom without the use of the word kingdom.

5. Who Then Will See God and Be Saved? Those who are sensitive to the Conscience of others as well as his own Christian Conscience, seeking their good as well as his own good: Psalm 24:1 and I Corinthians 10:26. {How important it is today to consider this in the light of the American Conscience, which has become more guided by accusing others and excusing self like the non-Christian Gentiles conscience, and as much governed by the “toleration” of the American Democratic Faith as by any spiritual wisdom, so that we will outline this portion of I Corinthians, as also dictated and demanded by the context, as “Wisdom on Conscience”.

{Note: as we continued to scan coming to VI on the “Wisdom of God” where in the topical and historical sequenced outline get to what is normally considered as the wisdom literature of the Bible such as Proverbs, Ecclesiastes—among the writings of the King of Israel most noted throughout the world of that day as a man of wisdom, we do not at first find any quotes from I Corinthians, none at all from Proverbs which is also a shock [are we to think that Proverbs simply covers good wisdom of the world rather than spiritual wisdom, although we do find that James revels in quoting from Proverbs as well as Peter and John, and perhaps as you noticed on “Wisdom from God” in Proverbs, Paul does quote from Proverbs in I Timothy. Is this a clue for us as to some similarity between I Timothy and I Corinthians?}.}
8-2: Those Given the Grace of Understanding.

It should be obvious with the weirdos on TV with teachings supplemental to the Bible, from the many supposedly Bible based books on the best seller list, with all these strange sounding “revelations God gave me” to quote some of them, and with all these new advances in the Gospel of Prosperity, if you would believe some of the many Bible teachers with itching ears...I say with all this massive “heaping up” of Bible teachers like a monumental fortress, the size and length of the famous wall of China, to protect the desires of church members and the intolerance toward sound doctrine mentioned in II Timothy 4:3,4, it is important that we fall back to what we really know to be the Word of God, some of which is to be found in I Corinthians where we know it to be from the Apostle Paul, we know Paul to be an Apostle who with the Prophets and Jesus have ever been the only ones authorized to give Revelations through men; and further in the first 9 verses of I Corinthians 1, we see exactly who are the blessed recipients of understanding: it is those who have already received “the grace of God which was given to you by Christ Jesus” (I Cor 1:4) for “all utterance and all knowledge” (1:5).

1. And don’t you ever believe that there are no restrictions on the utterances and the knowledge of that grace of understanding. First of all, it is a gift from God through the Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore is not to be peddled like some commercial product. You know as you listen to all these potentially false teachers and preachers on television, and even in your churches and denominations--and remember you who really look for the Second Coming must also face up to the realities of false prophets, teachers, and preachers in the end times--those teachers who claim even by their presence behind the pulpits that they have a special gift of understanding, beyond just the gift of gab, emotion, and salesmanship, that if it is really a gift from God they will find it hard to peddle it beyond the extent of daily bread.

(1). There were only 12 Apostles, all personally taught by Jesus, and Paul was one of them. We know the first 12 that Jesus called to be Apostles and trained, and how the 12 went down to 11 as Judas fell by transgression, and then how 520 disciples under the leadership of Peter decided that God through Jesus had chosen Matthias to be numbered with the 12 (Acts 1:21-26), but what the Ascended Christ really needed was a converted and practical Bible scholar {a lawyer, already schooled in Scriptures} to properly interpret all the Old Testament Scriptures, and to write 14 books of the New Testament, also sponsor 3 more through John Mark and Dr. Luke. {Don’t ever forget that the Apostle Peter testified to the Apostle Paul as writing scriptures in II Peter 3:15,16.}

(2). Don’t forget also that only the Ascended Christ choses Apostles and Prophets. Peter also said that it was the Spirit of Christ speaking through the Prophets of the Old Testament which gave us OT Scriptures, and in Ephesians 4:7-11 that
we also learn that it was the Ascended Christ who gave the gifts of understanding and Revelation to the Prophets and Apostles.

“And He gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers…” (Ephesians 4:11)

There will be no more Apostles and Prophets today with the gift of revelation, so immediately although reluctantly you can label as “false” using righteous judgment any today who claim the gift from Christ of an Apostle or Prophet. While it is true that in New Testament days there were prophets and prophetesses in the sense of the democratic nature of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at the beginning of the last days and as recorded in Acts 2:22-39, their gift was not as mediums of revelation but after were gifts of wisdom, as for example those who warned Paul of the bondage fate that awaited him in Rome. THERE IS A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WISDOM AND REVELATION! There is a difference between Revelation, which is the giving of the Word of God through Apostles and Prophets, and illumination, which is the gift of understanding of those originally given Revelations. The great similarity between Revelation and Illumination is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit of God is the source of giving revelations through “holy men of God” especially chosen to be Apostles and Prophets—all in the past, and forget anyone that claims to be the equivalent today; and God the Holy Spirit is the source of giving illuminations of the revelations today.

(When the Apostle Paul as directed by the Spirit and the Ascended Christ, the overall direction, of course, coming from God the Father, to write the epistle of I Corinthians, it was to make clear that distinction between revelation and illumination, between understanding and wisdom, between the gifts to all church members, and the how of how those gifts come! We have read it, and at some point in our Christian heritage, we have known it; but we have either forgotten, ignored it, or chosen it as part of what we will no longer endure of sound doctrine.)

(3). Another righteous judgment criterion you can use to distinguish between false Bible teachers, itching ears Bible teachers, false and true spirits is to see if their so-called gift of understanding from Jesus and the Holy Spirit, their claimed understanding for utterance and knowledge, achieves the purposes the Ascended Jesus intended when He gave to men the gifts of evangelists, pastors, and teachers. (The three gifts, unlike apostles and prophets, which do exist today.) That is also given in the context of Ephesians 4:7-16, and for certain you can know even before you read it again that it was not given to make them famous, or rich, or even for their profit but rather for the total body of the church, nothing less than the assembly of the Firstborn, the Lord Jesus Christ, written in heaven. And I like what Paul calls it here in I Corinthians 1:2 as “the church of God {not to be confused with the denomination called Church of God which has done much to promote contem-
porary misunderstandings on revelation and illumination}, that is “the church of God which is at Corinth” which makes it clear that no matter what label men chose for themselves and their group, and they are almost without number, if there is really some people of God in that local church, then it is the “church of God at fifth and main of a certain city”, or something similar. {I know all the churches, diverse teachings, and denominations--always growing--is confusing; but remember 2 things: (1) the Lord knows his own; and (2) like at Corinth as Paul was told in the vision of a dream, in any given city there is a remnant of people that God calls His own.} Well, you can look at anyone claimed to be called of God and the Lord Jesus Christ for a certain ministry to see if they really qualify according to the original purposes of the Ascended Christ for ministry.

“...for {the gifts of evangelists, pastors, and teachers--the only three gifts of ministry available today that are given by the Ascended Christ} the equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry {1}, for the edifying of the body of the body of Christ {2}, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ {3}, that we should no longer be children, tossed to and from and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting {4}, but, speaking the truth in love {5}, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head--{6}, Christ--from whom the whole body {you just must see this to be nothing less than the total body of Christ no matter where the church of God at so and so is located and what it is called, if indeed it has some of the people of God in it}, joined and knit together {today with even separations and competitions between churches of the same denomination, we just can not see that “joining” of all churches and denominations; and especially we can not see the “knit together”) by what every {7} joint supplies {if this were really true today then we could say that the joint at First Baptist Church at seventh and main supplies a part share to the Roman Catholic Church on Preston Road, but we all know that it is not working that way, and in this message from I Corinthians we must discuss that}, according to the effective working by which every part {8} does its share {do you think that some churches of some denominations are not doing their share of work and ministry for Christ?}, causes growth of the body {9} for the edifying of itself in love.” (Ephesians 4:12-16)

Immediately, and before we get into the 9 ways you can recognize a gift of utterance and knowledge as being from the Ascended Christ, is the general statement that if the utterance or special knowledge builds up the speaker or the speaker’s prosperity instead of the total body of Christ, then the edification is of the so-called Bible teacher himself or herself rather than of the total body of Christ. {Since II Corinthians has the message of “The Ministry”, we will have to be
patient through the next chapter on II Corinthians before we can properly deal with all 9 of these proofs of utterances and knowledge from Jesus.)

2. The gift of utterance and knowledge is given only to those members of the local church who can meet the standards of I Corinthians 1:1-9: (1) you must honestly be able to say that you are a member of the "church of God" at such and such a location with reference to the fact that this is the total body of Christ, written in heaven, it in no way being sufficient to stake a claim based on a local church or denomination; (2) you must be among "those who are sanctified" in Christ Jesus, this sanctification being the God part of our salvation after we believe, the "believe and be baptized" of the great commission of Jesus, and which is the constant them of this volume on the letters of the Apostle Paul, that sanctification most often known as the One Baptism, or the total work that God does inside us; (3) you must be called to be saint, and while you are at the stage in your believer's life that you feel strange about that word, you must recognize the sense that you are called to become that, that is a saint--yes with all the holiness and righteousness of a saint in the Scriptural sense of the word, not to be confused with the teachings of certain men about sainthood; (4) you must recognize your place in the larger group of "all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord--He is their Lord and our Lord, and to act in any way differently, or superiority, or the elect of the elect, is to contradict your place in that larger group, that is in the Assembly of the Firstborn, written in heaven; (5) the grace of God was given to you; (6) at the giving of that grace of God, you were "enriched in everything" {this is spiritual gifts which are far more important than material gifts which are never to be sought with priority, but here as always the practitioners of the Gospel of Wealth, of Success, and Prosperity will take it and run with it}, the everything here quickly focusing on "by {Christ} in all utterance and all knowledge"--you want to speak spiritual utterances and you want to show spiritual knowledge, well the source must be Jesus Christ, the grace to do that must not come first from the local TV station, but also from as a grace of God whereby you were "enriched" in everything; (7) the testimony of Jesus Christ must be confirmed in you even as the Apostle Paul confirmed in the church of God at Corinth that it was in some of them; (8) your group is short of no gift in utterance and knowledge that Paul is about to discuss in I Corinthians; (9) you are "eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, obviously the Second Coming, and that the emphasis of your life shows that eager waiting--you can wait that long to be prosperous to the extent that you need to be prosperous, always seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; (10) year by year you should sense the confirmation of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself in your life if nothing but the silent hearing of "Abba" for Our Father in heaven; (11) you should also be seeing progress toward being "blameless" in your life, an increasing holiness and righteousness as you grow in the words of Ephesians toward the full stature of the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ; (12) you should realize that God is faithful, not only will He not suffer you to be tempted above that which you are able, but He will provide for
you wisdom in the words of the Apostle James, when you ask in faith—catchy huh, faith in the faithfulness of God; and (13) you should have the understanding to comprehend that you are called into nothing less than “the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord”.


That the subject of I Corinthians centers around “wisdom” and “understanding” is clear from the number of places those two words are found.

1. For example the short quote from the OT, from Isaiah 29:14, in 1:19 contains both wisdom and understanding. This quote was deemed important enough by the Spirit to repeat it in I Corinthians, and perhaps it can be the beginning of our own understanding of the very nature of wisdom, including how understanding and wisdom are related.

“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.” (Isaiah 29:14 and I Cor 1:19)

(1). Let is no way to misunderstand that God will destroy the wisdom of the wise; and since we know about the wise, or those respected by society as the wise, especially the university teachers, authors, and many of the PhDs and ThDs who deny almost everything about the Bible, a case in point being the Jesus Seminar who deny that Jesus said most of what is in the Gospel of John. “Understanding of the prudent” is a little harder. Is this like in much of the OT, especially Proverbs, the saying of the same thing in two different ways, meaning that there is little or no difference between “understanding” and “wisdom”, or does it establish two categories: one for the wise and one for the prudent, corresponding to one for wisdom and one understanding. First, we will look at the context of Isaiah 29, and we immediately see that we are talking understanding and wisdom related to the Word of God: in 29:11 it is a matter of a vision coming in the words of a book, a common matter in all the Prophets, but the book is sealed and that reminds us of people who say I read the Bible but it is hard to understand {so already we see this choice of quote by Paul to talk about the understanding of spiritual matters}, a sealed book that the literate {educated and wise} say they can not understand because it is sealed and the illiterate {uneducated and prudent} simple say, “I am not educated” {sound familiar, but this is in Isaiah 29}; and then in 29:13, there is that same line of reasoning Jesus used in explaining what all things are taught in parables which is because (a) God’s people of Israel were participating in worship with their mouths and honoring God with their lips, but they kept their hearts far away from God {it should remind you of the present problem among church members of the perilous times of I Timothy 4:1-4 where church members “have a form of godliness but deny the power thereof”}, and (b) respect for God is taught by the commandments of men instead according to the authority of the Word of God {God doesn’t like that}, and (c) we might add from Jesus that the
people see and do not see, hear and do not understanding which Jesus in the Gospels applied to almost all of God’s people in Israel during His lifetime. Therefore I think that from the context, we can easily decide that the wise are the equivalent of the literate and the prudent are the illiterate. (Isaiah 29:14b is worded as the “prudent men”, and what I think we are getting at here is Mr. Average kingdom member with his common sense and practical capabilities, yet no understanding or wisdom on spiritual matters.)

(2). How are these prudent men; and since we are talking about understanding and wisdom as almost the same, then wise and prudent are almost the same, but each word explaining more of how they have no understanding because of the way they worship with their hearts elsewhere. It is like the psalmist wrote, “The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom”. Since they have no respect or regard for God except what is being taught by the inadequate commandments (or teachings) of men, then there is no real basis or foundation for understanding and wisdom. This context meaning is also clarified in Isaiah 29:9-10 where we see the theme of seeing without seeing and hearing without hearing repeated with reference to the words of how God has poured out a “deep sleep” on His people; He has closed the eyes of the people; and He identifies those eyes as the Prophets; and further God has covered the heads of the people of God, namely the seers. Ah, as we look at the wise as the literate and the prophets, we are looking at the prudent as the illiterate and seers. (It is also important in order for us to distinguish in I Corinthians between Prophets who give revelations and visions from God and the prophets and prophetess of the early Christian period who warned Paul, to think of the Prophets as the prophets and the prophetesses as the seers of things much nearer and mundane.)

But back to the prudent (29:15-16): they dig a deep hole to hide their counsel far from the LORD, these being the attitudes and instructions, customs and traditions with the teachings of men if you would, that guide the daily and yearly paths of their lives; the works follow along with the counsel (you might also consider it a common family, group, or community understanding for guidance) so that the works created by the group guidance are darkness; the people of God say “who sees us” and “who knows us”, that is no one is looking or directing us so that we can follow our own path; but God says that they have things backwards, can the clay say to the potter you did not make me and you do not understand me, obviously the creatures saying to the Creator that you do not understand us and we have no obligation to you. Therefore we would have to conclude that they are prudent with respect for God and His power, prudent with their obligations to Him, and prudent with the knowledge of the Sermon on the Mount, how God has the very hairs of the head numbered, knows the seatings and risings like He knows when a sparrow falls.

(3). Now, we can check this understanding of Isaiah 29:14 and context with the explanation of the Apostle Paul in I Corinthians 1:19 of the quote; for remember
that is the very purpose of the OT quotes most of the time, to state them and then to give the Authorized Semi-Public Interpretation. What follows after 1:19 by way of explanation? Well, first (a) Paul elaborates on what Isaiah meant about the wise and prudent as where is the wise, scribe, disputers of this age, and how God has made foolish all the wisdom of this world; (b) it was through the wisdom {spiritual} of God that this world through wisdom {natural wisdom of this world} did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe {and this is the marvelous work that God would again work among His people of Isaiah 29, starting with the preaching of the Gospel by Jesus Himself and continuing through the Apostles and other disciples}, and further the foolishness of the message from the worldly standpoint is that a wise way of life would come through the death of the Son of God on a cross, the death and sacrifice more like a criminal than like a hero in battle. {You see the difference between the way the world thinks about wisdom and the cross as compared to the way believers think about wisdom and the cross.}

2. The word wisdom is found often beyond the quote of Isaiah 29:14: in I Cor 1:20 God makes foolish the wisdom of this world; in 1:21 it is “the wisdom of God”, the world using the approach of their own wisdom but not finding God that way {you can see more of this in Romans 1}; in 1:22 while the Greeks seek after wisdom, the Jews seek after a sign or miracle {and recall Paul’s experience at Mar’s Hill in Athens before Corinth where philosophers listened all day to something different and new, and were so religious that they even had a tomb to the unknown God--by the way you might also consider such seekers after wisdom and philosophers as the prudent and wise}; in 1:24 the cross is the wisdom of God as well as the power of God although a stumblingblock to the Jews and foolishness to the Greeks; in 1:30 it is the Lord Jesus Christ who became for us wisdom from God {marvel on that for a while, but we will come back to it}, this wisdom from God identified here as the whole salvation process of “righteousness”, “sanctification”, and “redemption”; in 2:5 the faith of church members should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God {in modern thought patterns I would say not in the American Democratic Faith as much as in the power of God}; in 2:6 Paul and company speak wisdom for the mature which is not the same as the wisdom of this age, and it is also not the wisdom of the rulers of this age, the rulers of which are well on the way to becoming “nothing”; in 2:7 it is the wisdom of God in the hidden form of a “mystery”, a mystery that God ordained before the ages of history and for our glory {you hear some more of Ephesians here, and in reality in I Corinthians and in the other first 10 of Paul’s epistles what we have developed in the truth of Scriptures that will be summarized in Ephesians}, the specific reference being developed here is of how “God chose us in Christ from before the foundation of the world and determined us to be Sons”. Enough, if you look in YOUNG’S CONCORDANCE you will find that “wisdom” is found 15 times in I Corinthians, contrasted to once in II Corinthians, 3 times in Ephesians, 6 times in
Colossians, only once in Romans and none in Hebrews; and from the other NT writers, 3 times in Matthew, once in Mark, 6 times in Luke, once in Peter, four in James, and 4 in Revelation; therefore we can base on the text of I Corinthians itself decide that both God, Christ, the Spirit and Paul wanted us to have understanding on wisdom and understanding in the book of I Corinthians; and whatever we find as a gist for I Cor to distinguish it as one of the 14 letters from Paul, that gist must include either wisdom, understanding, or some combination of the two.

3. Remember, we are after in I Cor 2 the very nature of spiritual wisdom. We should do a quick exegesis of the thought flow from 2:1-16: (1) when Paul was with this church at Corinth to declare the “testimony of God”, it was not by the means of excellent speech or of wisdom, you seeing in the very beginning of wisdom definition, a reference back to the first words of the epistle related to utterance and knowledge; (2) Paul carefully planned and chose his message to the church to be only on Jesus Christ and His crucifixion; (3) while human wisdom {of course we are again on one aspect of the wisdom of this world} includes “persuasive words”, Paul’s message and preaching included weakness, fear, trembling {here I think we are seeing some of the aspects of the illness of Paul which showed itself in his appearance}, included a demonstration of the Spirit and of power; (4) that the faith generated by hearing the message {remember that faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God} should stand, not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God; (5) okay the wisdom from the Apostles and companion disciples is (a) a wisdom among the mature, (b) not the wisdom of this age or of the nothing rulers of this age, (c) wisdom spoken in a mystery which God made known recently, and (d) a wisdom which the rulers of this age did not know since they crucified the Lord of glory {so that the wise rulers of the age of Paul are clearly identified as the religious leaders of the time of Christ, you know the scribes, Sadducees, Pharisees, and rulers who always opposed Jesus and had Him put to death}, but according to the will of God; (5) Paul quotes again from Isaiah, this time in 64:4 to the extent that what God has prepared in eternity for those who live, eye has not seen, nor ear heard, or even the heart of man has not enough imagination to conceive of; (6) however God has revealed them to us through His Spirit.

4. And we must pause here to lock onto this second usage of the word “revelation”. The first was in 1:7 and was an eager expectation for the revelation of Jesus Christ at the Second Coming. That is where we know Jesus most fully for we shall physically see Him with our own eyes. This second usage of the word relates to the Revelation of the Word of God, where we can not see but by faith. {The wisdom of the world, especially today in physics, technology, and to the extent that the social sciences like to practice the scientific method place an emphasis on what can be seen or physically determined by measurements. Remember however according to the definition of faith in Hebrews 11:1 “faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” We reasonable expect, that is the
hope of the Bible, that God has spoken to us through the words of the Scriptures, and we have a lot of real evidence that the Bible of 66 books is the Word of God although we do not see the Holy Spirit, nor did we see the writing of the Scriptures, but we can see, read, and hear the results of those Revelations.}

“But God has revealed them {the “them” we know to be the mysteries of God plan for us from before Creation} to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.” (I Corinthians 2:10)

(1). God has REVEALED this formerly hidden wisdom based on His decisions from before Creation, the wisdom of the what and how of our salvation. Those revelations are in His Son, in the teachings of His Son, and in the written words of the Old and New Testaments.

(2). The means of communication from God to man was the Holy Spirit. Jesus said when He is come, and He did on the first day of Pentecost after the Ascension, then He would teach disciples all things and bring all things to their remembrance. Paul tells us that “all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable....” Peter said that Paul wrote Scriptures and that in the OT Scriptures “holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit”, further Peter said that sometimes the Prophets themselves did not understand what they were recording, but wrote it as lead by the Spirit of Christ {there is hardly any difference between the Spirit of Christ in the OT and the Holy Spirit in the NT and beyond}.

(3). The Holy Spirit searches the deep things of God, of God’s character, of God’s will, and of all those marvelous things that God has prepared for the loving.

A Wrap-Up of I Corinthians 2 on the Nature of Wisdom

Can we therefore say that there will be no wisdom from God except what God the Holy Spirit has chosen to REVEAL in the Scriptures. Yes, there would be one exception if we had been alive to hear one of the Apostles or disciples give their testimony to what they saw and heard from Jesus Himself; but we have those testimonies anyway in what Matthew recorded, Mark, Luke, and John, and Peter and Paul, the testimonies that Simon Greenleaf, the expert on legal evidence, is a prima facie case that would stand up as reliable testimony in any court of law.

We must add here that there is no room here for extra-curricula revelations whether it comes from a so-called Prophet of the Mormon Church, from the Pope, or from the Pentecostals who says often “God gave me a word” or “God told me”. This is not and can not be a Revelation. It can be an illumination of the Revelation, but not Revelation itself. We could also make the dogmatic statement based on what we have seen in I Corinthians that: ANY REVELATION NOT COMING DIRECTLY FROM THE SCRIPTURES IS NOT PART OF THE SPIRITUAL WIS-
5. *(I Cor 2 continued and concluded from above):* (7) We as part of humanity with a human spirit know about man from that spirit, and likewise only the Spirit can fully comprehend the things of God; (8) the spirit of this world is that human spirit, but that is not what we received when we believed, rather we received the Spirit who is from God, and in order that we might KNOW the things that have been given of the Spirit from God.

6. Again we must pause on I Cor 2:12 to distinguish between: knowing the things from God and those things which have been given from God by the Spirit, between in other words the Revelation, which is the original giving to us of the things of God, and the Illumination, which is the knowing of the things previously given to us. The Revelations are there and in the 66 books of the Bible since they were put there by the Spirit of God of all the deep things that God wants us to know, but that does you not one iota of good until you “know” those things through illumination. Not only must be briefly look at this in 2:12 but also in the summary of Ephesians 1. *(You see this goes to the very nature of the wisdom of this world, the wisdom that comes from God through Revelation, and the understanding of those revelations through the illumination of the same Spirit who wrote them in the first place.)*

(1). I Corinthians 2:12.

“Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.”

To the Bible as the Word of God meaning it is divine in origin, absolute in authority, and high fidelity in communication, we might add "freely given of God" instead of the standard sufficient in message and "all the deep things of God that the Spirit can dig up"!

(2). Revelation and Illumination Summarized in Ephesians 1:17-19.

“...that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you *(Never forget that God the Father is the ultimate source of the Spirit, this spirit of wisdom and revelation)...the spirit of wisdom and revelation *(well, isn’t that what we have been talking about in I Cor 2 of how the wisdom from God, not to be confused with the wisdom of this world, is made known by through revelation--don’t you like the Holy Spirit here being called the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation, and by the way although the Spirit does work on our Spirit, here it should have been capitalized as NJV)...in the knowledge of Him, the ears of your understanding being enlightened *(there it is, immediately after the Revelation is the Illumination with the words of “your understanding being...*
enlightened”)...that you may know (and there after illumination or enlightenment is the KNOWING)."

And now we will not get into the specifics of the knowing of these deep things of God which Paul summarizes as the hope of Christ’s calling (the one hope), the riches of the inheritance in the saints (the one body), and the greatness of His power on our behalf (the one Spirit and perhaps even in the one baptism). We will save that for the chapter on Ephesians where all the great truths of the first ten epistles from Paul are summarized, and primarily without OT quote.

(3). While we are on the Spirit God has given to us, we should relate that to how to LEARN CHRIST and initial salvation, most generally called the new birth, sanctification, and glorification, but which has a problem today in leading to more “tares” in the churches and the kingdom as it is an instantaneous new birth being presented, preached, and practiced rather than the more like 9 month physical birth to which Jesus made the contribution (for more on this subject of new birth and the falling away see the two commentaries based on Mark of CUP OF WATER and WHAT THE CHURCHES DON'T WANT YOU TO HEAR).

“But you have not so learned Christ (this makes it obvious immediately that church members can learn Christ improperly and inadequately to the extent that they yield to the peer pressure of other Gentiles)...if indeed you have heard Him (wow, that takes a lot of nerve for a preacher to question the salvation of a church member with the big “IF”) and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus...” (Ephesians 4:20,21)

What is really required for salvation, for the Learning of Christ if you would is: (1) to hear Jesus in your heart as He says I and My Father knock at the door of your heart, and if you open up we will come in and sup with you, and you with us; and (2) and been taught by Him, the way of the teaching of Jesus now is through the Holy Spirit as John makes clear from the teachings of Jesus in John 14.

How to Understand the Bible from I Cor 2:13-16

While many good books have been written on hermeneutics, the science of biblical interpretation the best of which are from Bernard Ramm, the Bible itself in many places lays down the requirements for understanding of Itself. Some of these principles are given in the concluding four verses of I Corinthians 2, based on the background of the total chapter 2 context.

(1). You must have respect for the Apostles like Paul and the Prophets as the only mediums through which Revelation from God has been given to man; and when in 2:13 Paul says the “we” he primarily speaks in reference to himself and the other Apostles, perhaps even the Prophets of the OT. The words given to Paul, the words preached by Paul, and the words written by Paul are words that come from the Holy Spirit, not from the words generated in the wisdom of men. Like B.H.
Carroll stresses in his commentaries, the actual words in the Scriptures were inspired as written in the original Hebrew and Greek languages.

(2). The teachings of the Holy Spirit as recorded in the Bible compare spiritual things with spiritual. Paul in I Corinthians with Isaiah, Isaiah with Romans, and Romans with I Corinthians and Mark and Matthew and therefore with Jesus. When the Spirit Revealed Scriptures the comparison was made between spiritual in the OT with spiritual in the NT, and you can see that in the mode and pattern of OT quotes in the NT, especially from Jesus Himself; and further when the Spirit internal to you Illuminates or Enlightens you on the teachings, it is by comparing the spiritual things your spirit already knows and from one place in the Bible with the spiritual things you are coming to know from another place in the Bible. I think we could summarize this principles of hermeneutics as “Read your Bible: it will throw a lot of light on the commentaries.”

(3). Of course, most of the world does not understand the Bible; of course there are many interpretations based on the wisdom of the world, and that do not utilize the ASI method of interpretation (“no scripture is of any private interpretation”, so that we must have not a public but a semi-public and authorized by the Spirit interpretation); of course there are many denominations and differences of opinions since most of the world can not understand the Bible as they use the wisdom of PhDs, ThDs, and the scribes of the world; and of course there are degrees of maturity in the understanding of the Bible. Why? Because “the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” (I Cor 2:14)

(4). The degree to which you have come to think like Christ and feel like Christ, and do the will of God like Christ, is the extent to which you will have maturity in the understanding by illumination of the Scriptures; and Paul again quotes from Isaiah, this time Isaiah 40:13, to let Isaiah ask the question of “who knows the mind of God” and then to answer by way of interpretation and according to the Spirit, “we have the mind of Christ.”

8-5: Extra-Biblical Revelations and the Anointing.
Mark Laury likes to joke about the different denominations, and how the Pentecostals or charismatics—whichever one you chose to call them, but you know the group of which I speak—have miracles and the Baptists any many other denominations do not. From this same group has come many other extra-biblical revelations like the Gospel of Prosperity, pleading the blood of Jesus, special protection for the family, and on and on; and at bottom to this extensive problem is not something new, rather something old and superficial that has been revived, and which at heart is nothing less than the teachings of men substituted for the Revelations through the Apostles and Prophets. While these Pentecostals and others famous on TV would not want to admit this or hear it, they have placed themselves in the same category of extra-
biblical revelations as the Roman Catholics--where the Pope can speak revelations, the Mormons--where the President every time he speaks is speaking revelation, not to mention the other four Bibles that Joseph Smith gave through revelations with the help of an angel from the other side, the Church of Scientology has their revelations. It is true that when Jesus gave the great commission of “believe and be baptized”, He told the Apostles that God would bless their preaching to believers with signs: those signs being the casting out of devils, the speaking of new languages, an immunity to poison of serpents or deadly drinks, and that the sick will be healed. However, just like with Jesus in His preaching and healing ministry, these miracle-signs were exactly that, signs but not the message itself; and the signs were a blessing for God that the message also came from God. None of these accompanying miracle-signs were ever meant to be the message itself. If you listen to many of the charismatics today, you will find that the extra-biblical message of “anointing” has taken the place of the message of the cross of Jesus. This very large group recognizing where their bread, and greed, is buttered have subtle developed an extra-biblical message they know to be popular centered around the concept and man-made teachings of the “anointing”.

This teaching of men is more subtle in that the word “anointing” is actually mentioned in the Bible. Let us quickly take a look at the places in the NT where the word is used, providing some faithful exegesis of the Scriptures in the context, rather than doing as the charismatic teachers do, take a word or verse and go everywhere teachings. This is also called “isogesis” which is reading meaning into the Scriptures. Of course the most famous usage of all is by Jesus as recorded in Luke 4:18 which ironically when you consider today’s usages like they are as efforts to solicit money, was an anointing from God in order that Jesus could preach the gospel to the poor. (These charismatics seek to fleece the poor, and to gain from the rich, while at the same time glorying in how God has blessed them with the prosperity gained from the poor and the rich. Surely they must remind you of the scribes about whom Jesus said they make long prayers for the widows in order to gain the little money they have. And this gives us a clue as to what we will try to develop in this chapter on I Cor and the one to follow on II Cor, how these contemporary movement of the charismatics is a revival of old practices, from both the Jews and the Greeks where the Jews seek a sign and the Greeks seek wisdom. Admittedly, there has been some evolution of these twin methods from Satan and the world in that the contemporary charismatics--and indeed all who seek the status of an apostle or prophet with extra-biblical revelations...these contemporary extra-biblical revelationists have subtle developed for personal profit and status, a compromise message of both signs and wisdom.)

“The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor...” (Luke 4:18)
And we know when and how this Spirit of the LORD descended on Christ in a special way at the water baptism by John the Baptist in order for Jesus at age 30 to be empowered to start His ministry. It was an exception ministry, especially to preach the gospel to the poor, and it required special empowerment from God; however, you must recall that this special anointing had only started with the Spirit descending in the form of a dove, it still required fasting for 40 days and nights and victory in battle over Satan. {By the way, the Spirit of God could have descended quietly and unseen, the invisible and secret being more the province of the Holy Spirit like God the Father, but the visibility of the dove was a sign for John the Baptist and other disciples and would-be disciples. God the Father then reinforced His blessings on Jesus of Nazareth as the Son of God by giving a personal testimony that “This is My Beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased.”} If these extra-biblical advocates want to identify with the anointing of Jesus, where is the dove; and if they want to simulate the historical event of the coming of the Holy Spirit on the first day of Pentecost after the Ascension, where are the cloven tongues and the sound of the rushing and mighty wind. I know how they try to simulate the speaking in tongues which in the great commission, in the sending out of the twelves, in the sending out of many other disciples, in that day of Pentecost, and in subsequent NT practices, were real language: as one young Afro-American friend overheard a well-known charismatic preacher teaching a young convert how to speak in an unknown tongue, not at all a real language, by first speaking slowly a few designated syllables then speeding up on the incantation. And the artificial nature of most of these charismatic behaviors is something we must face up to. Along with the usage of the magic word "anointing", not at all like the anointing of the NT, they will convince you of how they are in revival; and if you do not see that revival, they will then remind you that you are in it! Brethren, this is nothing more than the old practice condemned by Isaiah, reinforced by Jesus, and reiterated by Paul when he was faced with the same problem in the church at Corinth, the age-old problem among God’s people of honor for God with the lips and mouth, in worship and praise, while the hearts are far away from God. With their heart outside of the worship place, somewhere on things or status or prosperity or greed, they have simulated the emotions of the heart with God by a waving of arms, shouting, jumping, and many other artificial gyrations, not to be confused with the real worship of God.

The central message of the Old Testament Writing Prophets is the same, as I try to make clear in volume 5 of the LEARN CHRIST commentaries, “The Message of the Writing Prophets”. While they are many messages in the prophets like the Gospel, the resurrection, the Living God, and Righteousness, the most common message of all the Writing Prophets (the majors, minors, and David) is summarized as follows. God’s people are not acting like God’s people. God is honored with lips and mouth in worship and praise, but the heart of the people of God is far away from God. They come into their large temples dedicated to God, and they say like in Jeremiah, “We are Safe”. We are in God’s house and God’s country: we are safe,
secure, and comfortable. Like a “den of thieves” referenced to by Jeremiah and quoted by Jesus, they live like they want to all weak, robbing the poor and committing spiritual adultery toward God, then on worship day, they come saying as long as we have these buildings, this community, and this country, we are okay. But God says, the Prophets consistently told us, He has already leveled a judgement of disaster on them, in some cases for their redemption and in other cases terminal; and that disaster depending on which Prophet is sometimes captivity, other times natural disaster, and always the disaster of blindness to the truth. God’s people come to see artificials as reality and realities as artificial. They are blind to truth; but the saddest disaster of all is that they are unaware of that blindness. The false prophets and false teachers encourage them that they have peace, revival, and correctness of answers while in reality they find it impossible to be converted and saved. {However, you can read about this in volume 5, and there will be so additional references in the following chapters since Paul constantly quotes from the OT Prophets for support and in order to explain what even his own people, while being custodians of the Scriptures, did not come to understand.}

Now, we quickly look at the other NT references to “anointing”: in Matthew 6:17 with advice from Jesus on how to fast so as not to attract attention to yourself (the opposite of what most charismatics desire) by anointing your head with hair oil in order to properly comb it; in Luke 6:13 many sick were anointed with oil and many demons cast out as the twelve were sent out by twos to preach the gospel of repentance {Jesus Himself gave them a special power over unclean spirits, Jesus urged them to keep their money-belts empty, and to cast out demons--do you see any of these miracle-workers casting out demons, and perhaps it is because as Jesus said that Satan can not cast out Satan, and indeed some will sell you that anointed oil for a profit?}, and don’t you begin to get the picture that all of this message of anointing is for personal profit, also of the Gospel of Prosperity; in Mark 16:1 the attempt to anoint the Risen body of Jesus had a very practical purpose of preservation as was the custom in that day, also of embalming in this day; in Luke 7:38 when the woman of sin and in the house of a Pharisee (how bad!) first washed the feet of Jesus with tears, wiped them with her hair {all that she could do and with a act of repentance and adoration}, kissed the feet of Jesus and anointed them {also a local custom of washing feet with a little relish of adoration}, and perhaps we could come closer to accepting the extra-biblical revelations of these charismatics if we actually saw in their anointings more adoration for Jesus than for themselves and their gain; in John 11:1,2 the Apostle John reminds us that the woman who anointed the feet of Jesus was Mary, she had made the town of Bethany famous for Bible readers where also Lazarus and Mary’s sister Martha lives; in John 12:3 where Jesus came back to Bethany, Mary did it again, anointing the feet of Jesus with a very costly oil and wiping with her hair {you don’t see any of these leaders doing that, rather they want you to anoint them}, and Jesus told Judas to leave her alone because of the cost, for she has
purchased this costly ointment for her burial {which can you most carefully identify these advocates of anointing with, Jesus and Mary or with Judas}; in James 5:14, the Apostle James calls for church leaders when called by the sick, to get out there in their homes, pray over them and anoint them with oil for the purpose of healing {these are costly acts, the cost of travel to homes and the cost of the oil, which would be too much overhead and much more difficult than simply anointing at a distance over radio or TV, and by the way we must add her how if the prayer of these church leaders {elders} is really a prayer of faith, the sick will be healed, God will raise them up, and sins will be forgiven them}; in Revelation 3:18 the lukewarm church of Laodicea was given a message from the Ascended Christ and through the Apostle John "to anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see", perhaps the kind of anointing that these charismatics should practice to see the Revelations already in the Bible so that they will not find a necessity to generate their own, and likewise this might be a cure for the blindness among God's people of which the OT Prophets often spoke, also Jesus reiterated, and Paul said would be a characteristic of God's people during the Falling Away as the people of God became intolerant of sound doctrine; in John 9:6 Jesus with spit and dirt anointed the eyes of the man blind from birth, and when Jesus found him again, leading Him to faith after the anointment {by the way it is here that Jesus said He has come into the world for judgment, a judgment already hanging over the head of most of the Jews and especially the religious leaders, a judgment to make some see and to make others blind (9:39); in Acts 4:27 as the first church at Jerusalem heard of the miracles of preservation and healing from the Apostle Peter and other apostles, the whole church spoke of how God had anointed His holy servant Jesus, and further identified this anointing as a matter of to win victory against all the opposition of the time, and I think what our brethren have done, if we may graciously call them brethren rather than leaders of the tares, is confuse the anointing of Jesus with what happened after the prayer of the whole church and of faith--(1) a plea was made for God to stretch out His hand and heal, (2) for signs and wonders to be done by God through the name of Jesus, (3) after the fervent and righteousness prayer of faith of the whole church, the place of assembly was shaken {have you seen any real shaking from God other than the vibration caused by jumping up and down and loud music}, (4) they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, this comes closest to a real anointing and was of the whole church; and (5) the real result of this anointing if we can press the meaning of the word a little was to speak "the word of God with boldness", not with boldness to generate some new word or words from God in order to gain distinction and prove that you and your group have THE MESSAGE and THE ANSWER. {By the way we are not in any way trying to deny that Jesus and the Apostles had a special anointing from God, perhaps much like the anointing from the charismatics which is hard to define, an anointing that included the giving of Revelations through the Word of God and also miracles; but we are set against giving that power and wisdom to all of those who claim it on TV, where it is obvious that
their primary goal is profit, and we don't even know who commissioned and called them in the first place unless it was another loony charismatic. Popularity and numbers is not a good sign in this day and time when we are obviously well into the Falling Away. Popularity is a sign now of those teachers of itching ears who are heaped up by church members who reject sound doctrine and seek out and heap up teachers and preachers who will feed their desires (II Timothy 4:3,4).

In Acts 10:38 the anointing of Jesus by God is clear as (1) an anointing with the Holy Spirit and with power (wouldn't they wish and claim it for themselves); (2) an anointing on Jesus from God in order to go about doing good; (3) an anointing of Jesus from God in order to heal all of those who are oppressed by the devil (this rather than presently an almost total absence for obvious reasons, would be a good emphasis for specific anointing to rescue people from the devil); (4) and the "for God was with Him" of Acts 10:38 is one of the best single phrase definitions of what the Bible truly means of an anointing stolen by the charismatics and with attempts to apply to themselves, it is a proof that God is on the side of Jesus--we just must doubt because of their subversion in status, fellowship, and profit that God is similarly on the side of these "revelators" and miracle workers.

We know that God is still healing in response to the prayer of faith, that prayer of faith coming from the individual in need of healing. Jesus when He healed said that He was continuing to do the works of God that He had seen God do which means, bottom line, that Jesus saw God the Father heal many times, and therefore He continued to heal. However, God chose to do these things in secret even as Jesus asked the healed to keep it secret. God likes to heal like He asks us to pray, in the closet and in secret. And even as Jesus used spit and dirt as a medium of anointing for healing, why is it a strange thing that God increasing in history used the healing of medical doctors, at least as far as they can go; and why is it consider a strange thing that God uses language training in schools, even as Paul so acquired the ability in many tongues in schooling, to speak the Gospel to all the nations; and likewise why should be considered so a strange thing that the Holy Spirit quietly comes in and on individuals as part of the one baptism that comes immediately with the believing and the 9 month new birth.

We must look at two on “anointed” from the Apostle Paul before we proceed in I Cor and with the 14 letters from the Apostle Paul. In II Corinthians 1:21, which we will come to in more detail in the next chapter, it is in the first chapter and in these verses of which 21 is a part, “and has anointed us is God”, as though Paul who making a reminder of the uniqueness of the "us" of the same verse as elaborated on in the Wisdom from God of I Corinthians before he gets into Apostolic revelations of “The Ministry” in II Corinthians. The “we” and “us” which we must discuss more in the next chapter is obviously as listed in the previous verse of 1:19 is the Apostle Paul, the evangelist Silvanus, and the evangelist Timothy; and to say that this are anointed is another way of saying what we have previously covered from
Ephesians, that it is the Ascended Christ who gives the gifts of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, those gifts being different for each office, as Paul will discuss in I Cor and II Cor, and that a pastor, teacher, or evangelist, who have the gifts of illumination, since he does not have the gift of revelation is not to do the work of an Apostle. And on a very positive note we should add in the total context how God establishes the “us” with the “you”, the designated leaders chosen by Christ with the believers. He (God) (1) seals both leaders and believers, (2) God gives both the designated leaders and the believers the Spirit (the Spirit is no unique gift of the loud mouth or gifted), and (3) that Spirit is a guarantee in both the heart of the designated leaders and the designated believers. Amen, Amen, and Amen.

8-6: The Wise, the Miracle-seekers, and the Wind-Bags.

Although we have a long ways to go, much further than chapter 2, to do justice to I Cor, we will have to continue that in the next chapter, since we have been making special effort to present I Cor even as all the letters of Paul in the total context of the NT, the context of the OT Prophets, and in the context of the environment where we live in this day and time, an environment which demands the treatment from I Cor 1:18-25 of the “wise”, the miracle seekers—it was the Jews in the time of Jesus but is the charismatics today, and the windbags. Perhaps I should try to define windbags as those loud mouths with the gift of gab who attempt to convince you that they have the answer or the solution. In the secular world, people like Oprah Winfrey and Rush Limbaugh have capitalized with the windbag approach on the present popularity of windbag ship. During my college days it was Joe McCarthy who had all the answers, but they became unpopular; and for a while in American thought, it was the person with a little humility in most fields except for one field where he could prove competence that was the accepted authority. In those days, just before the advent of the windbag period in American history, it was an authority of demonstrated wisdom, of education and training; whereas today it is an authority of who can speak the loudest and to the most people and the longest. The emphasis has gone from knowledge to the lip and mouth.

“Now, Talk is the principle product of the world: it comes out of loud speakers, after-dinner speakers, and just plain windbags. It is spoken in every language known to man and especially women. Everyone agrees that there is too much of it, but how do you get less without doing more.”

And as these many heaped up Bible teachers and preachers (they have many names for themselves like apostles and prophetess and so on) came hardly been blamed for witnessing how in the society environment of America, it was popular to both be a wind bag and to have all the answers. Further, as the social and religious phenomena itself of the Falling Away should testify to you, they were assisted by thousands of church members who (1) would no longer endure sound doctrine, (2) who encouraged them by heaping up such teachers to themselves, and making them popular, and
(3) who wanted out of their own desires to tickle their ears and to comfort their hearts. So what did we get? Among many other itching ears teachings amassed in the last few years, we have gotten “how to live the good life now?”, we have received from loud mouths with sufficient Bible knowledge or proof of any Bible training or commission to do so the “living of the everyday life”, and the living of the extraordinary life--in each case they want you to be like them, God forbid, as they are your examples for how to live those kinds of lives; and let us not leave out the anointers and the advocates of the Gospel of Prosperity. You know if we had no other proofs of the Falling Away than the two following, it should be sufficient: (1) the silence from pulpits and on radio and TV about the Falling Away, and (2) the phenomena we see know of a numberless, like the sands of the sea, multitude of varied Bible teachers with novel things to say, which I hope are a resounding sound to some of you, like a noted improperly struck on a public organ.

That brings me to the "wise" and the miracle-seekers of I Corinthians 1:18-25. The Wind-Bags I have coined to describe the contemporary teachers of itching ears teachings. You will notice that in most cases if not all they claim to have “the message” and “the answer”. You see this is the reason that you do not hear today from the churches or from other popular Bible teachers about the Falling Away. How in the world can they admit that they are leaders in the falling away, and leaders in the sense that they have more to fall away from since they have seen the works of God longer, and still make the claim before you that they have the answer and that they have the message. Recently in Dallas Texas, by perhaps the largest church in the Metroplex and no doubt one with 23,000 of the largest churches in the SBC, the announcement was made of a campaign for 50 million dollars in order to build a satellite church in Frisco. Not a mission with a separate pastor and not to number into the 30,000 in order to exceed Lakewood Church in Houston and Bellevue in Memphis, but rather in their own words that “more people may hear the message”.

Prestonwood church members and leader seek after wisdom like the Greeks, showing pride in their PhDs and ThDs and status and large buildings of stone like the Temple in Jerusalem: the charismatics seek after signs, they want and fake miracles in order to prove that they are the very elect of God. Both wisdom, signs, and wind are used to convince large groups, where popularity is evident, that they are the elect of God and to comfort them as their use their own desires as a standard for what should be preached.

I know it sounds trite, but it is still the Word of God, to repeat with Paul, the following--

“but we preach Christ crucified...Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.” (I Corinthians 1:23-25)
We in this continued studied on I Corinthians, then II Corinthians, and further into the 14 letters of the Apostle Paul, always in the total context of the other Apostles, Jesus, and the Prophets will look carefully at this (1) foolishness of God, going far beyond wisdom and miracles, and (2) this weakness of God which goes far beyond the itching ears of the wind bags.

8-7: Wisdom on Apostles.
2. The Example of Paul as an Apostle, I Corinthians 9.
3. Some more of Apostolic work, I Corinthians 16.

8-8: Wisdom On Divisions and Contentious in the Church.
1. Introduction to a major local church problem, divisions, I Corinthians 1:10-17.
2. Wisdom on Contentions, I Corinthians 11.

8-9: Wisdom On Miscellaneous Church Matters {1,2,3}..., I Corinthians 1:16-17
1. Wisdom On Sexual Immorality in the Church.
2. Wisdom On Legal Matters.
3. Wisdom on Marriage.

8-10: Wisdom and Conscience.

8-11: Wisdom About the Falling Away.

8-12: Wisdom on Spiritual Gifts.
You can see that this wisdom on the spiritual gifts is the real body of I Corinthians, including the famous twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth chapter of I Corinthians.
1. The Mystery of the Total Body of Christ, Unity in Diversity, I Corinthians 12.

The Gospel is much larger than we might consider it to be, having like salvation the time phases of past, present, and future.
2. Our Hope Centers around the understanding of the Resurrection of Christ, 15:12-19.
3. Your Theology to be complete, that is your understanding or wisdom on theology, or I should say more importantly on the Bible, should go beyond Christ and the reign of Christ to the time when Christ delivers all to God the Father in order that “God the Father may be all in all”, 15:20-28.


8-14: “Believe” in the Letters of Paul Continued.

37. II Thessalonians 2:12. You have to admit that we have a pretty good statement of faith of our beliefs up to this point, simply by looking at the word “believe” in the letters of Paul, and simply by reading our Bibles. A conviction must be in our mental statement of faith that those who do not believe the truth of the Bible and the Gospel are indeed condemned, to an eternity without God and of punishment. Also that those good people have had much pleasure in unrighteousness. Definitely as Paul writes of bad church behavior characteristics in II Timothy, they had had been “lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God”. You stop to think about it, that is easy to do: to love and enjoy the pleasures of comfort and the good life over God.

38. I Timothy 1:16. Isn’t it amazing the nature of the Bible as itself a statement of faith, that you can go anywhere in the Bible where often all the majors that are important are repeated over and over and in different words and ways, and gain a good compendium of real Bible beliefs. For example, Paul reminds Timothy and other believers of how he obtained the mercy of God, although in persecuting Christians and in being a leader in the Jewish religion he really thought he was doing right; and if God by his mercy had not intervened we would have never had an Apostle Paul and his writings. God showed a pattern of longsuffering toward Paul that can encourage us with patience in our prayers and efforts for others on the way to destruction convinced they are right, and among the only right, those we pray “who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life.”

39. I Timothy 3:16. Bare minimum, you should receive an assurance of the correct way to Learn Christ in this commentary, the last words of the last chapter, or near the last words, telling the correct way to Learn Christ. It centers around John 14, the three questions asked by three Apostles; and the three answers by Jesus. Don’t miss it! In fact, read it now if you wish. What better way to Learn Jesus and how to learn Jesus than from the teachings of Jesus Himself. It relates to the way to heaven and God the Father; it relates to the way Jesus has provided in Himself and in the death on the cross; and it relates to the way in which all we believers can presently see God and Christ in a manner through faith that the rest of the world can not see, a way that God and Christ really come to take up residence in our lives and hearts. Yes, it is real! Oh yes, “without controversy great is the mystery of godliness”, the mystery of the way to godliness.
Whether by Revelation from an Apostle or Prophet, illumination from a pastor, teacher, or evangelist; or most importantly by our own efforts to read the Bible while meeting all the requirements that the Bible itself lays out for understanding, primarily with the help of the Holy Spirit—remember it is best in illumination to have the help of the author of the Bible, that being the Spirit of Christ or the Holy Spirit—our goal is to garner the Wisdom from above, the Wisdom of and from God. Also, we will try to practice more brevity in our exegesis and preaching. This, hopefully, will be achieved by choosing what is deemed to be the major verse of that section of Scripture; for example in the chapter 4 to follow 4:8,9 as the focal point. You will notice that the section below starts with "9-7" instead of "9-1". This is because the outline of I Corinthians continues from the last chapter. The last seven sections of the last chapter, only barely outlined, become the sections of this chapter with meat on them.

9-7: Wisdom on Apostles.
We will briefly look at the scattered teaching on apostles that is given in chapters 4, 9, and 16, scattered to the extent that you know of how Paul wants all believers to know of the wisdom that comes especially from Apostles and from the Word of God which they write in Scriptures. Even if from the levels of wisdom on a priority scale along, the revelations of the Apostles would have to be considered far beyond our own wisdom and that of itching ears teachers today, and going far beyond that is that the Ascended Christ has chosen and designated the Apostles to give revelations of Scriptures, only after the Prophets, and further that the Holy Spirit has
honored them only as mediums of revelations of Scripture. {That we know of Jesus and the Apostle Paul, of you who claim God spoke to you in a special way, that way not being consistent with the Revealed Word of God, and that is part of your “anointing”; well, we don’t know about you.}


We come to what is the most prevalent in Paul’s own mind of the “us” and “we” of both I and II Corinthians, therefore which was uppermost on the mind of God and the leadings of the Holy Spirit. {You know it truly takes a lot of nerve and pride for a young and attractive lady to stand before a crowd and on TV, without Bible training or special gifts from Christ, perhaps even without ordination or commission, to proclaim that the Spirit has anointed her, and her only and selectively, to give a special revelation to be taken and heeded as on the same level with Scriptures, which at the same time would place her on the same level as an Apostle Paul or Peter, or Prophet Isaiah. What gall!}

“For I think that God has displayed us, the apostles, last, as men condemned to death; for we have been made a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men. We are fools for Christ’s sake, but you are wise in Christ! We are weak, but you are strong! You are distinguished, but we are dishonored! To the present hour we both hunger and thirst, and we are poorly clothed, and beaten, and homeless. And we labor, working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure; being defamed, we entreat. We have been made as the filth of the world, the offscouring of all things until now.” (I Corinthians 4:9-13)

Well, I am sure that your “anointed” leader is part of the establishment, which is the opposite of every thing you see about real Apostles, part of either the television established business and popular or part of the denominational and group establishment. Indeed, they can be considered presently as first in the kingdom, compared to the Apostles that were when considered in worldly terms, anywhere except from Jesus and heaven, as last in the kingdom; or far enough down on the totem pole that even the church members at Corinth considered themselves, with worldly justifications to be of a higher level than them. The church members then, like today, were not impressed with the credentials of the Apostles as far example as compared to one of their own, the young orator Apollos. What had Paul shown them: (1) that the Apostles were as good as condemned to death by the Roman Empire, therefore criminals in the worldly sense of the word; (2) they were made a spectacle for entertainment and persecution and ridicule as different; (3) they if you consider common sense wisdom were fools while the church members today and at Corinth were wise, smart in the ways of the world and prosperity and success; (4) they appeared physically weak, not at all like athletes, while many of the Greek physically fit resided in Corinth and in the church; (5) many of the members in the
church were honored for their wisdom and education and status, while the apostles of Jesus had no such honor {Paul was the closest with his previous status as a lawyer and a scholar of the OT law, politics, and religion}; (6) the Apostles operated while they were hungry, thirsty, poorly clothed, homeless and battered while the itching ears teachers live today with the comfort of the best of food, drinks, clothing, and homes--if they were in any way abused by society, you would hear no end of it; (7) being reviled, you bet the itching ears teachers will tell you; and (8) being "defamed", they would use that for more fame and popularity.

The argument of the fourth chapter about the apostles and the kingdom of Christ, by the way a word that we have allowed to be eclipsed by denominations and churches and group and programs, goes like this: The desire in 4:1 is for church members to consider the apostles as "servants of Christ" and as "stewards of the mysteries of God" {I am sure these itching ears teachers would also like for you to consider them as presenters of new mysteries of God}; faithfulness in 4:1 is a prerequisite of being an apostle, which would be demanded of leaders today; but in 4:3-5, you and others are not qualified to make a judgment on Paul, nor is he, only God, even as you are not qualified to sing your own praises now, let God do that at the end as the sheep are separated from the goats, as the tare leaders are separated from the wheat leaders; Paul wants to consider the differences between himself, Apollos, and the church members at Corinth--the purpose is to have no being puffed up {in the words of Paul in other epistles "not to think of themselves more highly than they ought to"}, to think about how one believer differs from another and how of what you have spiritually to consider where it came from, and therefore do you have any grounds for boasting, really; and while you are full, rich, and live in comfort and security like kings {surely compared to the middle class American today, the same}, look at what happened to the Apostles and far that matter at the same time you might consider, as stated by Jesus, which of the Prophets did not the people of God and the subsequent religious leaders not persecute?

2. The Example of Paul as an Apostle, I Corinthians 9.

Paul is under examination by some in the church at Corinth. He must defend his authority and status as an Apostle of Jesus Christ which he is very ready to do. The question, "Am I not an apostle?" Is really a statement "I am an Apostle of Jesus Christ." Some of the evidences for his Apostleship are given: (1) Jesus Christ, the Ascended Christ, no less, appeared to him on the road to Damascus and taught him in Saudi Arabia; (2) the believers at Corinth who listen to Paul and believe in Jesus are the seal of his Apostleship; (3) Paul is free to work, eat, have a family, and have food and some material things to meet his needs and those of his companions like any other Apostle; (4) Paul has the authority to make collections of material things from them; (5) Paul has the authority to preach the Gospel of Christ; (6) Paul like Jesus has made himself the servant of all men, Jews and Gentiles, in order to do the Apos-
tolic work of winning to Christ; and (6) Paul shows the self-disciple in personal life and in ministry of an Apostle of Jesus.

3. Some more of Apostolic work, I Corinthians 16.

As an Apostle of Jesus, Paul gives orders to the church at Corinth to make a collection of money for the saints even as he gave a similar order to the churches of Galatia. \{We are to look for that in the book of Galatians.\} Although some would claim that the law of the tithe in the OT is still the law in the churches, and there is nothing wrong with 10% as a guideline, Paul gives an apostolic method of giving for churches based on the changed relationship to Jesus: (1) on the first day of the week when they come together for worship, Sunday of course; (2) store up some money each week for the time of collection when Paul comes; and (3) it is to be a percentage that is stored up based on how they have been rewarded in their labor; and (4) Paul rather than collect it himself will send the messenger from the church with a litter of approval from the church and with the collected money to Jerusalem \{those are the saints\}, perhaps Paul can go or not depending on their request.

Now here we get a little of the extent and sequence of the work of the Apostle Paul: (1) Paul will be passing through Macedonia \{remember Philippi and Philippians\}, hoping to also come to Corinth; (2) perhaps Paul can winter with them, God permitting; (3) Paul will do the work of an Apostle for 3 years in Ephesus where he has both a great and effective door and also many adversaries; (4) Timothy does the work of the Lord like the Apostle Paul does so if he comes they should receive him--right now Paul is waiting for Timothy with other brethren; (5) Paul exercised some of his authority as an Apostle to strongly urge Apollos to come to Corinth with others of the brethren like Timothy, but Apollos made other plans and will come to Corinth at a convenient time.

4. I Corinthians 15:9-11 belongs under this division of Paul's constant defence of the reality of position as an Apostle, one which was necessary in order for church members to accept his letters as Scriptures of the Word of God.

"But by the grace of God I am what I am \{an Apostle, the least of the Apostles, which he states in the previous verse because before conversion he persecuted the church of God\}, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all \{than the rest of the Apostles labored\}, yet not I \{sounds like Galatians 2:2 where Paul summarizes the Gospel as "now I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me\}, but the grace of God which was with me." (I Corinthians 15:10)

9-8: Wisdom On Divisions and Contentious in the Church.

1. Introduction to a major local church problem, divisions, I Corinthians 1:10-17.
Like all problems, worldly or otherwise, there are historically always many people who seek to take advantage of them for personal gain. This is especially true of divisions in any local church. Today, there are those who dogmatic claim that to be a Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, etc. is to cause divisions in the church which is the total body of Christ. Likewise there are those foolish enough to claim that the placing of an appropriate sign out in front of a local church like “church of Christ” or “assembly of God” or something similar is sufficient to divide all the others away from them, making them synonymous with the church, the body of Christ. Further causing divisions and very similarly is those like the Roman Catholics, the Church of Christ, the LDS, and some nondenominational churches who would claim to be the only church. Oh yes, the problems of divisions and contentious are still with us. In fact, we have a very large segment of American people who desire no church at all because of the divisions and the disagreements between churches and denominations that go with the divisions.

I wonder if we can gain some fresh insight and wisdom on this subject that might help us in this day and time. A few years ago (in 1968) as I wrote and distributed a commentary on Ephesians entitled ONE COMMENTARY ON EPHESIANS, I was encouraged by the establishment of community churches, by the non-denomination efforts of Billy Graham, and by the possibility of more peace among all denominations based on the inherent unity of the Holy Spirit. A unity which churches, or some members of the churches, either have or do not have; but event these efforts at unity, and with Ephesians, have been diverted by the Rick Warren movement for personal gain and status—not only getting a popular book, within itself popularity with the present Falling Away being a bad sign, and exerting much influence on churches throughout the nation, Falwell also having the nerve to call it a sign of revival—where we have forced and PR unity in the same line as the personal law and order that Nixon tried to place over the whole nation. Somewhere in the last 38 years we in the churches and denominations of America slid into the historical event known as the Falling Away, and now new churches and denominations and new Bible teachers and leaders are more a sign of “the time (has) come when they (church members) will no longer endure sound doctrine....” What a difference approximately 20 years can make as God’s people of the US have passed from leadership as Gentiles in the Fulness of the Gentiles, in the leadership of the spreading of the Gospel to every nation which is just before the end, into the Falling Away. Pastors that preach the Gospel are run off, pastors who will feed the flock their desires to be called the elect of God, for comfort and security are “heaped up”, another characteristic of the Falling Away, God’s name is freely taken in vain, and divorce condemned by the laws of God and reinforced by Jesus Himself is as prevalent among churches as in the secular world even as also the sins of God’s people have become like the Gentile Americans around them, losing all salt and distinct except for their noted assembly each Sunday in a large or small building while they worship God with the greatest enthusiasm ever, “with the lips and the mouth”, with waving arms and
jumping feet and shouting and praise with loud noises (I suppose the noise and the motion compensated for a "heart that is far away from God") Sad, huh; but that is the plight of the Falling Away which inevitable must happen before the Second Coming, and which indeed must be well under way. Any local church or denomination which has been so effective as to cover up that they have the problems of the Falling Away, has learned to practice that forced unity, a unity for which our democratic government and organizations have been famous, of the American Democratic Faith and have learned to utilize the American Conscience to justify bad behavior and "spirits" (attitudes) in church members!

Well, what is the message for the churches and leaders today on divisions and contentions in the church. Just like it has always been: (1) that there be no unusual or jarring sounds of doctrine in any local church which is a sign of intolerance toward sound doctrine, all in the local churches speaking "the same thing"—yes, speak, preach, teach the SAME THING, for it is difference in teachings and doctrines that creates ultimately the divisions and contentions; (2) "be perfectly joined together in the same mind", yes the mind of Jesus as Paul iterates in Philippians and Colossians and even in Ephesians; (3) get away from pride in your religious leaders—some say we are of Paul, others of Frank Gramm and others of Stanley or one of the prophets—which is nothing less than the condemned pride of life of I John, among the things like lust of the flesh and lust of the eyes that are of the world, not the Father, and of the things which pass away, therefore not being a good and eternal emphasis of spirituality for any church; (4) pride in who and what group water baptized you, water baptism in no way—contrary to the Church of Christ division and others—being synonymous with salvation even after believing; (5) preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ as THE MESSAGE, not looking strictly for the wisdom of Ph.D., ThDs, and the famous on TV and in their own minds, but with the cross and crucifixion of Christ. There is the need to take up the cross of Christ daily in churches and among church leaders even as in daily life.

Another help would be to work for the "kingdom of God". I recall how during 4 years in Naval Air where my ministry started, having been licensed by Dr. Lee and the Bellevue Baptist Church, the work had a kingdom emphasis since it was with sailors, groups, and others more than with churches; but when a young pastor, after the Navy, I felt the "unspoken influence" of working for that local church which was paying my income and even indeed for the deacons and the established in society representatives, they thought, of the church, the priority pressure was less on the kingdom of Christ and for a local church benefit. It is a subtle difference; but it is a significant difference. Try in your local church life, giving an emphasis to the kingdom of God and God's righteousness ahead of the programs, administration, campaigns, and unique denominational emphasis of your local church. Leaders like it that for there is a certain evolution of programs and corresponding terminology from the denominations that makes all others out-of-date.
who know only the Word of God, and who revel in it as the message. How many churches and denominations will you hear today with "the answer" and "the solution", each have some itching ears twist to it to make it sound differently for all others, and from sound doctrine. This is not a practice of the "same thing" and the "same mind" of Christ.

2. Wisdom on Contentions, I Corinthians 11.

The most subtle contentious today are those where they just refuse to listen to all that speak differently from their answers and their solutions. It is contention, not by controversy are discussion, but contention by ignoring and silence. It is an effort to use group influence under the leadership of selected pastors and teachers to isolate and silence what they consider would be differences and contentions if they would really listen. Yet it is still the part of the Falling Away, after efforts at intolerance toward sound doctrine, when church members heap up, heap away, and heap in selected Bible teachers--they heap up a fortress of itching ears teachings and unsound doctrine around themselves for protection, they heap away pastors and Bible teachers that would disturb, thwart, or deny their own desires, and the heap up to themselves Bible teachers with the right message of comfort, security, and rightness. {Much, I might add, like the wisdom of the world which is wise in public relations, practical psychology, and tolerance of everything--like Peter Marshall said, "If we stand for nothing, we fall for anything".}

There is a lot of pride of life in our churches that we are paying for in the Falling Away from the kingdom of God and from the righteousness of God, a pride of life in who our pastor is, a pride of life in the size and building or location of our church, a pride of life in who our friends are, a pride of life in the larger groups or denominations to which we belong, even a pride in families and things and stone buildings and brick buildings and our reputations. The fine line of priority between all these things and the kingdom of God and His righteousness can easily be crossed over to the bad side of these things under the name of a worship of lip and mouth service, not matter how charismatic, if those things have led the heart to depart far from the living God. You have to do nothing worse than "have an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God" to become a victim of the Falling Away, to become evil more so than the adulterous, and drunkards, and other criminals, to have no eternal rest with God, and to be like the first children of Israel in the wilderness who saw the miracles and works of God for 40 years, yet never honored God truly as they should have.

9-9: Wisdom On Miscellaneous Church Matters {1,2,3}...

These church matters are respectively the outline of I Corinthians 5:1-13;6:1-20; and 7:1-40.

(1). Here we have a legitimate NT practice that could help, if we are not too late into the Falling Away, the unsound doctrine and behavior and attitudes of church members.

"deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." (I Corinthians 5:5)

(2). The next verse about the “glorying” of the church is a little more difficult to understand; however, it helps when you look careful all the following verse after the next where “a little leaven leavens the whole lump” which makes the statement that the overlooking of the bizarre behavior of one church member can bring down the church. So often we tend to say, “Oh that is our buddy so and so, he is just like that”; and we overlook the bad church behavior. After all, he is one of us; and that is the glorying that Paul speaks of in any local church.

(3). Yes, it is true that the Apostle Paul’s leadership through Scriptures from God, like that of Jesus, is in the direction of having more regard for immoral people of the world than for a similarly immoral person in the local church. Put away from yourselves that evil person Paul says as he quotes from Deuteronomy 17:7.

“I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people. Yet I certainly did not mean with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner—not even to eat with such a person.” (I Corinthians 5:9-11)

There are a lot of pressures to diminish the attendance in local churches today that are not being practices: (1) first there is this separating from the company of the church people called God’s people or called by the name of God and Christ, by themselves or others, who commit sexual immorality, who covet, who practice idolatry by putting things, status, and the world before God, who cause turmoil in the church and against the leadership of the pastor, who drink, and those who extort money even if an executive and in order to do business; and (3) the admonition of the Apostle Paul of II Timothy 3:1-9 not to have company with church members or a church where there is “a form of godliness without the power thereof”, listing the bad behavior and bad spirit-attitudes that will allow you to recognize such church members.


At heart this is an effort to get at a philosophy and practice of life that is based on the teachings of Jesus and of the Scriptures from the Apostles that: (1) there are two groups in every society including in America, the believers who are the children of God and the nonbelievers who are the children of Satan, harsh but
true; (2) that the majority of the Gentiles and now even Jews are going the broad way that leads to destruction, while the real people of God must demonstrate in practice and beliefs that they are going the minority way that leads to life eternal and which is more difficult than is the way of the other Gentiles; (3) that saints are given a special wisdom when they are truly more than 9 month born again, a wisdom which someday will allow them to judge the world so why not get in the practice of such judgments today rather than going before a judge of this world; (4) the saints have enough wisdom to judge between the brethren in the church; (5) the unrighteous, such as many judges and lawyers, will not inherit the kingdom of God and they do not rule and practice according to the principles of the kingdom of God, nor of its righteousness; and (6) in heaven you will not see one who practices fornication as a habit of life, you will not see one idolatry--I think for most of you it is because you can not recognize an idolatry today independent of one who has idols in his home, not comprehending that the placing of any thing or person, etc. ahead of God, His kingdom, and His righteousness is to place an idol in front of God. This is a perspective of wisdom that most church members do not have today, the ability to distinguish between the world and the kingdom of God. They have been overcome by the American Democratic Faith which sees the moral majority as the kingdom, or which treats all Americans as if they were born Christians. Then there is the more extreme behavior of churches where all outside their church walls, much like a cult, are to be ignored, feared, and isolated.


9-10: Wisdom and Conscience.

9-11: Wisdom About the Falling Away.
The primary wisdom of Scriptures on the Falling Away is found in I and II Timothy with support from II Thessalonians (perhaps even after understanding the Second Coming in I Thessalonians and in II Corinthians); but until we can get there in the course of these chapters, we will consider an introduction to the Falling Away here in I Corinthians 10.

(1). We have the example of the Falling Away of most of God’s people in the wilderness wanderings as an example of why we must “lust after evil things”. The children of Israel did not even have as many things to lust after as the materially rich average American church member has today. Granted they were able to take many of the things the Egyptians gave them in order to get rid of the plagues of God, many of which I am sure were shed during the wilderness wanderings because of the
heavy load; and many no doubt came out with delicacies food, which did not last long, and about which they complained for Egypt for cumcumbers, water melon, and other delicious foods as contrasted to the manna, water, and quail that God provided. \(\text{Never forget in this day of the Gospel of Prosperity, that all which God promises is daily bread and the necessities.}\)

All of God’s people in the wilderness like God’s people today saw the guidance of God and the rescue of God; all of God’s people in the wilderness like God’s people today were baptized; all then and today ate spiritual food; and all then and now to a certain extent participated in the Spiritual Rock of Christ; but then and now, God is not pleased with the people of God. Then He scattered the bodies of His people in the wilderness except for the children 19 years of age and younger and a few like Caleb; and do you really think that God’s people today who exercise a similar unbelief in the practices of the Falling Away are not going to experience a similar fate, if not immediate judgment in a disaster then the judgment of eternity without God and Christ.

“Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted.” (I Corinthians 10:6)

Our problem among church members today, and among others, that we can not see as evil such seemingly good things as houses, land, income, status, even family and country, if they take priority in our lives over God, the kingdom of God, and God’s righteousness. No less a person that our Lord and example of faith, the Lord Jesus Christ, during His life on earth had to live as much by every word that came out of the mouth of God as He had to live by bread.

(2). Again we do not see, even as the Corinthians church did not see and the children of Israel did not see at Mount Sinai and elsewhere in the wilderness, that "idols" do not have to be physical idols, rather they can be anything that comes between us and God the Father or the Lord Jesus Christ. Things in our country, and the things related to things, are most often the idols in America. Increasingly with the itching ears Bible teachers, as with the heaping up today of so much unsound doctrine and intolerance toward sound doctrine, the Gospel of Prosperity itself is becoming an idol in the place of the Gospel from God and of the Lord Jesus Christ.

“And do not become idolaters as were some of them. As it is written, ‘The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.’” (I Corinthians 10:7 and Exodus 32:6)

(3). Always closely akin to the spiritual idolatry and adultery of the people of God encouraged and promoted by the environment and the people around them was also a habit of sexual immorality. It was particularly dangerous to all the people of God as they stood at the threshold of the tremendous job of taking the Promised Land from the heathens that occupied it, immediately after they had failed to
obey God that they could take the land, and after they had made a futile effort to do it in their own power, then thinking that the very identification with some of the people of the land could help them.

"Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell {listen to that you who say that if a majority of people in a church vote a certain way it must be right; no, not even if there are 23,000 of your people who vote that way}; nor let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents; nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer." (I Corinthians 10:8-10)

You, church member and one called by God's name or the name of Christ, are in a good position to be a victim of the Falling Away (1) if you complain too much in your church; (2) if you tempt Christ; and (3) if you cultivate a habit of sexual immorality. Other bad church behavior and bad church spirits {attitudes} we will also come to in II Timothy 3:1-9, so much so that you would think that Paul in giving Scriptures was talking more about the Gentile civilizations as he does in Romans 1 instead of church members who "have a form of godliness but deny the power thereof; and therefore urges any church member not to keep company with church members of such bad behavior and spirits. {Among the bad and seductive spirits you will find the love of money, love of self, self-will, boasting, and pride; and among the bad behavior you will find brutal, lovers of pleasure more than God, and teachings in homes that pervert believers.} We will provide the background in I Timothy of the "seducing spirits" and "doctrines of devils", which dominate in the latter times in churches as some depart from the faith to group in II Timothy 3:19 the bad spirits or attitudes of church members and the bad church behavior.

(4) The "end of the ages" has come upon present day church members with the indisputable historical fact of the Falling Away, of which inevitable the churches must be the leaders in the Falling Away as they have more to fall away in witnessing the power, miracles, and other works of God, more to fall away from of Christ and more to fall away from of the sound doctrine of the Bible.

"Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the age have come. Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall." (I Corinthians 10:11,12)

Did you hear that church member, you may think you stand with confidence in your local church, your pastor, you own works; but take heed lest you fall, not from salvation as there is no falling from grace and the Security of the Believer is true, but rather from unsound doctrine about the non-9 month new birth, substituted with the instantaneous new birth of the fundamentalists where the seed falls among thorns and is immediately received with joy, that joy being interpreted as the new birth. Rather it is a Falling Away from God, Christ, and the Bible. Your church
attendance may go up as a substitute for your heart being near God; your numbers at your own church may go up, as it is not a Falling Away from churches, especially in this time of the unsound doctrines of Bible teachers and preachers with itching ears, who will tell the church members what they want to hear especially about being the elect of God; nor is it the present generation going to the dogs and classically has been predicted by some, if this Falling Away is like the example Falling Away mentioned above, young people 19 years of age and below are safe. You know the unsound doctrines and the unsound behavior and spirits that led church members, like the children of Israel in the wilderness, into the Falling Away. We church members currently express their pride in their own church, sort of an exclusive attitude as if they had something special and as a matter of superiority and religiosity above others, I like to ask them, “How far into the Falling Away is your church?” They don’t like to hear this! It is WHAT THE CHURCHES DON’T WANT YOU TO HEAR as I try to make clear in a commentary on the book of Mark, it is certainly what the church and denominational leaders do not want you to hear since it denies their having THE ANSWER and THE SOLUTION. They are horrified to think that their churches, of all the churches in the world, would have participants and victims of the Falling Away. What do you think?

(5). When Paul says in 10:11 to “flee from idolatry”, making a plea for spiritual wisdom from wise men in the church, it is much deeper than what we ordinarily think of as “idolatry”; rather it is a matter of separation in attitude and action from the other side, the side of demons.

“You cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the Lord’s table and of the table of demons.” (I Corinthians 10:21)

Isn’t this much the same as Jesus saying: “You cannot serve God and mammon” and “you cannot love one and cleave to another”, and “where your treasure is there will also be your heart”, and “those not a servant of God are a servant of Satan”; and on an on is the equivalent of drinking the cup of the Lord Jesus Christ versus the cup of Satan and the demons.

(6). Do all for the glory of God and always seek the well-being of others, I Corinthians 10:23-32.

9-12: Wisdom on Spiritual Gifts.

You can see that this wisdom on the spiritual gifts is the real body of I Corinthians, including the famous twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth chapter of I Corinthians. While the original churches, a pattern that we have gotten away from like many detrimental departures from the NT pattern of churches and church organization like a pastor, bishop, and elder being the same term for church leaders, of course which meant they needed to be senior rather than youthful, the departure in contemporary churches from the deacon, demon deacon or otherwise
like at Wake Forest, being a servant of material necessities to the church instead of the board like with other American business organizations; transfer of church membership, in NT times if a person was a member of the church at Jerusalem, they were also a member at Antioch, and etc., since to be a member of a local church was synonymously to be a member of the total body of the Christ, the Assembly of the Firstborn; and we could go on and on with ways in which the American Democratic Faith and business and other organizational influences in America have created American churches that have far distanced themselves from the NT pattern. A young lady met me at a Presbyterian church not long ago to inform me that she was an elder in the church: it did not fit with even American societies concept of elder, much less with that of the New Testament. Do we apologize for these many departures; no, somehow we tend to glory in them. I think you can measure much of the growth of the Falling Away in America by the lack of emphasis on the general assembly of the Firstborn with a corresponding lack of conviction on the kingdom of God, as well as practice; on the departures from patterns for the local church as in the NT; and on a glorying in large brick and stone buildings. Know the real and practical question we will need to answer based on Scriptures and 1 Corinthians 12, is the body of Christ complete when a local church has all the gifts, something very hard to do, or is the body of Christ--you know the head, the legs, the fingers, and so on--when the total body of many churches and denominations is complete; and likewise where is the obligation of the local church and total church to the Apostles and the Scriptures of the Apostles, as to the Christ who has never changed like God, and will never change.

1. The Mystery of the Total Body of Christ, Unity in Diversity, I Corinthians 12.

Paul announces that the subject of chapter 12 is "spiritual gifts" and that he has a message for the brethren in the local church at Corinth, a message on spiritual gifts received by wisdom and revelation from the Holy Spirit and from Christ, the same message that he and the other Apostles preach in all churches. And at first it is difficult to see how there is a direct link between 12:2, where these Gentile "brethren" were previously led away to dumb idols and 12:3, where the reference is to Jesus Christ: how to call Jesus accursed can not be done through the Holy Spirit, and how to call Jesus Lord has to be done through the Spirit. In other words, there seems to be some link between dumb Gentile idol follows and Jesus, the Holy Spirit being a key. (Perhaps we have come to one of the many places where Peter said of the Scriptures written by Paul, that Scriptures and Word from God, are hard to understanding and which tend to confuse many. I know many people today can not understand Paul, and tend to misrepresent him like the church at Corinth; and that is very serious since God and Christ chose Paul to write 14 of the 27 letters of the NT. Does such people want us to believe that they can accept less than 50% of the NT, still be a believer in Christ, and still be tolerant toward sound doctrine? I think not!)
What you would legitimately expect is for the next few verses as shown below to tie together those two links of being led astray by dumb idols and of being led properly by the Spirit of Christ to call Jesus Lord rather than accursed as idol worshippers still do. It seems to be a legitimate effort to both point out the inadequate nature of their previous background as idol worshippers and as wise, and at the same time focus on THE HOLY SPIRIT as the source of wisdom even on Jesus.

“There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are diversities of ministries, but the same Lord. {Okay here is a long connecting link between the Lord Jesus Christ to the Holy Spirit to the diversities of gifts and ministry.} And there are diversities of activities, but is the same God who works all in all. {Well now we have God the Father in here with the Son and the Spirit in turn leading to three kinds of diversities: gifts, ministries, and activities. It looks like there is a preliminary plea for the oneness of all church activity even as in Ephesians where there is a pleas for the oneness of all doctrines such as One God and Father, One Spirit, and so on.} But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all...{well, that is easy to understand whatever manifestation of the Spirit in activities, gifts, ministries, if it is a valid manifestation, is a gift to an individual church member for the benefit of all church members--it should not be for personal gain, personal attention, or self-gratification}...for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues.” (I Corinthians 12:4-10)

The activities, the manifestations, the gifts, the diversities are listed as: (1) the word of wisdom, remembering that while ordinary church members, pastors, teachers, and evangelists--in other words all leaders chosen by Christ except Apostles and Prophets--can not receive the wisdom of revelation, only the very important wisdom of illumination; (2) the word of knowledge, and I think we see how Bible knowledge is to know about the Bible and teach it and preach it, while the previous wisdom is to have wisdom to properly apply the knowledge according to the illuminations already revealed in the Word of God; (3) faith, well that is very clear, and since we know that all believers have the Spirit and faith, then we are talking a certain measure of faith here where some have the faith of a grain of a mustard seed and some do not have the faith to remove mountains and some are babes in faith while others are mature in faith--so that even within these diversities are sub-diversities; (4) gifts of healing, all do not have this gift, and no doubt many who claim it and fake it do not have this gift; (5) working of miracles, and the same goes here as far the gift of healing {one might think that only the Pentecostals
and Charismatics have these later two gifts, and I am sure that they would be willing to claim that consistent with their tendency to show proofs of believing with such manifestations as well as tongues--does this then mean that the body of Christ is only complete in all the manifestations of the Spirit as the Baptist and Methodist get together with the Pentecostals? I think that we can find a better route and one that is more Scriptural as we know this can not happen, the Pentecostals being no more at home in their worship services than would be the Baptists in theirs, so what have the lost, or what have we gained that we should not have gained in our worship services, and is this more of the departure on the part of Pentecostals and Baptists form the NT pattern?; (6) to another prophesy, and surely we must recognize that in the category of those prophetess who warned Paul of what was waiting for him in chains at Rome, rather than the revelations of Scripture; (7) to another the discerning of spirits {we will talk more about how there is a spirit in each human, how there are seducing spirits that can influence other human spirits, and how often as in II Timothy those seducing spirits are the attitudes of church members, those having a form of godliness and denying the power thereof in their worship with lips and mouth while the heart is far from God, like love of money, love of self, and lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God}; (8) kinds of tongues, which is definite languages that need to be spoken to foreigners in order to communicate the truth, Paul spoke other languages and tongues more than the church at Corinth and more than any other Pentecostal church today because they were languages that he learned the hard way in his education and training--which in no way related to a special sign to show to others as has become the practice today that you are a real believer or Christian, and that you are among the select that are real, and that you have real salvation (you know this really borders on preaching another Gospel than that which was delivered as Paul wrote of in Galatians, and also a matter of another spirit which was not from Paul and the other Apostles, and therefore not also from Jesus); (9) to another the interpretation of tongues, and even as we need missionaries who will learn the different languages of different tongues in order to spread the Gospel, so also we need the interpreters or translators in the interpret languages into Scripture and to act as interpreters when evangelists take the Gospel to foreign lands {of course, to be honest now, as a world traveler across much of the world, it is difficult to find any place in the world where they did not know speak English except for in the Highlands of Scotland).

“But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individual as He wills.” (I Corinthians 12:11)

So there are many gifts from the Spirit, and you have only one of them if it is real; but how can you boast or act different, special, or proud in that you only have one of them--there is no difference in the weight of them based on the attitude of the
Holy Spirit, God, and Christ, so you can not consider miracles, tongues, and healings as greater than knowledge, wisdom, and faith.

(2). Can we now say in the light of 12:12-27 that the members of the body such as the eye, ear, foot, etc. are of the one body of the local church, or are members of the total body of Christ, the church of the Firstborn, the general assembly of all Christians? If it takes the members of all churches and denominations with the diverse gifts to make a complete body then we are in trouble, so we tend at first to lean toward a local church as having all members which indeed would make the small churches more fortunate than the large churches as the small churches would have more gifts per members than the larger ones. And I am afraid that Paul answers the question immediately as to which body has all the gifts, for it is the one body all that are baptized, of all Jews and Greeks that are baptized, and the one body of “all” who “drink into one spirit.”

“For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body--whether Jew or Greeks, (and we see that we need both the sign seeking capability of the converted Jew and the wisdom seeking capability of the converted Greek), whether slaves or free--and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.” (I Corinthians 12:13)

And let me say parenthetical here, although in keeping with the main theme of this volume, “Believe and Be Baptized”, that the one baptism here as in most of Paul is not water baptism but is the baptism of the Spirit that comes with and continues in salvation. The emphasis is on the One Spirit with the One Baptism, like you find in Ephesians. {Already, I am sure Satan was using the emotions and self-centeredness of certain church members at Corinth to claim uniqueness in salvation and blessings from God because they could speak in tongues, although unknown instead of real languages.)

So that when we come to “the body is not one member but many”, it is the equivalent of saying that there are many diverse members {Paul has mentioned nine} in the total body of Christ, the Assembly of the Firstborn. The foot of the Baptists, nor the eye of the Methodists, nor the mouth of the Pentecostals can not say to the other members that we do not need you; and any member of any other church in fact can not say to you that you are not a member of that church when you belong to the total body of Christ. {This may be the real largest problem we have today in a departure from the NT pattern, any member of any church should also be considered as a member of all other churches. Fantastic and impractical, yes, but NT; and the departure from such patterns could mark a trend away from sound doctrine, with a big bump in the direction of the Falling Away. Well, we got into this mess someway; and it is obvious that we are not going to get out--the Falling Away will not permit that, so that we must grow accustomed to certain gifts being missing from certain local churches, perhaps
most of the gifts are missing from any one local church. It is even conceivable, based on the argument of Paul and the Scriptures, that a church could have only one of nine of the gifts, perhaps even none! That would explain a lot of the condition of the churches today with the increasing gap between Christ and church membership.) Well, then we have another problem to deal with!

"But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased." (I Corinthians 12:18)

The gifted members are set in the local church body, the total of which are in the total body of Christ, by God Himself; and if God has neglected your church in any of the gifts, then I think you know where you stand with God. All the gifts have equal honor to God and should to church members, each member is to have equal care for all other members in spite of the diverse gifts, if one member suffers all members of the total body suffer, likewise with honor, all members of all denominations and churches are to rejoice.

"Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually. And God has appointed these in the church {again, it is obvious we are on the total body of Christ, the church that is mentioned approximately 20 times in the NT as compared to the other 100 which are the local church}: first apostles {say, this is starting to read like about the Ascended Christ giving gifts in Ephesians for the work of the ministry, and once again Paul does not hesitate to say that Apostles, and you know he includes Himself, are the first according to the head, the Ascended Christ who gave the gifts}, second prophets {I think we must conclude based on the way that revelations and authority go from Christ down to Apostles and Prophets that this is the OT Prophets}, third teachers, after that miracles {would you believe some who would make miracles more important than Apostles and Prophets or even Bible teachers}, then gifts of healing {well, healing comes in fourth}, helps {that is a gift from Christ and the Spirit that we seldom give honor, like the Deacons who perhaps we do not as they tend to take the honor beyond helps for themselves}, administrations {this, I'm sure, is a comfort to many church leaders especially in large churches where their work with a large organization has become more administrative than spiritual}, and varieties of tongues {once again I read varieties of languages from this, or even dialects, but not tongue that are no known language on earth}." (I Corinthians 12:27-28)


"But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way." (I Corinthians 12:31); and with this we come to the famous I Corinthians 13 of:

"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels {well, this do allow for some languages not known on earth as they are spoken in heaven and by angels,
although it does not make real are so-called speaking in tongues today which may not be known either in earth or in heaven by anybody but the person and group that made of the syllables], but have not love...." (I Corinthians 13:1)

While the purpose in the rest of I Corinthians 13 is to learn more wisdom on love and the priority for love, even a better definition on love; as we go along we also acquire more and more spiritual wisdom illumination on the gifts. For example, we see that "the gift of prophesy", here which is more equivalent to preaching, has two aspects: (1) understanding of all mysteries, that is of revelations of Scripture; and (2) all knowledge. One of faiths largest measures is to get concrete results here on earth to the extent of moving a mountain here on earth; giving of goods to the poor is giving but self-sacrifice is more giving; and without love there is no profit with God.

Okay the definition of the right kind of love since there are so many kinds of love: love suffers long; love is kind; real love does not parade itself or draw attention to itself with motions and noises in worship service, motions of self-gratification; love does not puff up in after a service when the worship leader asks for less distractions to others by more self-control and moderation; love does not envy the gifts and positions and status of other church members, in other denominations or in their own; love does not behave rudely, courtesy is a characteristic of love even if considered old fashion by younger and newer church members; love does not seek its own, as self-love and love of money and love of pleasure more than love of God are the spirits and bad behavior of church member who have a form of religion but one which denies the name of God and Christ; love is not provoked, thinks no evil...and you know the rest of the story or can read it again in I Corinthians 13.

Wisdom and gifts and love in perspective: we understand and are illuminated only in part of the total truth of God; we preach only a drop in the bucket of the total truth of God. When in eternity we see total truth in Christ, then we can drop the partial truths that we cling to; children speak immaturely because they understand immaturely and in turn because their thoughts are limited to those of a child; but with Christian maturity comes the discarding of childish ways. Now we have wisdom and understanding like looking into a mirror dimly, but after the Second Coming of Christ we will see face to face; now we know only a little but then we shall know even as we are already known by God the Father, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit of God; and well, we have considered these all important three--faith, hope, and love: but the greatest of these is love.


Paul is always on continuity and transition: summarizing chapter 13 with the two words "pursue love" and chapter 12 with the three words "desire spiritual gifts", all in 14:1, then the development springs forward to the purpose of love and spiritual gifts: in order to prophesy. Prophesy in this context is preaching. Unfor-
tunately we tend to think of the OT Prophets as primarily making predictions, and
indeed they did, but God chose them first of all to deliver a message to their own
generation; and you have already read the chapter on that subject, The Message of
the Writing Prophets, where most of the 16 Writing Prophets had a common mes-
sage for God's people, the gist of that message being that "God's people are not act-
ing like God's people." You can tell that it is the equivalent of preaching by first of
all in 14:2 the general nature of the one doing the prophesying is "he" rather than a
Prophet or Apostle, then the specifics of the definition of what it really is to proph-
esy in 14:3.

"But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men." (I Corinthians 14:3)

Notice how in both verse 2 and 3 the focus is on the direction of the prophesy to
other men: and bingo in verse 5 you get the contrast between prophesying and
speaking in a tongue {this would be an unknown tongue perhaps in the language of
heaven, not a language known on earth as obviously there is no one in the local
church at Corinth who is able to understand it}: speaking in a tongue edifies the
person that is doing the speaking while prophesying builds up the whole local church
body that is listening. In this age of the Falling Away where the heaping up of Bible
teachers and preachers, male and female, knows no bounds, where everyone even
without Bible training and knowledge, has many words to speak--I guess because
somebody, maybe their mother, has told them that they have the gift of gab; and as
previously discussed this is the age of a popularity for the wind bag like Oprah Win-
frey and Russ Limbaugh. What an ego some seeking the limelight in churches and on
TV must have to think that they have something to offer when their inabilities in
speech training, voice, and Bible are apparent. Do they think they have a gap to fill
which the public needs to hear when the gap is already over stuffed with the inu-
merable heaping up of Bible teachers. Our cup in American Christianity is running
over with these self-appointed, self-called, and self-trained--though limited--teach-
ers of the Bible. WHAT IS THE CRITERION FOR PROPHESYING, alias for Bible
teaching and preaching? It is that there is a message there that can build up the
church. If there is no contribution to make, let them sit down and shut up. At least,
get off TV. What it is doing is making all of the church look bad! Well, that is the
point of Paul in I Corinthians 14.

Paul says that he wished all of the church members spoke in tongues (14:5). I hope
he is watching now from heaven, because with some kind of awesome developments in
American society and American Christianity, it seems as though anybody with a
mouth is speaking in an unknown tongue, unknown in that it is not a language of this
ever and unknown in that it does not have a distinct sound of the Bible that makes a
contribution to the hearers. It must be the result of Democracy, the American
Democratic Faith, the heaping up of bible teachers of the Falling Away run amuck,
and I am sure the charismatic movement has done its share to make those of obvi-
ously low capability so prolific in placing themselves before the public. I think we need to learn something from the criterion of the priesthood in the OT where men could not be chosen that were handicapped. However the wish of Paul for those of Corinth for whom he is responsible in that he is their earthly father in the faith is that they might “prophesy” more than speaking in tongues. “He who prophesies is greater than he who speaks with tongues” (14:5), Paul writes under the inspiration of God; but he that prophesies is not greater than the unknown tongue speaker if one interprets for him in order that the whole church might be edified. {Do you get the picture that at the church in Corinth during worship there was contest between the members of who could speak in more tongues, or louder tongues, or more unknown tongues? Yes, I think you can not only from the context, but also what you see increasingly going on today. The “everyday life” movement, the “extraordinary life” movement with the “how to books on self-realization” have literally blown up tongues that are uncertain, nobody understands, and that do not make a contribution to believers or unbelievers. About the only thing that is being accomplished is that the ego of the speaker is being comforted.

“That The Church May Receive Edification”
That the church may be built up, that is the goal of any speaking in the church no matter what you call it. Paul says in 14:6 that if I come to you “speaking in tongues” {and I am sure this implies that he did not when he first came to them with the evangelistic message that lead to their salvation}, what would it profit you? And here is the way to speak in the church: (1) by revelation, of course this is only for Apostles and Prophets, and we know the Word of God is complete in the Bible; (2) by knowledge, the foundation has already been laid in the first chapters for Bible knowledge and understanding, and of how it must come from illumination on the existing revelations of the 66 books, not from extra-biblical revelations; (3) by prophesying, and you see that we have passed from the gifts to Apostles and Prophets of Revelation to the gifts of pastors and teachers to preach or prophesy (sometimes I wonder what pastors and other church leaders, trained in Bible and in other ways for the ministry, whether that training is formal or informal with extensive and many years long Bible study, must think of all these amateurs of low and lack of ability, yet bold to speak because of nothing less than a gift of gab--more wind bags); (4) and lastly you are to speak in the church if you have something to teach. You know we know something about teaching in this country. A teacher needs unique capabilities to teach: they must be apt to teach with proven capability, they must have some kind of training, and they must have some knowledge in order to teach. Herein may be part of our problem. With the increase in the schools and colleges of degrees without capability, with the explosion of the democratic nature of education itself as subsidizing the superficial scholar, that influence has been carried over to every mouth in America. {What church is licensing and ordained all these people anyway?} More importantly,
when did, or did the Ascended Christ really give them a gift? I recall back when along with "the human frailties of the pastor", pastoral ministry classes in college and seminary would make a point of how some in the classes might be called, not by God of Christ, but by some other person; might think there motivation were for the right reasons when they were the wrong reasons. Today, perhaps we need a movement like that in the churches to lead the average church member to question whether they are authorized and have the ability, the gift if you would, to speak openly in the church. We always think of the statement, "It is better to keep your mouth closed and be thought a fool, than to open your mouth and prove it."

Let them sit down and shut up. That is what Paul says in 14:28.

"But if there is no interpreter, let him keep silent in church, and let him speak to himself and to God." (I Corinthians 14:28)

Might I add, if he is going to talk to himself, let it be silently. But you see there is a fundamental principle of this Revelation from God which goes beyond tongues and unknown tongues to the VERY SOUND OF WHAT IS BEING PREACHED AND TAUGHT. It is really a call and a cry for "Some Sound of Sound Faith" and for "Some Sounds of Sound Doctrine", especially critical at this time in history when the number one challenge of this generation of Christians, even America, is the historical Falling Away that must happen approximately 40 years before the Second Coming. {I can see the appeal of Darby and Scoffield with their thousand years on earth before all is wrapped up, it takes the pressure off being ready, especially for a fight during the Falling Away, gives the relief of time before a final justice is rendered; and is just one more nail in the coffin of intolerance toward sound doctrine.}

The Sound of Sound Faith and Doctrine

Later Paul will write in II Timothy that "the time will come when they {the churches} will not endure sound doctrine"; also that God has given Timothy a "sound mind". It is as though Paul is laying the foundation principle here, while confronted with a very practical problem of orderly and profitable worship in a church he established, and which by the way is also a growing problem of all of our member churches of the body of Christ. Look at the usages of the word "sound" in I Corinthians 14.

(1). The call of Scriptures for "distinction in sounds".

"Even things without life, whether flute or harp, when they make a sound, unless they make a distinction in the sounds, how will it be known what is piped or played?" (I Corinthians 14:7)

If you actually talk in the tongue of another language, only necessitated if there are some hearers in your church or over TV who can understand that language, then there will be a distinct sound. You know how distinct for example the French and German languages are from the Spanish language, and how in the Arabic languages
you have the deep guttural sounds. When the Spirit of God confounded the languages at the tower of Babel, it is beyond us to understand what plan was used for the distinction of the sounds; but we do know that on the first day of Pentecost after the Ascension of Jesus when there was the historical coming of the Holy Spirit in democratic presence and power to take the place of Jesus on earth until withdrawn during the Falling Away, that the distinction in sounds was overcome as scattered Hebrews from all over the known world needed to hear the Gospel of Jesus from Peter and the other Apostles in their own languages.

(2). Who will prepare for the battles of today if they are hearing uncertain sounds?

“For if the trumpet makes an uncertain sound, who will prepare for battle?” (I Corinthians 14:8)

Now I know how this has been misinterpreted and misapplied today by certain ladies who think the sound has to be of “out-of-breath”, rapid, and in a dull monotone. Not so, you know beautiful the sound is of a trumpet with the high notes, low notes, the steady tone and the frills. Even the call to battle of the army sounds better to the ears, and especially to the hearts of God’s people, than those young and attractive ladies that have placed themselves forward as the first in the kingdom. And by no means, do I exclude the men of similar behavior, for the Word of God that we are looking at here does not exclude them! It is just that women are more susceptible to emotion without substance, and we never thought in our wilderest imagination, say 40 or even 20 years ago, that Paul and the Word of God would be completely ignored when it said, “let the women keep silence in the church” (14:34). Much of what we are hearing today is only preparing the world for battle, it is an affront perhaps to the tares and the goats in the kingdom of God and the church, those who having taken a stance of intolerance toward sound doctrine, are now seeking these kind of Bible teachers to heap up and to satisfy their own desires. It is working!

(3). The sound of five words in the church “with understanding” is better than 10,000 words in an unknown tongue. Paul knew more languages {tongues more than tongues of heaven and unknown tongues} than all of the church members at Corinth, having been raised as both a Hebrew with the Hebrew language and Aramaic and as a Roman citizen with Greek, Latin, and perhaps other languages, a scholar and a lawyer of the religious law; and no doubt, Paul knew more languages than almost all church members today.

“yet in the church I would rather speak five words with my understanding, that I may teach others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue.” (I Corinthians 14:19)

(4). Let there be the sound of “decency” and “order” in your worship services.
“For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.” (I Corinthians 14:33)

Always there is an underlying principle of revelation, and principles, although the applications of those principles may be a jolt on our contemporary American conscience. Here it is the principle of order, decency, and peace in worship. (We Americans have highly developed business and leaderships, also the psychology of leadership in many organizations such as churches, universities, and other schools, as well as in civil service government, and we know that without proper leadership in any group, worship or otherwise, there is confusion.) Let the pastor lead the worship service, or one designated person, and let the worship leader call on the person or persons to do the praying. Without worship leadership there is confusion, lack of order, and lack of decency.

Here is the bottom line on the problem, then and now: many members of the local church think they have the same gift of prophecy and preaching, even Bible teaching, as the pastor. They think of the gift of gab, which is really a birth distinction or sometimes of training by the world, as synonymous with a gift from the Ascended Christ to perform the functions of prophecy or preaching for the church.


The Gospel is much larger than we might consider it to be, having like salvation the time phases of past, present, and future.


Here’s where hopefully we can spend more time, on the Gospel, than with countermeasures to these problems in the churches like above. (Of course, Paul, Christ through Paul and the Holy Spirit giving revelation felt it necessary to nip it in the bud—that did not happen, so we must deal with them over and over, preaching the word and being “instant in season and out of season” so much more so as we see the Day of the LORD approaching, heralded by the inevitable Falling Away; and we must also remember that the Apostle John also had to deal with similar problems in 6 out of 7 of the churches of Asia Minor. Yet the historical event of the Falling Away is an unique in history as the falling away of all of God’s people in the wilderness except for a few.)

Paul declared on paper the same Gospel which he had preached to them while there. Not only was he writing Scripture, as he knew and the Apostle Peter knew, but Paul was practicing what he always said about “put the brethren in remembrance”, especially on the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, the good news from God for all the world, the subject of the Great Commission to “believe and be baptized”.

Paul preached it; Paul recorded it in Scripture for them to read; the church at Corinth had previously received it; and the church at Corinth presently had their standing in the sight of God and Christ based on that Gospel. The Ascended Christ
had used Paul to open the door of the Gospel, remember how Paul had a dream and vision at Corinth of how God had many people there, and now Paul did not want to see that door of the Gospel shut in front of God and Christ.

"For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures {oh, there is some sound doctrine and sound sounds on which to prophesy and preach, the atonement and the Scriptures as a basis for beliefs}, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures {Paul likes those references to the Scriptures, and we know how often in I Corinthians as in most of the other letters from Paul he quotes from Scriptures, acknowledged by him and the other Apostles as the Word of God, as if God Himself were speaking, which indeed He is}, and that He was seen by Cephas {you can read about Peter seeing Christ dead, then buried, then raised from the dead in I an II Peter as well as the testimonies that Paul had John Mark and Dr. Luke included in their Gospels from the testimonies to Paul of Jesus from Peter and James}, then by the twelve {also Paul through Luke had the appearances to the twelve put in the book of Acts}. After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present {that speaks, doesn't it, of Paul's persona knowledge of those five hundred, even perhaps many of which had previously been on his list before conversion for captivity, but which no doubt now he worshipped with--we know of his missionary journeys out of Antioch and with Barnabas, Silas, and others}, but some have fallen asleep {no doubt, Paul could also list those of the 500 witness to Jesus who had already died, since there spirits were with Jesus awaiting the body resurrection of the Second Coming, like Jesus Paul called them asleep}. After that He was seen by James {remember how after his conversion and training by the Ascended Christ in Arabia, Paul said of all the Apostles he spoke only with James and Peter, no doubt making a record in the ways of a lawyer of their testimonies to Jesus, then--I think-recording them on a manuscript with his own OT quotes to give to John Mark for the writing of the Gospel of Mark and to Dr. Luke for the writing of the Gospel of Luke.} Last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time. {I think it is rather unfortunate that the dramatic conversion of the Apostle Paul is used by many preachers, including David Jeremiah, as an example for all who hear the Gospel. It is not typical: we do not see the light like that, we do not hear the physical voice of Jesus although we must as the only real way to LEARN CHRIST as Paul makes clear in Ephesians to spiritual hear the knock at our personal heart's door to "Come in", and to let the Father and the Son come in, to be taught of them and to spiritual hear them: most, if any, people are not struck blind and can not see for three days; most are not called to be an Apostle, a medium of the giving of the Word of God; and most are not trained personally in Arabia by the Ascended Christ. If you want to use examples use the examples of the questions and answers of the
twelve apostles as recorded in John 14, in particular three that had the nerve to ask the same questions that we need to ask.) (I Corinthians 15:3-8)

2. Our Hope Centers around the understanding of the Resurrection of Christ, 15:12-19.

Wow, the church at Corinth had a bigger problem than a haughty attitude toward gifts of Apostles, pastors, and teachers. They had a major problem of unsound doctrine: a denial of the reality of the resurrection of Christ (15:12), without which there is no faith and no preaching of the Gospel (15:14,19), and no real hope.

“But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.” (15:20)

A reaffirmation of what he preached to them, and part of the infallible and inerrant Word of God, that CHRIST IS RISEN FROM THE DEAD, but Paul goes far beyond that with the resulting application to all believers—that those fallen asleep, and mentioned above as among the 500 who saw Jesus risen, have risen from the dead like Jesus, Jesus being the firstborn and those since falling asleep have been the firstfruits, which you will recognize as implying that all at Corinth who truly believe, also Paul, will be among those second fruits to follow the firstfruits.

(1). The resurrection part of the Gospel.

“But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ’s at His coming.” (I Corinthians 15:23)

The argument leading up to this verse is: (a) even as death came by man, not God, the cure of death in the resurrection of the dead came by the Man, the Son of Man, Jesus; (b) all died in Adam even as all that are made alive are made alive in Christ; (c) first Christ Himself is made alive by God and then subsequently in like manner by God the believing fruits are made alive by God; and (d) the body resurrection, after the falling asleep for the spirit to go be with God, takes place at the Second Coming; and (3) after the Second Coming will be the end (oh that disciples of Darby, Scofield, and the fundamentalist might read and acknowledge that after the Second Coming, “then comes the end”, rather than picking and choosing what they want to believe in Scripture in order to justify their previous conclusions that there is a thousand year reign--no, then shall the end come.

(2). Perhaps the most often neglected and misinterpreted part of the Gospel is that immediately after the Second Coming is the end, and that then Jesus Christ delivers the “kingdom of God” to God the Father in order that God may be all in all. For years, as I simply read this from I Corinthians 15:24, I would see some in the congregation winch from not wanting to hear it, which I did not understand; and now I know the problem is that they do not wish to hear anything, especially Scripture, that would deny their precious one thousand years to delay the end and to enjoy the materialism of this world. Also there is a problem in that our practical theologies
are limited to only Christ when we must see that past the reign of Christ, and even in our prayers and worship and service past the Christ to God the Father, is the Father that must be “all in all”. In other words our Christology has limited our Father theology, and that is neither the God of the Bible nor the Christ of the Bible!

“For He has put all things under His feet” {yes again Paul quotes OT Scripture in NT Scripture for support and proper interpretation, according to the ASI and you know what that is--of course from Psalm 8:6 and from David}. But when He says “all things are put under Him,’ it is evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted. Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.” (I Corinthians 15:27,28)

Perhaps this is the most important Scripture of all the Bible in order for believers to gain sufficient Bible understanding on God the Father, the Lord Jesus Christ, the relationship between them of time and future, and how and what eschatology really lead to! I have thought long and hard about that wincing in the congregation, and what people expect from the Christ that such real Scripture disturbs. Except for the killing of their end time and millennium concepts, which exist primarily in their brains and in the Scoffield Reference Bible notes, there is something very fundamentally wrong in their Christology which does not want Christ to be subjected at the very end to God the Father. I think it is because they want to "reign with Christ" exclusively, not turning over with Christ the reign to God the Father; however they must realize that if there “God is too small”, then also their Christ is too small. This would naturally make for small salvation, or no salvation at all!

3. Your Theology to be complete, that is your understanding or wisdom on theology, or I should say more importantly on the Bible, should go beyond Christ and the reign of Christ to the time when Christ delivers all to God the Father in order that “God the Father may be all in all”, 15:20-28.


“But someone will say, ‘How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come?’” (I Corinthians 15:35)

(1). How are the dead raised up?

The short answer is by the power, wisdom, and plan of God. First the physical body must die in order to be sown a new body; and you know that wheat or other grain looks differently from the seed it came from; God gives all kinds of bodies by His wisdom and power that please Him, like there are different kinds of fleshly bodies, celestial bodies and terrestrial bodies; with the process of the resurrection body under the control of God the Father the body of corruption becomes a raised body of incorruption--you see, thank God and the Lord Jesus Christ that this is a big
difference between the before and after body; and even as it was first a “natural body” in the Resurrection at the Second Coming of Christ, it is a "spiritual body".

(2). With what can of body are the dead raised up?

“And as we have borne the image of the man of dust {God created man from the elements of the earth and in His own image}, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man {God will re-create for our ashes and based on our unique DNA a heavenly man like Christ and in the image of Christ}.” (I Corinthians 15:49)

(3). Here is more of the "mystery" of the end at the Second Coming of Christ, that is the end--the Day of the LORD and Lord--the end marked here and in the book of Revelation as the sounding of the seventh and final trumpet, then immediately the dead in Christ will rise first meeting the Lord Jesus Christ in the air with those who have already in Christ fallen asleep, then all together receiving the new resurrection bodies, the angels having been busy also gathering all humanity from the four corners of the earth, sheep and goats, with pronouncements of judgement by Christ, the goats sent to eternal punishment in hell and the believers whose names are written in the book of life--and this is the only basis for judgment of the believers--will be forever with God and Christ. What those of inadequate sound doctrine on eschatology, Christ, and God do not admit even though clear from II Thessalonians and also from II Timothy, as well as collaborating Scriptures from throughout the Bible, is that the Falling Away sees also the loosing of Satan as the Holy Spirit is withdrawn from earth--recall that Satan was bound as the Holy Spirit was sent o restrict his work on the first day of Pentecost after the Ascension, the beginning of the last days and the binding of Satan on that day with the end of the last days with the withdrawal of the Holy Spirit with the subsequent release of Satan from bondage for a little while, this being the final tribulation to be experienced by all humanity--believers and otherwise, and this is another thing that fundamentalists do not want to admit or tell their people--that will wrap up with the final shaking of heaven and earth, subsequent to a new heaven and earth with a new Jerusalem lowered down from heaven. That is the eschatology of the Bible.

9-14: “Believe” in the Letters of Paul Continued.

40. II Timothy 1:12. If you have not already come to trust in the wisdom of God as given in the Bible for your mental statement of faith over a church, denomination, or some leaders, then you had best start now. Leaders come and go, churches and denominations thrive and die in the long history of Christianity, yet the Bible and Christ march on with the truth that is most important! Paul and us, as expressed, "know whom we have believed": and part of that biblical statement of faith is that we know “He is able to keep that which we have committed to Him until that Day” when all things are wrapped up at His Second Coming.
41. Titus 3:8. I hope you are enjoying this trip through the Bible as much as I am with some simple and pungent statements of faith as we are looking at the references in the letters of Paul to “believe”. The Gospels, especially John, are also full of them; and you may desire to take a good Concordance like YOUNG’S, etc., to look them up, meditate on them, and revel in them. Titus and Timothy, young and early leaders in the church, were encouraged to do similar things, like here in Titus 3:8, this young evangelist is encouraged to affirm certain things constantly, the focus in this verse being that those who believe in God should also keep with a maintenance of good works. It reminds you of what the Apostle James taught as Pastor of the first church at Jerusalem, “faith without works is dead”.

42. Hebrews 4:3. Good ole Hebrews, no doubt was the messages that Paul first preached to the Jews in the synagogues; and which with Romans is at the very heart of what we call the Gospel of Christ. Did you know also, that Hebrews is a book about the Falling Away; and did you know that often in the letters of Paul does he lead believers and church members to look inward as to whether they have truly been saved. For example in the “beware brethren, lest there be in any of you {church members} as evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God”. You see Paul as he presents in Hebrews, knew that almost all the so-called people of God or children of Israel that came out of Egypt fell after 40 years in the wilderness, fell from eternal rest or salvation and fell away from a life in the immediate Promised Land. Yes, God swears. In fact, God is the only one allowed to swear. But what did He swear as recorded in Psalm 95:11 and quoted in Hebrews 4:3, that all those evil hearts of unbelief in the wilderness would not enter into His eternal rest. If it can happen to them, it can happen to us in the US and in our large and small churches. Increasingly the world is aware that we definitely in America do not have all the answers! Like Putin of Russia responded to Bush, “we certainly don’t want a democracy like Iraqi has! It looks like the time of the United States in the plan of God for the evangelization of the world has reached twilight if not night, as the time of the Fulness of the Gentiles draws near; and as the protective umbrella of God over this nation of once faith in God is withdrawn! Gloomy yes; but Bible!

43. Hebrews 11:6. Faith, faith, and faith alone is what can please God. Faith in His book, faith in His Son, and faith in His only plan of salvation in the one baptism. Start now, if you have not started, with the fundamental belief that God looms large in His existence up there on the circle of the earth and on His great white throne, and with the Lord Jesus Christ at His right hand making intercession for our sins and coming to get us again in great power and glory; and believe that God will daily and in many ways reward your basic faith in Him.
Wow, did Paul ever stir up the church at Corinth with the writing of I Corinthians. We might even think that the other and previous epistle he wrote as mentioned in I Corinthians 5:9, could be what agitated the “divisions”, “contentions”, and multitude of both church and society problems with which he found it necessary to deal with in I Corinthians, again in II Corinthians. You imagine what an uproar it would cause in any church today for a respected leader to dynamically say, "Let your women keep silent in the churches...." (I Corinthians 14:34) My goodness: many would react immediately like the women of Jerusalem did to Jeremiah when confronted with his temple messages, for the most part using the men and children to be a spokesman for them against the Prophet of God. Poor Jeremiah, he was only delivering the very unpopular message that God gave him; but God’s people either did not pay any attention to him or openly defied THE MESSAGE. Jesus told us that God’s people have never listened to God’s Prophets; of course meaning that while on certain occasions like with Isaiah, they did listen—at least a select few—the majority of time they did not listen to the Word of God. And is that what is happening today with the oft expressed objections to some of the attitudes and teachings of the Apostle Paul, or have we made Paul a scapegoat, “like the church at Corinth” for our own lack of sound doctrines in church and in marriage.

For you see that Paul did take on two explosive subjects, then and today, in only two short verses in two sentences. I would say, then and now, these are two verses of the Word of God that rocked and continue to rock the world. Most Bible preachers and teachers prefer to keep silent on the two subjects, or to joke about it, or to
make Paul a scapegoat by justification in the uniqueness of his own life-style and attitudes, or to simply explain this and other divisive issues of I Corinthians away as "the times were different in First Century Christianity than are the times today." Look at the church and home issues in those two verses, and then we must go on to the third verse that follows these two, which is really the underlying problem that Paul is dealing with here and in the other major problems of I and II Corinthians. {Let us not be deceived that we are dealing with old first century problems, because the problems, or issues if you chose the more contemporary word, are the same problems in churches, worship, home, and Bible teaching today. There are the very issues with which we have refused for pragmatic reasons to deal with, and that timidity is being used today by Satan to bring the church and churches down into the Falling Away, the time when church members will no longed endure sound doctrine.} Their justification then in the church at Corinth for unsound doctrine and practices at home and in church is the same as today. You know just like you must have a "grounds for divorce", so human nature will have a ground for making Paul a scapegoat. The grounds here is the dominant thought pattern of the times and environment, then the society of Corinth and today American Society. In other words, then and today, "what the people around you think, the major movements of the times, what leaders are saying, what is the style. "Style" is perhaps the single most descriptive word for what is being discussed here, and we might call it today "The American Style."

The American Style

Style is something that we as Americans are all subject to. While we may not jump on the latest from France, we are motivated each generation to choose what will at least fit in with the rest of society if not like the youth who demand a uniqueness of dress for their own generation. Well, we also have an American Style for our way of thinking and our way of acting. It is in short, the product of our American Society. It comes from education, television, experiences in shopping, talking with our friends. It comes from work, play, seeing those in government, education, and in other positions of leadership. It is both a spoken and an unspoken influence. At the highest levels of thought, attempts have been made in "The History of American Thought" to summarize the dominant thoughts of any one period of history of the American people, acknowledging where sometimes the thoughts of the leaders in literature, government, and education lag or lead the people, or completely diverge. It is an effort to determine what makes us what we are as an American people, Some like to call it "The American Character". What I am saying here is what makes you tick as an average, or even not-so-average, American citizen; what motivates you in the home, in the church, and at work and play. How do you think and how do you act? What are the major attitudes and beliefs that really govern your actions and what you say, in church, home, and elsewhere. Does you individual
and personal AMERICAN STYLE make Paul the scapegoat for what you there is in your life which you find to contradict the Scriptures of the NT?

Let’s look again at the two, and even three, bombshells of I Corinthians 14:34-36.

“Let your women keep silent in the churches {I like the fact that Paul uses churches here rather than just church for only the church at Corinth, for we have already decided based on the Bible teachings of gifts and members of the physical body which is a good analogy of members of the total body of Christ, that there is no way that every local church can have all the gifts [members of the body] that the total body of Christ has, the obvious shortcoming of the local church is that they can not have members, like Apostles and Prophets, sometimes even evangelists, that can give revelations of the Word of God; and that is the real issue that Paul is dealing with as you will see in the third verse.}, for they are not permitted to speak; but they are to be submissive, as the law also says. {We must look at the OT Scriptures on the silence of women in congregations, and then consider if these laws of the OT are also under the umbrella of Jesus’ teachings where He said He came to fulfill not destroy the law and the Prophets; and how that no wise would neither a jot or a tittle of the law pass away until all is fulfilled. If so, then the contemporary leadership that women are taking in the church and churches certainly does not fulfill the law; rather it fulfills what could be a law of history, the Falling Away, when church members are dominated by (1) intolerance toward sound doctrine, (2) to select Bible teachers and preachers based on their own personal desires for comfort, security, and self-fulfillment, (3) some Bible teachers are heaped out and some are heaped in as the movement dominates the church of a heaping up of teachers with itching ears, (4) as church members continue to develop and condone a “form of godliness [a type of religiosity and church membership if you would] that really denies God and Jesus and the Word of God, (5) it is synonymous with a major world and American movement to turn away [church members are literally turning their back on truth, and could that be the case here on these two major issues of church and home]--to happen only twice in history, now and in the 40 year wilderness wanderings of God’s people where after seeing God’s miracles and works for 40 years, all except a few developed an evil heart of unbelief in “departing from the living God”, and (6) they turn in fables, unfortunately the wisdom and conscience of American society can be eternal to God “fables”.

“...And if they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is shameful for women to speak in church. {What a contrasted perspective as compared to the American Style today! What we are more likely to hear today, precisely contradicting what is recorded here, is “it is a shame to silence women in the church.”}
And you see how this assumes that the man should have the spiritual leadership in the home. I know the reaction of many, well, the men in church and home will not do it, so that it must be done by the women. Well, not if the OT Scriptures in the law say otherwise; and not if Paul is expressing here as an Apostle, Word from God, in the revelations of NT Scriptures rather than his own opinions. Granted, there is one place in I Corinthians where Paul allows himself the freedom to express his own opinion on style in marriage, in I Corinthians 7:1-9.

"Now concerning the things of which you wrote to me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman. Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have their own husband." (I Corinthians 7:1,2)

Isn't it a marvel how one man and one woman can come together to form a marriage, a match made in heaven as well as on earth, where a woman sees in that one man something beyond all others and a man sees in one woman something likewise: so that even in making a personal "concession" not by the commandment of God to deliver the Word of God, Paul has much more on the teachings and pattern of God Himself for marriage than he does of his own concession not by commandment.

{And by the way, if you want to know why Paul knew of all these problems in the church at Corinth, notice that it says above that "you wrote to me". We had a descriptive epistle from the church to Paul of real issues: (1) sexual adultery in the church, (2) unsound doctrine on the resurrection of Christ whereby some church members even denied that Christ had risen from the dead; (3) worship services had become disorderly with many praying at the same time, with unknown tongues without proper interpretation, without regard for what the lost among them were hearing, with songs and praise that did not come with real spiritual understanding; (4) prophecy in the church by those who did not have the gift; (5) by women speaking, preaching, and prophesying in the church; (6) by women learning from some foreign source instead of a home from their husbands; (7) by church women's refusal to practice the pattern of Scriptures from Paul and the OT on spiritual leadership in the home; and (8) by practices of idolatry which wounded the conscience of other brethren. Wow, what a mess was this local church that Paul himself started; yea, even the members of which Paul led to Christ, although he did not baptize so that we see some other influences had come into their church life, the prospective members of which Paul was informed at Corinth in a vision of a dream as God told him "I have many people in this city" in Acts.}

"But I say this as a concession, not as a commandment. For I wish that all men were even as I myself. But each one has his own gift (even as most, in fact none in this day and time have the gift from Christ to be an Apostle, even so those church members at Corinth, that would not have the gift to remain single--you see already Paul recognized that his doctrines and mes-
sages from Jesus, like they did for Jesus Himself and as Jesus said would be the fate of faithful preachers could not be endured long from the Roman Empire, the Style of the Jews, the Roman Empire, the Greeks and the contemporary society under the control of Satan would eventually catch up with him, that is when under the control of God his ministry was complete)...one in this manner and another in that. But I say to the unmarried and to the widows {Paul is back on his concession of a personal opinion}: it is good for them if they remain even as I am {don't ever forget that first and second century Christians, signalled by the martyrdom of Paul and Peter in Rome and John on the isle of Patmos, the killing of other Apostles, were about to experience a time of persecution unparalleled in human history for a religious movement, so much so that "even the elect might be led astray except it was shortened--so that Paul was expressing the urgencies also of the time--they killed Jesus, they would kill him and Peter like the other Apostles, even Paul himself before conversion was placing them in prison, the times were very unique in history not to justify that the uniqueness of the times in history gave another personal expression of concession of Paul for the silence of women in the church, rather than a commandment. WE MUST DISTINGUISH BETWEEN THE COMMANDMENTS IN SCRIPTURE THAT PAUL WAS GIVEN FROM CHRIST AND THE HOLY SPIRIT AND BASED ON OT SCRIPTURE FROM ONE, OR EVEN A FEW TIMES PAUL ALLOWS HIMSELF A PERSONAL OPINION BASED ON HIS SPIRITUAL WISDOM ABOUT THE TIMES!}.

...but if they can not exercise self-control, let them marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion.” (I Corinthians 7:1-9)

The American Style is Rebellion Against God

There is no one single law, teaching, or plan of God that is not increasingly being questioned and rebelled against in the contemporary American Style. God's original given plan for marriage--one man and one woman with children for life--also reinforced in the teachings of Jesus on many occasions, forbidding divorce except for the cause of adultery and then in that case no remarriage (you see how Jesus just like Paul demanded no remarriage, and the only reason we don't claim "personal prejudices" for Jesus as well as Paul is that we like to call ourselves by the name of Jesus, because He is the author and finisher of our faith, and we are afraid that we could never justify an argument that would win about the teachings of Jesus. But did you ever stop to think, especially since some of you like to bring up the differences in those times as contrasted to our times, that many of those first church members at Corinth, since at the time of their believing were like the other Greeks, had found it necessary to divorce their husbands and wives which still had even as part of their religion a practice and worship of sexual immorality). There are other ways that the American Style increasingly and continuously rebels against the plan of God for marriage: (1) gay marriages, (2) lesbian marriages, (3) divorce for any reason or no rea-
sons in the style of American Hollywood, and (4) the forbidding of marriage for priests, which Paul will discuss in I Timothy as a form of unsound doctrine, along with the forbidding of certain meats good for the body as an act of worship, those coming not from the Word of God but from "seducing spirits [attitudes] and "doctrines of devils [doctrines and styles from the world which is under the control of Satan]. God Himself is under fire and disrespect along with His clear commandments and teachings of the Ten Commandments, also reinforced by Jesus, that His name is not to be taken in vain, and further "that God will not hold him guiltless" of any time or nation including of the Style of the American nation, and though a church member, that does take His name in vain. Listen to TV for a while if you can take it, and listen to the American writers as they express themselves on TV and in books in their efforts to in turn reflect the way Americans will and do talk, you will hear again and again God names taken in vain even as you will of the name of Jesus taken in vain. God's name in vain as become as surely a part of the American conversation as apple pie, mother, and the American flag. It has become perhaps the only vehicle as a means of communication that some think will make a point and achieve some attention: yet it continues like the Word of God to be a giant no-no right up there in the category of murder, adultery, and lying, it is an increasing sin of American Society, American Style, and unfortunately church member with a form of godliness that denies the power thereof, that God can not and will not overlook! Be sure, these habitual practitioners of the taking of God's name in vain that this sin of all sins, against the God of the Bible and the God of the universe, that it will find you out! Like THE MESSAGE of the Writing Prophets: "God's people are not acting like God's people; disaster is coming upon them inevitably; and that disaster can be a natural disaster like a hurricane, earthquake, or tornado, or it can be the inevitable disaster of an eternity in hell and without God." If you learn to make yourself at home here on earth among those who show disrespect and disregard for God by taking His name in vain, no matter how respected and smart and successful they are, even religious, then you will be making yourself at home with Satan, his fallen angels, and all wicked criminals and unbelievers in hell and in eternity.

Where Did the Word of God come From?

The real underlying issue that Paul is dealing with in the church at Corinth, and which is the same for us today, goes beyond the issues of silence of women in the churches, or disorderly worship, tongues, miracles, even beyond sexual immorality and the unsound doctrines about the resurrection of Christ as part of the Gospel of Christ. It goes to the very fundamental and basic concept of our respect for and attitude toward the Word of God. If you are realistic, you would have to admit that in any one church today, there are degrees of respect for the authority of the Bible as the Word of God. The spectrum runs all the way form "the Bible is inspired like Shakespeare is inspired and therefore contains spiritual widom" to
those PhDs and ThDs of the Jesus Seminary who pick only a little of the Gospel of
John as coming from Jesus; and then between those two extremes we would have
the fence straddlers that either pick and chose certain Scriptures for emphasis like
the fundamentalists, or the church members who see some Scriptures as applicable
to only certain times, their being a certain poorly defined evolution of Scripture
whereby we are more qualified to see through the issues and solutions as more
informed Christians with the American Conscience and the American Democratic
Faith--after all, don’t we know more, have more developed democratic ways and con-
sciences than of any civilization in history--than were the church members at
Corinth or of any place in the first century. After all, we have bubble gum, super-
man, wonder woman, and Russ Limbaugh and Oprah Winfrey. While the Jews only
had the ability to seek after some “sign” or miracle, and the Greeks only had the
ability to seek after “wisdom”, we as Americans have the ability to do all of this plus
the American Democratic Faith and the American Conscience. Aren’t we setting on
top of the world with American English learned by every person in the world, with
American Democracy sought by all that see our moves in the world except the Mus-
lims, and have we not set the pattern for work of life in terms of American finances
and business. Yes, but only until the Fulness of the Gentiles is complete, which the
US was chosen by the providence of God to lead in; only until the Gospel is preached
to every nation; only until God controlling all nations and the bounds of all nations has
used the US to punish other nations even as He used Assyria and Babylon, then in
turn bringing diasters upon them; and only until the Falling Away in the US even as in
the rest of the world completes itself with the revelation of the man of sin, with the
complete abounding of sin and lawlessness with the corresponding love waxing cold of
God’s people today and in this country, with the horrible to think of withdrawal of
the Holy Spirit which releases Satan for his full fury even as the Coming of the Holy
Spirit on the day of Pentecost bound Satan for a figurative “one thousand years”, an
extremely long and indefinite time known only to God and not us. {Yes, we do have
many fundamentalists would want to identify that time definitely, based on the con-
venience of reading and teaching the Darby and Scofield Reference Bible notes;
and who have a similar problem as the Jesus Seminar, a method of “hunt and peck” or
“pick and chose” that does not respect and regard the Scriptures of the Word of
God as coming only through Apostles and Prophets, as only having already come
through the only Apostles and Prophets.

“Or did the word of God come originally from you? Or was it you only that it
reached?” (I Corinthians 14:36)

I hope that you see that this is a verse about “the word of God”, the Scriptures of
the Bible; that this is perhaps one of the most important verses that we could con-
sider today in dealing with our church and spiritual issues; that this is perhaps the
most significant gist of all of I and II Corinthians, dealing with the very nature of
Apostles and Prophets as only given the gifts of revelations, which is also echoed as

LEARN CHRIST commentaries 201
one of the most important doctrines of all the Bible, especially of the epistles of Paul; and the violation of which today has given us all these itching ears teachers who think either: (1) the Word of God came to them only; or (2) that they originated the Word of God. Did you, or do you only, originate the Word of God? Were you and your church or your group of Christians the only ones who received the Word of God? Today from itching ears Bible teachers we hear about “everyday life”, “the extraordinary life”, “the protection of the unity of church life by a forced unity and peace”, “the good life”, and the “life of prosperity and protection”. My, I wonder why it has taken Christianity over two thousand years for a select few Bible teachers to find these teachings? Or did they originate them as “God spoke to them” or as “God gave them a word”. Or is it seemly that they have gone beyond the Greeks in wisdom, beyond all the world in prudence, beyond the Jews in signs and miracles, to get more special Revelations from God that the world and the ASI did not know about.

The “Pride of Life” in America

Let us contrast these itching ears Bible teachings—everyday life, good life, extraordinary life, church life unity, and a life of protection and prosperity with the “pride of life” which is condemned in the Bible as being as bad as any other “lust”. Look carefully at these current teachings from men and women with the gift of gab, if not the gift of prophesy according to I and II Corinthians, and what you will find is more the “pride of life” than of a life recommended by any place in the Word of God. In fact for churches, the Pride of Life has become an adopted and dominant style of the American Style. You know, since we are in the Falling Away, what has changed drastically in American church history and the history of denominations and religion is that popularity of Bible teaching and preaching is now a bad sign. I think we would all agree that approximately 40 to 20 years ago with the preaching and evangelism of Billy Graham, even looking back on Moody, Wesley, Torrey, and other evangelists at that time in American history and under the total finalizing plan of history by God, popularity in Bible teaching and preaching was good sign. Now, when we are well into, by all current signs, well into the intolerance toward sound doctrine of the Falling Away...well into the bad church behavior and attitudes of the “perilous times”...well into the abounding in society and in churches of sin and lawlessness with the love of Christ and God and Scriptures waxing each day more cold, then now popular of Bible teachers and preachers is a bad sign. If they are popular, they are bad; if they are unpopular like Jesus, the Prophets, and the Apostles then perhaps you should be listening to them.

Now that deals with the teachers and preachers themselves, the vast proliferation of Bible teachers and preachers which Scripture calls “heaping up”, so vast is this heaping up in conferences, TV, churches, and you name it that I wish we had a word beyond “heaping” to describe it, say maybe like “avarice” is beyond greed in magnitude. They are everywhere: on the best seller list in New York, of course on TV
and radio, in the book stores, and unfortunately in the minds and hearts of the American people, in church or otherwise. Having dealt in a Scriptural manner with the false teachers and prophets which must come with the Falling Away and end times, let us identify them by their messages on "the pride of life." Now, first of all the pride of life is not the "good life" that was recommended by Lyndon Johnson...no, I jest, it is not the good life that the Apostle Peter recommended in order to live a long time on this earth, that life which must be characterized by "do good, abstain from evil, seek peace and run after peace." No, you need to recognize in these popular Bible teachers and preachers a "pride of life" that is condemned by the Apostle John in I John 2:14-17. (Or is this part of the Word of God that did not come to you or which you did not generate, or could it be that you also see in the Apostle John and Jesus even as you see in the Apostle Paul certain "personal prejudices" of simply words of wisdom given for the times.)

"Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world--the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life--is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever." (I John 2:14-17)

Pride of life according to the Apostle John and the Word of God that came to all of us is as much a lust as the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes. To covet anything or anybody now as in the OT giving of the ten commandments is a wrong in the sight of God. Lust goes beyond a simple look at the houses and land and status and income and husbands and wives and transportation that others have; it goes beyond even a simple desire to have those things, although it is truly hard to distinguish the point at which we cross over from simple desire to lust. However when we get there, I am sure we will know it; and we should not that it is wrong in the sight of God. Not only is it wrong and forbidden---of course, the pride of life right there in with the other lusts--but it has no eternal value. Lusts like the world is not of the Father, and lusts like the world are rapidly passing away. And if you can not see what the "pride of life" is from the context of this one verse, more importantly to see how bad it is to practice such pride as well as for your Bible teachers to practice such teachings; you should be able to both see it from the larger context of the I John chapter 2 and from the larger context of the whole Word of God, especially the teachings of Jesus.

1. The "Pride of Life" is similar to the attitude and way of life of the man of whom Jesus taught the parable, who talked to his soul with words of comfort, that he had the need in life for larger barns.

2. The "Pride of Life" as John the Apostle knew and foretold would happen during the "last hour" of I John 2:18, the equivalent of the end time and Falling Away from
the Apostle Paul, is preached and taught by the false prophets, false apostles, and false teachers that John refers to as "Antichrists".

"Little children {and I hope you can assume a little child attitude toward Jesus and the Apostles, the only possible attitude of the kingdom of God and therefore of salvation}...little children, it is the last hour {the last days started on the first day of Pentecost after the Ascension}; and as you have heard that the Antichrist {in NT times there were many Antichrists, those false prophets and teachers, and the Scriptures tell us that the number and intensity of these false teachers will increase, and even as the man of sin and perdition of Daniel was first a false leader from among the Greeks and later among the Romans, so the final Man of Sin, the Antichrist of the very end times, spoken of in II Thessalonians, and as the supreme leader of the following away}... is coming, even now many Antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour. {Boy, if John and the other Apostles saw them in their time, what should we be seeing with the “heaping up” in this time!} (I John 2:18)

3. The “Pride of Life” will be preached and taught by those who go astray in the church—the kind of church leaders that Paul warned the Ephesian elders that “would come out from among you” as grievous wolves to make disciples after themselves and to generate a following for themselves—because they no longer listen to the Scriptures of the Apostles and Prophets, “that none of them were of us”, the Apostles. Anytime and anywhere a popular Bible teacher generates extra-biblical prophesies, not according to the ASI and in order to promote themselves and make a prophet, they had separated themselves by their messages and interpretations from the Apostles, from Jesus, and from the Scriptures of the Apostles and Prophets.

“They went out from us, but there were not of us {these are the leaders of the tares and the goats as there is no way than any person today can either exceed the example of Jesus in the lives of the Apostles and the Prophets, even as there is no way they can give revelations with the same authority of an Apostle}; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us: but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.” (I John 2:19)

4. While these false heaped-up Bible teachers and preachers often claim a “special anointing”, and by the way an anointing that something like a priest they can pass onto you, do not place them on a pedestal of “pride of life”, as you have the same Anointing of the inward presence of the Holy Spirit that they have.

“But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things”. (I John 2:20)

Two very fundamental doctrines of the Word of God, from the Apostles and the Prophets is that: (1) You have the anointing when you believe and are baptized in...
the sense of what baptism means in the Bible, that is as the salvation process of new birth, sanctification, and glorification start in your life; and (2) you have the Priesthood of the Believers capability to "know all things" of the revelations of the Scripture, that anointing Spirit in you passing on that capability of reminded of the things of Jesus, etc. You will find in much of this "pride of life" teachings of would-be prophets and apostles today that element of trying to replace your priesthood as a believer with their own authority of a priesthood over you.

5. The bottom line is that these itching ears and heaped up teachers of the "pride of life" know that a message of the pride of life will appeal to you as natural; they know that it is consistent with your own personal and un-sanctified desires; they do not know, or chose not to know, that Satan, the prince of this world who always and ever promotes the pride of this life and world found it effective in the past and has fine tuned the message today with new subtleties and terminology, always taking some of the phrases and terminology of the Bible as a basis and with some tiny bit of truth taking the Scripture then running everywhere with it to preach and teach. The bottom line also is that they have two motivations: (1) to gain status for themselves by heaping up a certain number of followers and listeners, that is what Paul talked about would even happen at Ephesus; and (2) they seek to make a profit. You see they like to preach to you the Gospel of Prosperity as part of the "pride of life" in order to not only tickle your ears and satisfy your desires, but also in order to justify the fact that they have already sold out to the Gospel of Prosperity. Look at their lives of extravagance and affluence if you do not see it in their message. It is far from the message of self denial of Jesus where "you take up a cross daily and follow Jesus. It is more like a message of "take up daily the cross of Prosperity". It is far from the old gospel of the Sermon on the Mount where things are just added unto when you seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, never to be sought and promoted as a priority in life.

6. But they mention and talk about Jesus; and they talk about God; and they quote from Scripture. Yes, and to use the extreme example so did Satan in his temptations of Jesus in order to subvert Him from the real plan of God. And to use not such an extreme example, say for instance an example of an average church member in the church at Corinth as typical no doubt of the average church member today, Paul said that it can happen to them and their leaders that they can fall in the wilderness just like God's people did after 40 years of seeing the works of God.

"Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things {that we should not exercise the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the similar covetousness of the pride of life} as they also lusted." (I Corinthians 10:6)
And how God can be as displeased with God’s people in the churches today, and their leaders or would-be leaders, as He was with the children of Israel which were the original God’s people.

“But with most of them {most of them, the majority, and not only the majority but all but Caleb, Moses, Aaron, Joshua, and the youth 19 years of age and younger}...God was not well pleased {God was not well pleased with most of God’s people then and in the Falling Away God will again not be well please with most of His people; and could it be possible that of all the churches in America and the leaders that God could again become only pleased with the youth and 4 church members--no, impossible, well, I don’t know about that, and I would think that it behooves us to be among the only four}, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness.” (I Corinthians 10:5)

That is what God thought of God’s people after trying to get through to them for 40 years. He thought no more of them, than on several occasions and at several places, to scatter their bodies in the wilderness. What happened to the souls of these same number of most of God’s people is even worse: they were and have been prohibited from entering God’s eternal rest.

Preaching and Prophecy, What is the Difference?

Prophecy according to Paul, and no doubt Paul knew the Prophets better than all Apostles, and as recorded in I Corinthians is to exhort, edify, and comfort. Preaching the Word according to the Apostle Paul is to “reprove, rebuke, and exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.” Where prophesy and preaching obviously overlap is on the matter of exhortation, and that is a good overlap when you consider that it must be done with all the living doctrine of the Bible and with patience. Prophecy was started by the Old Testament Prophets who had a twin message of THE MESSAGE for the people of their day, and a large element of looking into the future which we can call prediction. God has stated through the Prophets that He will never do anything without letting God’s people know; and since God is very active as the Great Maker of History, that has meant that a lot of predictions had to be made in the OT and some in the NT. Prophecy has two aspects, that of revelations from God and that of illuminations from the Holy Spirit. Only the Apostles and Prophets have been granted the gift from the Spirit of Christ in the OT and the Ascended Christ after the NT times to prophecy revelations. Any church member since the coming of the Holy Spirit in great presence and power on the earth after the first day of Pentecost after Christ’s Ascension, and from the Father and at the direction of the Christ at the right hand of God the Father...that is any Christian in the nature of the democratic “anointing” of the internal spirit of God (that which takes place with ordinary salvation if you can call ordinary the salvation of any person) can prophesy, educated or otherwise, men or women, servant or none. It passed from special anointings on the Judges and other
leaders in the OT on certain occasions to the more general and democratic anointing of the Spirit in all believers after the Ascension.

**Teaching and Doctrine**

The two words in the Bible are similar in meaning: to have sound doctrine is to hold to sound teachings even as sound faith comes from sound hearing, and sound faith is similar to sound teachings. However, doctrine is teachings with wheels. Doctrine implies teaching that shows action in lives. Many years ago, a course in religious education at Southwestern Seminary utilized a book by Edge entitled “Teaching for Results.” Well, doctrine is teaching with results. Doctrine goes beyond teaching--while very dependent on the faithfulness of the teachings of Jesus, Paul, and the Bible--to applications in attitudes and behavior. For example, the “doctrine of Christ” of the Bible is first of all the Bible teachings about Christ, then it is what the mind retains and holds to often determined by the amount of faith that comes by hearing, then what the heart put its arms around, and then also what the will of the individual choses to act on.
You would think that the subject of “Spiritual Wisdom” in a way would continue in II Corinthians; however, while the major gist changes to “The Ministry”, Paul does continue with things like his Apostolic authority started in the first letter, also about the Greek orator Apollos, there is a little more about “understanding” and wisdom. There were, you can sense from reading II Corinthians a lot of reactions from the church members at Corinth to the first letter; for example, some of them were saying how bold he was in letters and yet how timid and non eloquent in person. Something was going on in the church and perhaps the churches about the young pastor Titus, and Paul spends over two chapters talking about the role of Titus in “our Ministry”. II Corinthians is much more personal, no doubt also part of a response to the reaction of the first letter. Time and again, even more than you read the key word “ministry” do you read “we”, “we”, and “we”; and when you try to discover that “we” based on the context of II Corinthians, you find it primarily to be Paul, Timothy, Silas, and Titus, and of course Apollos in a more rhetorical sense. Paul explains that Apollos presence was requested, but he declined to come.

11-1: The “WE”s of II Corinthians.
As a prelude, look at just some of the many “WE”s of II Corinthians that set the very personal tone of this letter from the Apostle Paul. Of course, it is also personal to Paul in that he must explain what he had not made the announced trip there, and also explain how he and his companions had despaired even of life, with the corresponding sufferings in Macedonia, and offering that as one explanation of the failed appearance. It is in 1:6 that “we are afflicted”, though for the consolation...
and salvation of the church {which needs some explanation}; in 1:8 it is "our trouble which came to us in Asia where we despaired even of life because of the burden; in 1:13 is "we" are writing to you for understanding; in 1:24 it is "not that we have dominion over your faith, but are fellow workers".

{Parenthetically there is a very "I Paul" statement in 2:1,2, much like Paul always writes, but it stands out in this letter because of all the "WE's": "But I determined this within myself, that I would not come again to you in sorrow. For if I make you sorrowful, then who is he who make me glad but the one who is made sorrowful by me?" (II Corinthians 2:1,2) Something significant has happened since I Corinthians to place Paul on shaky ground as an Apostle to the Corinthians. He defends in I Corinthians somewhat, not as much as in II Corinthians, his position and status as an Apostle; and when in I Corinthians 4:13 he ends a treatise about how hard it is to be an apostle, after discussing in the passage of 4:6-13 some of the differences between him and Apollos, and as he get into the apostle part thus separating himself from Apollos, the end of the passage being another "WE", this time for Apostles--and perhaps we will find in some of the other WEs apostles, though of course not because of Timothy, Titus, and Silas, and again the end is "We have been made as the filth of the world, the offscouring of all things UNTIL NOW." And I think this is clear that at that moment in time, Paul felt a security of status with the church at Corinth as related to his apostolic authority and status. As we progress in our study of II Corinthians perhaps this will become clearer, and perhaps even with some help of the church history from Acts.}

Definitely you will see the difference between the tone of "I Paul" in I Cor {for I Corinthians} as compared to the tone of "WE" in II Cor. Previously in I Cor it was "I thank my God" in 1:4, "Now I say this" in 1:12, "I thank God that I baptized one of you except Crispus and Gaius" in 1:14, "And I brethren, when I came to you" in 2:1 {in all fairness though the argument remains the same there is a "we speak wisdom" in 2:6}, a "And I brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ" starts chapter 3 of I Cor in 3:1 {with enough ire to irritate the Greek Christian mentality at Corinth that perhaps did not have the same effect on the Jews at Rome in Romans 2 of the Jews of the synagogues in Hebrews on babes and the need to be teachers}, "I do not write thee things to shame you" in 4:14, "I wrote to you in my epistle" {an epistle we are not sure about since there is not one to Corinth before I Cor that we can think of}: but you get the point of the "I's" in I Cor so that we can continue what we started in the above paragraph on the tone of "WE"s in II Cor: {we stopped briefly above with a parenthetical statement with the we of II Cor 1:24} in 3:1 it is "do we begin again to commend ourselves?", in 3:5 and 3:6 respectively "not that we are sufficient of ourselves" and God "made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant", in 4:1 we do not lose heart since we have received mercy to have this ministry, in 4:7 we have this treasure--no doubt the treasury of
the ministry—in earthen vessels, and since you get the point the last one I will mention until we do a complete exegesis of II Cor around “The Ministry” is one that supports the very gist of the title of this volume of the LEARN CHRIST commentaries, with that of “we also believe and therefore speak” (4:13) from Paul based on the “I believed and therefore I spoke” of David in Psalm 116:10 that Paul quotes.

11-2: What We Do Get of II Corinthians from Our Topical Bible Outline.

Back again to chapters 2 and 3 for all mentions of II Corinthians in our Topical Outline of the Bible.

1. Exodus 16:18 and II Corinthians 8:15: (1) During God’s supply of manna during the 40 years in the wilderness, those who gathered much had nothing left over and those who gathered little were not hungry so that it was completely by the grace of God and according to the individual needs; and (2) Paul quotes this in II Corinthians to illustrate equality among Christians in the churches, or to illustrate the democratic nature of salvation. (Paul, of course, here is talking of the Church Ministry of Giving.)

2. Leviticus 28:12 and II Corinthians 6:16: God desires a distinct or special people among whom He can dwell and be their God. {NOTE: In Isaiah 52:11 as quoted in II Corinthians 6:17 this is to be a clean and separate people.}

11-3: A Possible Outline of II Corinthians.

The Outline of II Corinthians will be more simple than that of I Corinthians, and so it should be in a second book that was written to respond to reactions from the first book, not so much introducing any new doctrines or new and astounding truths from either the OT or the Ascended Christ. However, before we look at that simple outline, it would be wise to also compare the type and extent of OT quotes between I Cor and II Cor. And immediately you see Paul’s love of and dependence on Isaiah.

### TABLE 2. Quotes in I Corinthians versus in II Corinthians

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OT quote</th>
<th>I Corinthians</th>
<th>OT quote</th>
<th>II Corinthians</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Isaiah 29:14</td>
<td>I Cor 1:19</td>
<td>1. Psalm 116:10</td>
<td>4:13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Isaiah 64:4</td>
<td>I Cor 2:9</td>
<td>3. Leviticus 26:12</td>
<td>6:16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Deut 17:7</td>
<td>I Cor 5:13</td>
<td>7. Ezekiel 20:34,41</td>
<td>6:17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Volume 3: Believe and Be Baptized**

**TABLE 2. Quotes in I Corinthians versus in II Corinthians**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OT quote</th>
<th>I Corinthians</th>
<th>OT quote</th>
<th>I Corinthians</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13. Isaiah 28:11,12</td>
<td>I Cor 14:21</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Psalm 8:6</td>
<td>I Cor 15:27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Isaiah 22:13</td>
<td>I Cor 15:32</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Genesis 2:7</td>
<td>I Cor 15:45</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Isaiah 25:8</td>
<td>I Cor 15:54</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTES on the Table:** You will notice that in II Corinthians how Paul well into the letter, in fact into the fourth chapter of only 13 chapters, or almost a third of the way, before the first OT quote. You can tell he is on the defence because of the reactions at Corinth to I Cor, and then he is ready to get down to the work of writing Scriptures.

You see a similar mix in both cases of Isaiah and Psalm, although of course, there are only 12 quotes in the 13 chapters of II Cor, while there are 18 quotes in the 16 chapters of I Cor for respectively a quote/chapter density of 12/13 and 16/18 or 92 % and 89% so the ratio is more balanced between the two than at first appears, and the decision would still lean in favor of Paul having planned a certain number of quotes from a book of "The Ministry", at least on his own Apostleship part. You will notice also that Paul threw up 4 from the law in the first case, and 2 from the law in the second case; there is one from Jeremiah in both cases; one minor Prophet, Hosea, in the first and the major Prophet Ezekiel in the second. Also we should note that while Job is quoted only in I Cor, one of the historical books, that of II Samuel, is quoted in II Cor. Also you will note that quotes from Ezekiel are an addition to II Corinthians, Ezekiel 37:27 and Ezekiel 20:34,41.

While Paul is going to continue to deal with the problems in the church at Corinth, even as he did in I Corinthians and in another epistle, the primary compulsion on him is to fulfill His own commission to Christ and God as chief editor of the NT. You see, Paul's perspective is that God has a plan for the Jewish people to complete the oracles of God, and that he has a part in that to write 14 letters of the NT according to what Christ told him in Arabia and according to what he had written down on a parchment back at Tarsus of OT quotes that must be explained in the NT. For this writing of the epistle of II Corinthians, Ezekiel would be a key part of both: (1) a forever part of the Word of God that would go to all nations and peoples across the total earth and across time; and (2) a proper dealing with the problems of God's people for all time, God and the problems also being consis-
Volume 3: Believe and Be Baptized

tent and similarly the same and planned on by God. In other words, Paul had the con-
fidence even as James expressed that “known unto God are all His works from the
beginning of time”, that God knew the church at Corinth as all churches would have
these kinds of problems even as He had known the Hebrew children would have simi-
lar problems—God’s people then and God’s people now. Paul knew that if by revela-
tion through the Holy Spirit of God, and based on his list of OT quotes and in the
light of what Jesus told him in Arabia, he could deal with total human problems in
light of God’s plans for solutions, then he could also deal with the problems in the
churches at Corinth. After all, these were church members that God Himself had
picked out. In a search for problems and solutions that transcend any local church
with solutions for those local churches, we will start with the eternal teachings from
God the Father as recorded in Ezekiel.

11-4: II Corinthians 6, the Ministry of a Distinct and Empowered People of
God.

This approach places the sixth chapter of II Corinthians at the focal point of our
study and of the Ministry, because not only does the contain the two quotes from
Ezekiel--37:27 and 20:34,41—but also contains a grand total of 7 OT quotes. We
will look at them in the order they are given in chapter 6 with the explanations and
applications of the Holy Spirit through Paul. (the way to get the ASI). First a
reminded of the underlying problem at Corinth as made clear in I Corinthians was a
certain pride that either the Word of God was originated by them or that the Word
of God had come to them only. This is what created a major problem among the peo-
ple of God in the Old Testament, and this is what creates major problems among
God’s people today.

1. That oft repeated message from the other epistles of Paul is in the first quote of
chapter 6, a call that “now is the accepted time” to receive the grace of God, and not
in vain”, that “now is the day of salvation”. Jew or Greek, Hebrew or Corinthians, no
individual, Jew or Gentile, could have grace, mercy, and salvation except on the time
table of God the Father. While it is offered, take it; as God does not always extend
the same offer on the same schedule and to the same people. Even as the children
of Israel had only 40 years to “test, try, and prove God” in the wilderness, even as
the restored Israel after captivity in Assyria and Babylon had only 3 and 1/2 years
after the Crucifixion for salvation of the Jews until the Fulness of the Gentiles was
complete, even as Gentiles led by the US had only period from the Fulness of the
Gospel preached to every nation to the Falling Away of the end time (the time when
churches no longer endure sound doctrine, the time when sin abounds and the
love of many wax cold, the same time when Satan is loosed as the Holy Spirit is
withdrawn from earth, and the same time when the third man of sin of Daniel is
revealed), so there is a period, called “now-time” for the church at Corinth. Now was
one new time for the children of Israel in the wilderness, now was one new time for
the Jewish people in the restored Israel of the time of Christ, now was a different
now time for the church and other churches of the Gentile Roman Empire, and now is a different now time for us, near the end of the Fulness of the Gentiles, near the end of the Gospel being preached to every nation, at the beginning of the 40 year Falling Away, and near the end of the Age as Christ comes again. What remains the same through all of these “now-time” periods is: God, God’s Word and words, and the plan of God for any specific period.

“In an acceptable time {the time acceptable to God and according to the generalized and specific plan of God which He did and always does make known to His own people in the words of the Bible} I have heard you, and in the day of salvation I have helped you.” (II Corinthians 6:2 and Isaiah 49:8)

God choses your time of salvation according to His plans and phases; God choses to help Jews or Gentiles when He sees fit.

(1). The context before and after this quote is “we as workers with Him” pleading with you to receive the grace of God when and how it is offered (6:1); that we know now and here to be the accepted time and place for you at Corinth; and that we put the Ministry first. We do not want the Ministry to be blamed in anyway, therefore we are careful to give no offences in anything. We do promote ourselves as “the ministers of God” by: patience, in tribulation, in needs, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in sleeplessness, in fastings, by purity, knowledge, longsuffering, kindness, the Holy Spirit, sincere love, word of truth, power of God, armor of righteousness, honor and dishonor, evil and good report, deceivers and true, famous and infamous, as living dead, chastened but not killed, in sorrow and rejoicing, as poor and making rich, and having nothing on earth while possessing on things eternal. Wow, did Paul get all that out of those few words of Isaiah 49:8? Yes, in that these are the many ways Isaiah and the other Prophets were helped by God even as Paul and his company were helped by God. The only difference was in the kind of salvation and help for the now-season: the help of God for His former people the Jews was almost over {surely even time now we are 3 and 1/2 years after the Crucifixion}, and the beginning of the now-time for the Gentile Greeks was starting with an unknown cutoff time of approximately one thousand years. There was the Old Covenant between God and the children of Israel with a few Gentiles that existed from Mount Sinai to Christ; there was the new covenant for believing Jews until the Apostles, first churches, and until God’s cutoff 3 and 1/2 years after the Crucifixion; and a 3 and 1/2 year overlap with the Gentile age from Christ to the Falling Away, the period leading up to the Fulness of the Gentiles and the Gospel to every nation, a period for Gentiles only.

(2). O Corinthians that we have spoken to with open hearts--you do the same--BE NOT UNEQUALLY YOKED TOGETHER WITH UNBELIEVERS, II Corinthians 6:14. This is a problem God has dealt with now and in OT times.
 Volume 3: Believe and Be Baptized

“For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols?” (II Corinthians 6:14-16a)

2. You are the Temple of the Living God, II Corinthians 6:16b.

“As God has said: ‘I will dwell in them {the anointing of the inward Holy Spirit} and walk among them {which God did through Jesus for approximately 33 years}. I will be their God {Jews and Gentiles for 36 and 1/2 years, then only Gentiles, that is for new people}, and they shall be My people {we have the historical event of the establishment of a new group to be called “God’s people.”}’ (II Corinthians 6:16b and Ezekiel 37:27 with Leviticus 26:12 and Jeremiah 32:38)

{Some additional food for thought in a NOTE: how does the approximately one thousand years from a new Hebrew nation with a covenant with God of Mount Sinai, about from 1491 BC to about 36 and 1/2 AD--approximately because we know our usual dating schemes to be somewhat off even as God’s knows that we can not be responsible for exactness in time, thus giving us a rounded off number of one thousand for a long and indefinite time, not to Him but unknown completely by us until fulfilled, and then we have a problem with history--or a “now period” of say of approximately 1530 years; that is how would that 1530 years compare to the from 39 A.D. to 2006 plus AD during which we as leaders in the US of the Gentiles of the Fulness of the Gentiles, or the 1967 years of our one thousand years? Of course, you must remember that the binding of Satan happened when the coming of the Holy Spirit on earth in a unique and powerful way--more of the now time of that period--starting the famous “one thousand years” found only in one Bible passage and in the book of Revelation, a book of spiritual representations by numbers like 12, 7, etc.; and ending the famous one thousand years when the Holy Spirit (II Thessalonians) is withdrawn from earth which does release Satan from bondage. Without the work of the Spirit to convict the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, Satan is released to do almost all that he desires in the world, also knowing that his time is short, somewhat in the nature of the 40 years of the Falling Away. (What Daniel calls the time when the power of the Holy people is completely shattered.) And what adds the indefiniteness to the 1530 and the 1967 years to make them both one thousand years is in the first case the exact time after the Crucifixion when God cut the Jews off as His people, and in the second case the exact time when the Falling Away of the Gentiles started. Well, while we do not have charts and diagrams and hideous pictures with a time table to show you like fundamentalists and premilleniumists, we do like them have our speculations--I hope based more on the total context of the Bible, rather than a book of Revelation taken out and away from the total context of the rest of the Bible, especially from Jesus on eschatology, from Paul and Peter, and even from Daniel.)
(1). Ezekiel 37:27 and the context of Ezekiel.

The Prophet Ezekiel had a similar message to Jeremiah and most of the Prophets: “God’s people in Jerusalem and in the Temple as in all of Judah are not acting like God’s people, and disaster had already been ordained by God to come on them, some near disasters and some the far disaster on all heaven and earth.” The latter is the Judgment already rendered by God, and the former are the judgments already rendered by God and planned in heaven. The distant disaster on God’s people, as with all people of all ages, is an eternal separation as tares and goats from God and heaven to a place called “hell” and the “lake of fire”. The nearer disaster for God’s people the time of Ezekiel, Jeremiah, and Daniel (also dealt with as history by the Prophet Daniel and as predictive history in Isaiah) was captivity under the dominance of Babylon and Persia. Ezekiel tells from southern Babylon and based on visions from God what Jeremiah tells from being there during the last days of Jerusalem and the Temple before the complete destruction by Babylon. {Captivity of the southern kingdom of Judah, after captivity of the northern kingdom of Israel by Assyria, came in stages.}

The context message of chapter 37 of Ezekiel was that “those dry” bones of God’s people of Jerusalem and Judah would live again.

“Then He said to me, ‘Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They indeed say, ‘Our bones are dry, our hope is lost, and we ourselves are cut off!’ Therefore prophesy and say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD: ‘Behold, O My people, I will open your graves and cause you to come up from your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel....I will put My Spirit in you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken it and performed it,’ says the LORD.’” (Ezekiel 37:11-14)

What is not made clear here is that there restoration into the land would only last until 75 AD when Rome and General Titus, later Caesar Titus, would again kill, destroy the temple, and capture some. What is also not made clear here is the cutoff of the Jews from God 3 and 1/2 years after the Crucifixion {Daniel has to make that clear as we have discussed in the previous chapter on “The Message of the Writing Prophets”}. Likewise that those who would receive a new heart through the new birth would be more Gentiles than Jews during the Fulness of the Gentiles and the spread of the Gospel to every nation.

(2). Leviticus 26:12 and the context in the law and laws of God.

Paul, still a lawyer of the OT law in that he and the other Apostles as should the church at Corinth knew that the law had not been destroyed by Christ, only made full, that the law was first Scriptures even as the Apostles were now writing revelations for Scriptures which would slowly be Canonized, always and ever quoted...
from the law of Moses, the first five books of the Bible, as Word of God that was still in effect.

"I will set My tabernacle among you, and My soul shall not abhor you. I will walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people." (Leviticus 26:11,12)

While Paul explained in Hebrews the spiritual nature of the tabernacle of God as the inward temple of God's people, synonymous with the total body of Christ, he explained in Romans of how the real Israel, that is the real people of God after Christ, would be more Gentiles than Jews. All of that understanding from the Spirit was right there in the law from the beginning, especially as explained by the Prophets such as Ezekiel, Jeremiah, Isaiah, and Daniel, and yes also the Minor Prophets. The Message was always the same from God's Prophets to God's people, though the nature of God's people changed and the method of "now-salvation" somewhat changed from one period or phase to the other. Always however, God wanted a distinct and peculiar people different from their own time and social environment; and always God would be with them to help!

"Therefore 'Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you. I will be a Father to you (we think of how Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount of how God is our Father), and you shall be My sons and daughters (we think of in the first chapters of Acts with the preaching of Peter from Amos of how sons and daughters would democratic receive the anointing of the Holy Spirit with salvation, by the way the one baptism), says the LORD Almighty.'" (II Corinthians 6:17 and Ezekiel 20:34,41 with Isaiah 52:11)

This separation and distinction of God's people, which the NT most often calls "sanctification" (the inward and continuing work of the Spirit after new birth shows in also a separation of thought and acts from the social environment) is part of the One Baptism that comes after "belief"; so also is the new heart which bespeaks of the new birth which happens at the start of salvation and leads further to the sanctification. What did Paul need to write as Word of God that would therefore be applicable now and later, to Corinth and to the world to come at large in many other churches? The "cleanse" and "perfect" of chapter 7.


"Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves (the ourselves is inclusive to include the church at Corinth, Paul and his companions, the Apostles, and I think we can of necessity read ourselves into this) from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit (something which must be seriously considered is that there is a filthiness of the flesh and spirit which might be considered as a contrast between actions and attitudes), perfecting (perfection and perfecting along with maturity are always admonitions in Paul's epistles) holiness (that per-
The development in II Corinthians 7 through chapter 9—what I like to call the argument since never forget that Paul was a lawyer, albeit converted lawyer—of the Word of God based on OT and teachings of Christ in Arabia with further assistance from the Holy Spirit, goes like this: (1) news of the repentance of the church at Corinth after the writing of I Corinthians brought by Titus so that “in all things you proved yourselves to be clear in this matter” (7:11); (2) how Paul and Titus have been comforted and have confident in them “in everything” (7:16); (3) we want you to know of how the grace of God has also been bestowed on the churches of Macedonia—and how they were freely willing to give of their liberality—also imploring us to (a) receive the financial gift and (b) leading in “the fellowship of the ministering to the saints” (8:4) as part of the Ministry. And the rest of chapter 8 through chapter 9 is on “The Fellowship of the Ministering to the Saints” as part of the Ministry, never forgetting that this giving to the saints, even a cup of water, is part of the Ministry of Cleansing and Perfection.

11-6: The Fellowship of the Ministering to the Saints, II Corinthians 8,9.

The Fellowship of the Ministering to the Saints is Part of the Forever Ministry of Cleansing and Perfection, II Corinthians 8 and 9. Paul wrote I Corinthians to the church, and it worked. They repented with “godly sorrow that leads all the way into all of salvation”; they gave diligence and in the sight of the Evangelist Titus to clear themselves of the problems aforementioned with indignation, fear, desire, zeal, and vindication. An Apostle who had started this church could ask no better response from the church under God that he started!

1. The churches of Macedonia, as we had hoped, first had the grace of God to submit themselves to the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ then to the Apostles with giving; so Titus would be sent back to Corinth to also see the completion of that same gift of the grace of giving in their church (8:6,7). What they pledged for the poorer saints at Jerusalem a year ago, must be completed as part of their own perfection.

2. Even as Christ became poor that we might be rich; even as a willing mind makes the little one has more than what he does not have; even as there needs to be an equality of supply and demand among the churches without burden on any one church; so the children of Israel in the wilderness received from God the manna and meat according to their needs, never one having more leftover than what he really needed.

“As it is written, 'He who gathered much had nothing left over, and he who gathered little had no lack.'” (II Corinthians 8:15 and Exodus 16:18)
In other words, never did their feeding have anything to do with their individual capability to gather. Certainly some were faster in gathering than others, especially the youth over the elderly, some could work harder and longer to gather but this capability was also not a factor in the satisfaction of their hunger.

3. The Evangelist Titus {a messenger-brother who proved diligent to them, more so as he brought word of confidence about them}, and we will learn more about him and his ministry as we come to the book of Titus that Paul wrote for him and all ministers, accepted the “exhortation” to collect from the churches for the Judean saints (8:16,17); and further Titus and “the brother whose praise is in the gospel throughout all the churches” (8:18) {also the same one chosen by the churches to travel with us with this gift“} has been sent to Corinth for collection.

4. The Nature of Ministering to the Saints as part of the Ministry is “superfluos for Paul to write to them” (9:1) because Paul boasted of their giving to Macedonia a year ago, 9:1-5.


11-7: Paul’s Authority for Edification came from Christ, 10-13.

The Authority of an Apostle for “Edification” that the Lord Jesus Christ gave to the Apostle Paul, 10-13. Remember that “prophesy” as defined in I Corinthians included “edification” as well as comfort and exhortation. Paul like the other Apostles gave revelations for prophecy, as well as did the Prophets, and in both letters hoped that these revelations of prophecy of the Word of God, would in turn be the basis for the prophecies of other believers in the churches for perfection and for cleansing, in other words for the Ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ and from God.

1. The weapons of the warfare which an Apostle must face are not carnal, but are mighty ones from God to the full extent of pulling down “strongholds”, 10:1-6.

2. The authority for edification of the churches as from Christ given to Apostles, 10:7-18.

3. Paul is not inferior to the “most eminent Apostle”, 11-13.

   (1). Paul lead them to the only Christ possible with the only Gospel possible and by the only One Spirit possible, 11:1-15.

   (2). Again Paul allows himself another concession of personal opinion that is not part of His revelations from God, Christ, and the Spirit, 11:16, certain boasting of the flesh of the “pride of life” in order for them give him the respect of an Apostle.

   (3). Visions and Revelations from the Lord Jesus Christ as the signs of an Apostle, those Paul experienced, 12:1-6.

   (4). The signs of the weakness of the flesh and the signs of an Apostle of Christ that the church saw in Paul, 12:7-13.
Volume 3: Believe and Be Baptized


(6). Qualifications for examination of church members, Apostles, and their companions, II Corinthians 13. It gets brutally and frankly honest here with additional revelations from Christ on who “is in the faith”. (13:5)

Who “Are In the Faith”?

Who are you that are in the faith, of Apostles and false apostles, prophets, and teachers; and church members at Corinth and in other churches. Not only does Paul give frank and brutal in Ephesians where we find the theme “Learn Christ” of the 5 LEARN CHRIST FROM THE APOSTLES AND PROPHETS commentaries, going so far as to say “if indeed you learned Christ and have been taught by Him”, but we see here in thought and words the development of that questioning of the grounds of church membership in the body of Christ, and of the personal relationship to the Christ, with the words of II Corinthians 13:5,6.

“Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you are disqualified. But I trust that you will know that we are not disqualified.” (II Corinthians 13:5,6)

Who is qualified to be a church member or even an Apostle? Those who after examination and testing can prove to themselves that "Jesus Christ is in you".

220 LEARN CHRIST commentaries
CHAPTER 12

Titus, “Our Proven and Diligent Brother”.

Titus is already well-known in the first century churches when Paul comes to write the epistle of “Titus” to “Titus, a true son in our common faith”. (Titus 1:4). Paul wrote as we previously saw in II Corinthians of how Titus is “another brother” that will come to collect at Corinth for the saints at Jerusalem, how Titus was a proven and diligent brother by his previous ministry at Corinth, and of how Titus had comforted them, the Apostles and companions, with the same comfort he received from the church members at Corinth as they repented from the sins and unsound doctrines and practices of I Corinthians, vindicating themselves completely. You know we would almost think that the “other epistle” of I Corinthians, other than I and II Corinthians, might be the epistle of Titus, so carefully does Paul deal with churches and church behavior in Titus, if it were not for the clarity in 1:5 that Paul left Titus at Crete.

“For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking (here is the gist of Titus: to set in order in the churches the things that are lacking), and appoint elders (today we need to get our churches in order based on Titus and the rest of the Word of God, a place to start would be with the Bible on “elders”; that is, unless we think that either the Word of God came out of our church or that the Word of God came to our church only, or denomination)—you see, it is really hard to sympathize with the points at which Catholics, Presbyterians, Methodist and Baptist depart in faith and practices from the pattern of the Word of God; for while it has to be clear to them what is in the Bible that carry and claim allegiance to, they considered them-
selves as having some special signs or wisdom whereby they and their group have evolved beyond the contemporary application of the Word of God, in other words they have become smarter than the Bible and smarter than God, the passage of time causing short of an evolution of more sensitive conscience and wisdom, thinking that the God of the future of eternity is already outdated during their time, placing themselves in jeopardy of secularism from that eternity with God in every city as I commanded you {Apostles command evangelists and church members in authority even as the Ascended Christ commands all}--if a man (well, there it is an elder is a man, not a youth or a woman) is blameless, the husband of one wife (to be a husband is also difficult on the part of a lady and a young lady), having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination. For a bishop {hear that Methodist, Catholics, and pentecostals and other fundamentalists, a bishop is an elder and you know some of the qualifications of an elder} must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed {wow, look at the Word of God from which today we have departed in our unsound and intolerant doctrine, those self-willed and self-promoters of themselves on TV who claims messages for personal profit and status of extra-biblical revelations}, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money {oh my, how the greed of so many Bible teachers and preachers today is covered up by advocating for others their own sins of the Gospel of Prosperity--"I am rich and you can be rich also"}, but hospitable {they will be hospitable from a distance if you will send your gift and message so that they know who to “anoint” from a distance}, a lover of what is good {so many on TV and radio are so unproven as far as being a doer of good as well as being a lover of good}, sober-minded {can you really apply sober-minded to out of breath rantings and ravings}, just, holy, self-controlled {and with their rantings and ravings they are obviously out of self-control}, holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught {we must wonder who has taught them, if they have any training for the ministry, and how can you tell if that is “faithful to the Word” when with a brief mention of some verse or verses we know from the Bible, they quickly and immediately depart for some vast far off land of extra-biblical revelations, known only to them and their source whatever that is, as if the Word of God either came to them only or originated at their Source}, that he may be {sorry, that is a “he” only} able, by sound doctrine {what is that “by sound doctrine”; well, that is what we have from the Word of God with proper respect and regard for the Word of God before the Spirit speaks expressly in I Timothy that “some will depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits (bad attitudes) and doctrines of devils (bad church behavior and itching ears teachings for doctrines), and before the “time will come” in II Timothy when church members, during the Falling Away, will “no longer endure sound doctrine”, governed in the selection of pastors and teachers by their own desires, heaped up and heaping out accordingly of lead-
ers, turning away from the truth and turning into fables), both to exhort and convict (well, we saw “exhort” as part of prophesy, now are we to think that “convict” is part of either the edification, the exhortation, or the comfort) those who contradict.” (Titus 1:5-9)

Well, Paul did the convicting work on the church at Corinth in I Corinthians in order to cleanse and perfect those who by faith and practice contradicted the revelations of the wisdom of God. So the goal of Paul through Titus, hence the goal of all church leaders, should be to correct and exhort those who contradict any of the Word of God.

12-1: Exhort and Convict Those Who Contradict.
1. Idle Talkers and Deceivers, especially of the Jewish people, 1:10-16.
3. Some reminders of a sound church based on sound doctrine of the Word, leading to proper and sound attitudes and behaviors, Titus 3.
Snatching, Stumbling, and the Falling Away

reconciliation of Falling Away with the Security of the Believer
Each Christian leader, if he has enough talent for Satan to bother with, comes to a high point in his career, where Satan tempts him like Jesus.

"Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to Him, 'All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me.'” (Matthew 4:8,9)

At first, no doubt, we are shocked with the power allowed by God to Satan to take Jesus Himself up into a high place. Further, we are further shocked into the realities of spiritual warfare in high places, when we realize that Satan really had the power to give Jesus “all these things” in the world. And while each church and denomination leader today, is not physically carried up to a high mountain, they are in their minds and hearts carried to a place by the world where they have to make a major decision between “things” and the “only” worship and service of God.

"Jesus said...it is written, ‘You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.’” (Matthew 4:10b)

Normally the course of their career in the world--the world, of course is under the control of Satan--brings them to such a high place as was the experience of Jesus after the beginning of His ministry on earth with recognition from John the Baptist, with baptism from John, with a special anointing of the Holy Spirit, and with a testimony from God Himself. For most church leaders, it can be a high mental point in their own mind and heart when called to a large or potential large church, or perhaps university or seminary high position; for other church leaders it can be that
high point of high attendance and even a new church building; and for church leaders on TV and radio it can be either when they first become publicly noticed on the air waves, or it can be at that high point of popularity in the public; and for still others, it comes with the writing of a book after some measure of success, as the world measures success, with a church or social work. The leaders on TV and radio I suppose we can call them kingdom leaders since by placing themselves forward on TV and radio they have taken some of the first places in the kingdom. Many of these leaders in the kingdom of God and Christ start well; but at this high point in their career and popularity, Satan calls on them, if they are talented enough to make the major decision between: (1) worship and service for God “only”, or (2) worship and service of God with an equal worship and service for “all these things”. The “all these things”, of course, is popularity, status, the gospel of prosperity, personal gain and making disciples to themselves. Where you can often see this change in their ministry, a sort of crossover point of the talented under the influence of Satan, is when they take the attitude of some in the church at Corinth as if either “the Word of God came to them only” or that “the Word of God originated with them”. Satan subtleties today are even greater than the time of the temptation of Jesus, and the form of the extra-biblical revelations from these kingdom leaders diverted by Satan is diverse and sundry. In other words, the extra-biblical revelations of the “itching ears” Bible teachers, by false apostles and prophets takes many forms and changes rapidly with time, especially during this time of the Historical Falling Away. {I say “historical” because while any individual and church can be on a more personalized schedule of superficialities and stumblings that lead a personal Falling Away, the end time event of the Falling Away before the Second Coming of Christ is world-wide. It happens the same time that among God’s people sin and lawlessness abounds with a subsequent, according to Jesus, love of many of God’s people waxing cold. Likewise as the love of many of these church leaders grows cold, the influence extends without to the whole kingdom to develop an intolerance of sound doctrine, a heaping up, out, and in of Bible teachers with itching ears, a motivation of personal desires on the part of church members which controls what they will listen to, vote for, worship for, and serve for; and most church members and churches turn away from the truth, subsequently turning into fables, those fables taking many and diverse forms and changing from year to year--about at the same pace as new extra-biblical revelations.}

Having laid a proper foundation in Hebrews and Romans of what the Gospel of the kingdom really is, the kingdom obviously takes priority over churches and denominations especially when those during the Falling Away become questionable; then with I and II Corinthians, and from that part of the Word of God, developing spiritual understanding as illuminations based on Revelations only through Jesus, the Apostles and Prophets, we are ready to take on church and church leader attitudes (spirits) and behavior (actions) toward that sound doctrine of Hebrews, Romans, I
Volume 3: Believe and Be Baptized

and II Corinthians, of course with the examples of Titus, and now of I and II Timothy. If I Timothy can be summarized as “seducing spirits” and “doctrines of devils”, then II Timothy can be summarized as bad church behavior based on seducing spirits and intolerance toward sound doctrine based on the unsound doctrines of devils, that is of the itching ears. {While for the most part in previous Bible studies, I have chosen to think of the “itching ears” teachings as where church leaders comfort their people with messages of comfort and security, primarily with many subtle ways to convince the listeners that they are the elect of God, it seems more apparent in the course of this volume Bible study, that Satan is the one who is tickling the ears of church members, especially his tares. It is only that the “sold-out” leaders help Satan in that awesome and supernatural work of substituting for worship and service of God “only”, a compromise with equal priority for things.}

13-1: I Timothy, Seducing Spirits and Doctrines of Devils.

Paul was always and ever mindful of what the Ascended Christ taught him in Saudi Arabia. Based very solidly in the mind and heart of the Apostle Paul was the parable from Jesus of the Seed and the Sower, especially the part of the famous parable where the seed of the Word of God is "sown on stony ground" (Mark 4:16-17) with two results: IMMEDIATE NEW BIRTH AND SALVATION, (1) the seed of the word is received immediately with such joy that most of the church and church leaders interpret it to be complete new birth and salvation; SUPERFICIALITIES OF NO ROOT IN THE WORD, (2) they have “no root” for 40 years, living on the superficialities of spirituality—a very common practice in this day of contemporary itching ears Bible teachings where "everyday life", "the extraordinary life", and the gospel of prosperity with special anointings take the place of the original seed of the Word of God; STUMBLINGS FOR 40 YEARS, (3) after some period of time, say even nine months or longer, and after they are caused some problems because of convictions about that Word, they start to stumble and for 40 years continue to stumble like the children of Israel in the wilderness. Also Paul would have in his mind the teachings of Jesus, also part of the parable of the seed and the sower, of “the ones sown among thorns” (Mark 4:18,19), oh they listen to the Word at that point when confronted with a choice between (1) worship and service for God only, or (2) cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desire for other things, they compromise with half and half—half of these others things and half worship and service for God.

Paul was forced to reconsider the church members at Corinth to whom he had delivered the Seed of the Word of God when he considered their extra-biblical convictions, to reconsider them in the light of seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, to reconsider them based on the teachings of Jesus about SEED ON STONY GROUND and SEED AMONG THORNS. {It is particularly bad when part of the stone and part of the thorns is the Bible teachers messing with the Seed of the Word of
God! I hope you saw this point of realization in the ministry of the Apostle Paul, almost as significant as when God encouraged him with “I have many people here” originally at Corinth, the point at which after they questioned His own qualifications as an Apostle that he was in turn and in conclusion of I and II Corinthians to question their qualifications to call themselves a Christian, to call themselves God’s people.

“Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you are disqualified. But I trust that you will know that we are not disqualified.” (II Corinthians 13:5,6)

In going from I and II Corinthians, bottom line with the “examine” and “test” yourselves, “if you are in the faith”, to the departing of some from the faith in the “latter times”, we are passing from mid-kingdom time, the latter times would be approximately midway in the last days, to the very last days of the historical Falling Away. (Always and ever as made clear in the commentary on SOME MORE SOUNDS OF SOUND FAITH, the twin doctrines of the Security of the Believer and of the Historical Falling Away both coexist in the Bible as sound doctrines, the reconciliation comes as you see the superficialities and stumblings of the seed sown on stony ground and the destructive nature of cares of this world, the deceitfulness of sin, and other things on the seed sown among the thorns of the world and of the American environment. The only sufficient Bible teaching with a magnitude to meet the challenge of reconciliation between the Falling Away and the Security of the Believer is that 75% of Bible teaching and preaching is sown on bad soil—by the wayside, on stony ground, and among thorns; and that unfortunately the Seed Sowers by example have made a commitment to such kind of soils. Once again, you can not deny the oft Bible teachings of the increase of false Bible teachers, preachers, and even apostles and prophets during the very last of the last days. Why not, the Holy Spirit Himself is withdrawn, and what does that leave as a source of special anointing for their extra-biblical revelations. Watch during that period of the Falling Away as the Holy Spirit is withdrawn, you will not really notice any difference in the worship and service of most of the Pente-costals as they will keep faking miracles, tongues, healings, and “a word from God”! And as always during the historical Falling Away, popularity is a bad sign!)

1. Definition of the seducing spirits and doctrines of devils as synonymous with a departure from the faith.

   (1). The context of I Timothy before a definition of “seducing spirits” and “doctrines of devils.” When later we will come to the bad church members in II 3:1-9, what I tend to call “human frailties gone amuck of church members”, which
ones of the major list would you call bad behavior and which ones would you call bad attitudes. Well, church members as "lovers of themselves", love is more an attitude or a spirit than a behavior; "lovers of money", that is certainly a bad attitude; "boasters", well that is a bad behavior of a church member to exhibit in church; "proud", that is a bad spirit, the spirit of pride; "blasphemers", a bad behavior which would cover the current practice of many church members whereby they take God's name in vain; "disobedient to parents", surely would be both a bad spirit and a bad behavior; "unthankful", you must call that a bad attitude toward primarily God; "unholy", wow, surely that is attitude and action; "unloving", here I think contrary to the first two dealing with love--love of self and love of money--this would be more a lack of love in action and behavior which is based on a bad attitude or spirit of love; "unforgiving", that like love would be bad actions based on bad spirits; "slanderers", "without self-control", and "brutal" would be more bad actions or behavior while "despisers of good" could be both attitude and action, even as "traitors", "headstrong", "haughty", and "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. Undoubtedly also the crowning badness of all bad church behavior and spirit, that of "a form of godliness that denies the power thereof"--that is religion without God and Christ--is both bad behavior in worship and service and is based on a bad attitude toward God that denies the very inward power of God. It is the age old problem that the OT Prophets spoke of as they gave The Message that "God's people are not acting like God's people", that they are drawing near in worship and service to God only with their lips in worship and teaching and their mouth in song and praise, but their hearts are far from the living God. Well, we will see in I Timothy that the bad attitudes are the equivalent of the "seducing spirits" and that the bad behavior when practices for a extensive member of time by church members becomes bad doctrine [doctrine is beliefs and spirits in action], the "doctrine of devils" since obviously God is not the source, nor the Lord Jesus Christ and the Spirit of God, nor are the revelations from the Apostles and Prophets. The doctrines of devils are what Satan will whisper in your ear when he mentally takes you up to a high place to get you to compromise with "all these things" on worship and service of God.

That doctrine and sound doctrine will be the subject of I Timothy, also a lead-in to the seducing spirits and doctrines of devils of 4:1-5, is seen in I Timothy 1:3-11.

"As I urged {Paul, of course} you {another son in the faith other than Titus, Timothy} when I went into Macedonia--remain in Ephesus {how key the church at Ephesus is in much of our sound doctrine and in the spread of the Gospel, a place where Paul was led to teach and preach for over 3 years, and Timothy was entrusted to continue that work with sound doctrine} THAT YOU MAY CHARGE SOME {charging is a pretty strong word, say like from an Apostle to a faithful companion and son, and some; well, the "some" we must come to know in context of I Timothy} THAT THEY TEACH NO OTHER DOCTRINE {in order to know what the other doctrine is, later some of that will come to be the doctrine of
devils, we must know what is the sound doctrine only from Jesus, the Apostles, and the Prophets}, nor give heed to fables {see here in I Timothy is the ground work for the turning into fables of II Timothy after church members have developed an intolerance toward sound doctrine}...and endless genealogies {wow, what group does that remind you of today where genealogy is so important to them}, which cause disputes rather than godly edification {there is that magic word of three-part prophecy developed in I Corinthians, the building up of the congregation and the total church body}...which is in faith {well, do you recognize a little of II Corinthians here with the examination of “who of you are in the faith). “} (I Timothy 1:3, 4)

The Purpose of the Commandment, What Commandment?

“Now the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from sincere faith...” (I Timothy 1:5)

Well, the commandment from the Apostle Paul with an authority of an Apostle received from the Ascended Lord Jesus Christ as a gift, is: “to teach no other doctrine”, which we must call unsound doctrine. And then follows a list of those who have strayed into the unsound doctrine, that other doctrine: (1) some have substituted idle talk for sound doctrine {wow, do you hear a lot of idle talk from people like Joyce Myers, I think you could call a lot of jokes and sarcasm about her “everyday life” talks as being closer to “idle talk” of another talented wind bag with the gift of gab more than of sound doctrine--she does not even mean it to be sound doctrine, just listen; and is another lady that should keep silence in the church and churches [the kingdom] since the Word did not come to her only or out from her only--to listen you would not know otherwise, like many other itching ears teachers she has the solution and the answer, oblivious to her part and leadership in the Historic Falling Away}; and (2) some like always, want to take to themselves the status of a teacher, “desiring to be teachers of the law” (1:7), understanding neither what they say nor the things which they affirm--notice how so many of these extra-biblical revelations are based on misunderstandings of the OT law.

The Law is Good If You Use it Lawfully!

How timely that Paul should consider the use of the law of the Old Testament for doctrine and practices, right after in I Corinthians he has based the silence of women in the church on the teachings of the law.

“Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but they are to be submissive, as the law also says.” (I Corinthians 14:34)

How did Paul use this wisdom of revelation of Scripture lawfully for the benefit of the total church body? By putting a quietus on an exclusiveness of doctrine which comes when any person or group thinks that either the Word of God came to them
only or came out from among them. By an emphasis that would result in sound doc-
trmine, in teaching and worship and service! How far the women “lib” movement of the
American Democratic Faith and the American Conscience and Style have gone is seen
by the current popularity of a “Bible for Women Only”, as if the Word of God had
come from women only are gone out to women only. You see, how quickly and easily
we slide from a position that seems like sound doctrine to a position that is extra-
biblical. In short, how do you use the lawlawfully, the subject of 1:8-11: (a) by
keeping in mind that the law is directed more to the ungodly–lawless, insubordinate,
ungodly, sinners, unholy, profane, murders, manslayers, fornicators, sodomites, kid-
nappers, liars, perjurers–than to the righteous (the ungodly is defined as “any other
thing that is contrary to sound doctrine”, another evidence of how sound doctrine is
both sound living and sound beliefs–the oft mentioned faith with results); and (b)
based on the total and “glorious” Gospel of God which the Apostle Paul received as a
commitment from the Ascended Lord Jesus Christ, the Gospel base not only on the
Crucifixion which has a person aspect in the One Baptism, but also on our resurrec-
tion from the dead to complete salvation, and the process in between.

Sound Doctrine on the Ministry, I Timothy 1:12-17:

Sound Doctrine on “Faith” and “A Good Conscience” like that of Timothy as con-
trasted to the “shipwrecked faith” of Hymenaeus and Alexander, I Timothy
1:18-20:

Sound Doctrine on Prayer for all men, I Timothy 2:1,2:

Sound Doctrine on the One God and the One Mediator (obviously the beginning
of the seven ONEs of Ephesians), I Timothy 2:3-7:

Sound Doctrine on Men and Women in the church and home, I Timothy 2:8-15:
and the sequence goes like this, (a) men show spiritual leadership in prayer, (b) then
women having adorned themselves with modest apparel not to draw a lot of attention
to themselves--rather showing “godliness” with “good works”--let this become more
the message of Joyce Myers; and...and...and here it is again, some sound doctrine on
women speaking in the church repeated that we might come to know the real Word
of God from Apostles and Prophets.

"Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. {silence in the church and sub-
mission to the man in the church and in the home, and okay next is the com-
mandment of the Apostle}...And I do not permit a woman to teach or have
authority over a man, but to be in silence.” (I Timothy 2:11,12)

Paul "does not permit"! Who does he think he is? Right, an Apostle with that gift
from the Ascended Lord Jesus Christ. And notice that here as in I Corinthians that
Paul does not ask for a special concession from God in order to express an opinion.
It is not opinion; it is commandment; and it is part of the Word of God that must be
obeyed as Word of God not matter how just an women or group of women try to
make their rationalizations and arguments, generally based on the American Style and Conscience. However here in his justification of silent women in the church and home, Paul gives a basis in Genesis. {This could be considered also the law, beyond the Ten Commandments and corresponding laws in the OT, in that all five books from Moses, the first five in the Bible, are often called by Jesus as others as "the law of Moses".} This basis is women as demonstrated by how Eve first sinned and then Adam into the same sin, have more a nature of creation that allows them to establish a leadership, where permitted, of sinning. Women are admonished to: (a) bear children, (b) continue in the faith of sound doctrine, (c) love, (d) challenged to holiness, and (e) self-control. {This last is special self-control for women, a self-control that would lead to silence in the church and submission in the home, also a self-control that would prohibit the bad behavior and attitudes of church members then and later as listed in II Timothy 3:1-9. There you will notice that women also have a large role in their own homes where Bible study takes place, and where they are lead away by cunning men who have the craftiness of a "Jannes" or "Jambres" to simulate the works of God.}

Sound Doctrine on Church Leaders, bishops and deacons, I Timothy 3.

Sound Doctrine on how to act in the church and on the mystery of godliness, I Timothy 3:14-16.

Sound Doctrine on a Pure Conscience, II Timothy 1:3-7.

Sound Doctrine on the One Calling, II Timothy 1:8-12:

Sound Doctrine with Sound Words, II Timothy 1:13-18:

Sound Doctrine of a Life Lived Lawfully, II Timothy 2:1-13:

Sound Doctrine on Approved and Disapproved Workers, II Timothy 2:14-26:

Sound Doctrine of persecutions and living godly, II Timothy 3:10-12.


Sound Doctrine on Preaching, II Timothy 4:1,2 and 4:5.

2. Examples of Seducing Spirits and Doctrines of Devils in I Timothy in total context as from the Apostles and Prophets.

With all of these sound doctrine of I and II Timothy behind us, leaving us no question of what is sound doctrine and where it comes form, namely from the Word of God through authorized Apostles and Prophets only, then we are ready to look at the opposite of sound doctrine, that is to look at unsound doctrine, the doctrine examples and sources that comes form "seducing spirits" and "doctrines of devils".

"Now the Spirit expressly says..." (I Timothy 4:1-5)
If you see no where else the work of the Holy Spirit in moving the Apostle Paul to write Scriptures which are Word of God, you should see it hear. Paul was not expressing an opinion by concession, but that the Holy Spirit since it is and was an Apostle, was giving him a revelation of wisdom from the mind and hear of God, that in the second half of the last days, "some will depart from the faith". Well, you might say, how can this be a surprise since Paul in II Corinthians spoke of the necessity for church members and church leaders to "examine yourselves" to see "if you are in the faith"; well after examination and time, say about 500 hundred years for one half of the millennium, the Spirit finds if not the examiners, that many have departed from the faith given by Jesus, the faith forecast and defined in the OT Prophets, and the faith reiterated by the Apostles. What we obviously have here in about 500 year ago, churches and church leaders departed from the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ, of the Bible, and of God. This is not the Historic Falling Away; but it is a typical "perilous time" with continuance that precursors the historical Falling Away, also helping to define the seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, with some defined behavior like forbidding to marry and commanding to abstain from meats so that can easily identify by what we see and what we have seen, the group of members of the kingdom who have gone astray.

3. Contemporary Countermeasures to the terrorism of the tares in the kingdom of God.

This is considered to be what we find in I Timothy and II Timothy after the announcement of the departure from faith of many during the "latter times". In other words in I Timothy 4:6 through I Timothy 6:21.

13-2: II Timothy, "Perilous Times" and "The Time Will Come".

The "Perilous Times" and The Time of Intolerance Toward Sound Doctrine of II Timothy as examples of Seducing Spirits and Doctrines of Devils.

1. The "Perilous Times" of II Timothy.

2. The Time of Falling Away of II Timothy, the time of intolerance toward sound doctrine.

3. The difference between the "perilous times" and the Falling Away, and how do you decide when in your church that crossover point has happened. {You see, it seems apparent that every church and every church member will not be on the exact same time schedule as the more generalized time schedule of the world. It should also be apparent that some churches and denominations with revivals have had a delay in the major trend of the Falling Away, while some churches and denominations with a early start on seducing spirits and doctrines of devils have had a taken a jump on all others in the kingdom of God.}
A Cup of Water

a condensed version of Mark with comments
CHAPTER 14

Galatians, Gospel of the
One Baptism

By now, Paul has started to overlap many of the revelations that he received from the Ascended Christ; but as new problems arise in the churches that he started, the Holy Spirit gives him additional answers, and Paul has far from utilized all the OT quotes that he recorded on a parchment back at Tarsus for explanation in NT Scriptures. Here in Galatians the focus is again on the Gospel, giving to the Galatians a miniature of the same Gospel he preached for the Hebrews and Romans. Decidedly, do you have here in Galatians a miniature of Romans. If there is a major step of progression in Galatians as compared to Romans on the Gospel, it is with a renewed emphasis on the One Baptism. Before Paul will make his summary of the major doctrines of the Bible in the Seven ONEs of Ephesians, it remains to fully develop as part of Scriptures the One Baptism which is really quite synonymous with salvation. While in the Seven ONEs you will not find “one salvation”, you will find the “one baptism”.

“There is one body {developed in I Corinthians where there are many members of the total body of Christ, the churches}, and one Spirit {II Corinthians does as much to advance the arguments of the one Holy Spirit as any other, where the new covenant is administered by this One Spirit}, one hope of your calling {we saw that in Timothy Paul got around to the one calling}, one Lord {well, the Lord Jesus Christ was magnified in many Scriptures from Paul, but we would have to say the most magnificent is in Hebrews where even before Jesus as the author and finisher of our faith, and even before Jesus as the great high priest at the right hand of God the Father to make intercession for our sins, is the
Son of God ordained to be such by God the Father and given a name which is above the angels}, one faith {in Hebrews where faith is defined as “the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen}, one baptism {well, you know that this major doctrine, or teaching, is most fully developed here just before we come to the book after Galatians, the book of Ephesians for a summary of all major doctrines given through the Apostle Paul}; and one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all {and I would think that we would have to be indebted to I Corinthians and I Corinthians 15 for our exalted relationship between the reign of Christ and of God the Father, where God the Father becomes “all in all”}. (Ephesians 4:4-6)

And it is Galatians 2:20 that you see the relationship of Gospel to the One Baptism. While the Gospel would include the crucifixion of Christ for the sins of the world and according to the plan of God, also a repentance of death to sins and a living by way of Christ living in us, the new birth, likewise sanctification whereby Christ continues to live in us and grow us; with all these aspects of the Gospel from Christ is the One baptism from the Holy Spirit whereby we personally {one salvation} appropriate these blessings from Christ and God the Father. Look at it!

“I have been crucified with Christ; 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 gave Himself for me.” (Galatians 2:20)

Wow, if we can get so much out of one verse of Galatians, what is the treat and understanding that we are in for in the rest of the revelations of Galatians. We might call Galatians the book of the Implications and Applications of the Gospel.

14-1: Galatians in the other books of the New Testament.
1. It is evident from Galatians 1:2 that Galatia was a region of the Roman Empire, and that Paul had organized several churches in Galatia. {It is best to stick to the internal evidence of the Bible itself than to wander off on the many tangents of historical criticism, more of the idle talk that generates disputing.}

2. Thus not only is distortions of the Gospel with detrimental effects on all the churches noted in Galatians 3:1, the “O foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you...” but again it is echoed that the epistle is to all the churches in the region of Galatia.

3. Perhaps the first mention in time of Galatia as a region is in Acts 16:6. {We will not get into fruitless discussion about the difference between writing, publication, and distribution of Galatians and Acts.} We know Acts 16 to be part of the second missionary journey of Paul since Silas is with Paul instead of Barnabas, his appointed companion on the first missionary journey. It was just before 16:6 where “they had gone through Prygia and the region of Galatia”, that Paul joined the young Greek {his mother was Jewish} Timothy to their group (16:1-3). If you
look on one of your Bible maps, you will find the region of Galatia in the north central portion of Asia Minor.

4. The second historical mention is in Acts 18:23, where after Philippi, Thessalonica, and Corinth "he departed and went over the region of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples".

5. In I Corinthians Paul had already "given orders to the churches of Galatia" for the collection of money for the saints at Jerusalem, something Paul encouraged the Galatians through Titus and the epistles to do likewise (16:1).

6. By the time Paul was in prison in Rome and as he wrote in II Timothy for Timothy to come before winter to bring his cloak from Troas, the books, and the parchments, he needed company since Demas had forsaken him to go to Thessalonica (II Timothy 4:9-21), among those departing to go from Rome to the whole world was Crescens for Galatia. Then there was Titus to Dalmatia, Tychicus to Ephesus, Erastus who stayed in Corinth, Trophimus in Miletus sick.

7. The Apostle Peter got in the act in I Peter 1:1 when he wrote "To the pilgrims of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bythynia...": and since it is the second epistle, with no doubt a similar and same audience, that Peter mentions both how Paul writes Scriptures (3:16) like the OT Prophets, but also how churches are "wresting these Scriptures to their own destruction", surely this would include the book of Galatians as hard for the readers to understand. And perhaps we can use I and II Peter as commentaries on the book of Galatians.

14-2: I and II Peter as Commentaries on Galatians.

Before we can use I and II Peter as commentaries on Galatians, we need to outline them.

1. That the subject of I Peter is similar to the Gospel Applications and Implications of Galatians is clearly seen in 1:25b after a lengthy preamble in the first 25 verses. "Now this the word which by the gospel was preached to you." (I Peter 1:25b)

The gospel preached to them in Galatia and the other regions has been summarized in the first 25 verses, so let us work backwards to see what that Gospel is: (1) Peter, also giving revelations from God for Scriptures, mentions in 1:22-25 the new birth--by the seed of the incorruptible Word of God, and purified with love of the brethren by obeying the Holy Spirit; (2) redemption is part of the Gospel in 1:13-21, where those called to be holy are redeemed with the precious blood of Jesus Christ; (3) if Paul uses the one baptism and one calling more often to describe the implications and applications of the Gospel for the individual, Peter more often as in 1:9-12 uses the word "salvation", (a) it being the end of faith, (b) the grace to come to you as foretold by the Prophets, (c) those Prophets listening to the Spirit of Christ in them about the sufferings of Christ, and (d) their revelations given as a basis for
the reports from the Apostles through the preaching of the Gospel; and (4) Blessings on God the Father who has "begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead", which would certainly be the equivalent of Paul's "one hope of the one calling", and we recall how Paul clearly added to the Gospel of Jesus in I Corinthians, the resurrection of Jesus as the first fruit of others to follow.

1. Starting Point in I Peter 3:16 with Peter's testimony of how Paul writes Scriptures of the Word of God, some hard to understand like OT Scriptures; and how some "twist to their own destructions" both Scriptures. According to I Peter 3:16 there is a certain category of people who "twist" the Scriptures to their own destruction: they are "untaught" and "unstable" people. Granted, there is a beginning point with such people in that something about them latches on to Scriptures, Old Testament and from Paul, that are "difficult to understand"; so that as we start with Peter as a commentary on Galatians {in spite of personality differences say between Peter and Paul, the Apostles were always consistent when they wrote Scriptures of the Word of God as an Apostle}, we will look at both the characteristics of these kind of people who twist Scriptures and latch on to Scriptures had to understand, but also which Scriptures have been most difficult for them to understand. These Scriptures difficult to understand are obviously, based on I Peter 3:15 are those on "the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation", for it is this subject which both seems to be a conclusion of I and II Peter; but is also why Peter brings up Paul, Scriptures, "hard to understand", and twistings in the first place.

"Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless; and consider that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation--as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of THESE THINGS {that's what we want to focus on, these "these things" from Paul that are hard to understand, that are twisted by some to their own destruction}, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures. You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness {here is the danger to the individual believer of such misunderstandings, not that the personality of Paul might be used as an excuse to ignore the authority of Scriptures from any Apostle as the Word of God but that it can lead to their own personal destruction}, being led away with the error of the wicked {certain key words we see here in Peter such as "hard to understand", "destruction", and now "error of the wicked" which we can use to retrace the arguments of Peter backwards from this point and through all of II and I Peter are the more precise parts of Scripture, from Paul and the OT that are
hard to understand); but grow in the grace and knowledge (obviously this indi-

(1). It is obvious from here in Peter that Paul is writing Scriptures of the Word of
God in the same category as OT Scriptures. You that wrestle with the personality
of Paul take heed when Paul is taking a personal concession to express an
opinion and when Paul as an apostle is giving commands from God. One clue is when
Paul definitely says he “commands” with the authority of an Apostle; when he says
that as the Ascended Christ told him; or when Paul makes a decisive and definitive
statement like those on “silence of women in the church” where he bas is it on the OT
Scriptures. By far, one of the most outstanding characteristics of the Scriptures
from Paul is the extensive number of the OT quotes, another is his support of His
authority as an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ. Beware, lest you are opposing the
authority of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, the obvious consequences of which
would as denial of the Lordship of Jesus over your own life, be your own destruction.

(2). It is also obvious that the degree of understanding difficulty (remember of
how way back in I Corinthians, understanding was what Paul started with) from
the Scriptures through the Apostle Paul is the same kind of understanding difficulty
in the OT Scriptures, and perhaps on the same subjects.

(3). It is also apparent that these Scriptures hard to understand have something
to do with “salvation”, so that it our sweep backwards of II and I Peter we will also
be looking for the key words “salvation” and Scripture. (Since I am going to make
the speculation right now that at least in Galatians where it is maintained that
the prime subject is “The Gospel of the One Baptism”, that “baptism” in Peter is
also a key word, since the One Baptism is what Paul uses often to describe the
one salvation. (Remember in the what is the most important subjects of all the
Bible in the Seven ONEs of Ephesians, there is the One Baptism while salvation
is not mentioned.)

(4). Perhaps if we would go back to the original words of Peter and Paul—some-
thing which Paul likes to call “the pattern of sound words” in Bible teaching and
preaching today, there would be less misunderstandings today and new words like
“anointing”, protection, and on and on.

2. It is clear from II Peter 3:1,2 that Peter has in mind in both epistles to remind
believers at Galatia, and at other locations, of Scriptures from the OT Prophets and
of “commandments” from the Apostles {Paul, Peter, and others}, in particular how
those Scriptures told of: (1) scoffers of the Second Coming in the last days that
are motivated in their teachings by their own desires {does this not remind you of
the “time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine” of the Apostle
Paul in II Timothy, where such intolerance of itching ears teachers comes
from the motivation of their own desires?); (2) these scoffers forget OT history
of the destruction of the whole earth by flood, also how the next judgment and
destruction of ungodly men will be by fire; (3) they forget the longsuffering of
God based on (a) His patience as one day is a thousand years and a thousand years
as one day, and (b) His unwillingness that any person should perish (in this “long-
suffering of God” you see the subject of 3:15 echoed--“that the longsuffer-
ing of our Lord is salvation”--knowing that the subject hard to understand
from Paul and the OT relates also to this five point message to counter the
scoffers); and (4) the day of the Lord will come suddenly, the heavens will pass
away with a great noise, the elements of heaven and earth will melt with fervent
heat, all of the earth and the works on the earth will be burned up, and there will
be new heavens and a new earth; and (5) what manner of persons should you be in
“holy conduct” and “godliness”.

Can this five point message also be a summary of the Scriptures hard to under-
stand? Certainly the subject of II Peter 2 is those scoffers of (1), there called
false teachers with their false teachings. And the subjects of II Peter 1 are
introduced by Peter, before in 1:16-21 a reminder of Scriptures about judgment
and promises of destruction, the grace and peace from “knowledge of God and of
Jesus our Lord” (1:2) about: (1) the divine power that gives to us things “that per-
tain to life and godliness” (1:3); (2) God’s exceeding great and precious promises as
partakers of the divine nature, also an escape form the corruption of the world
through lust. Also certainly in the final words in I Peter 5 to “elders”, to “young
people”, and to Silvanus, they can easily be considered as the admonitions of “holy
conduct” and “godliness” of (5). The sufferings of believers and of Christ of from
I Peter 3:13 through 4:19 is more difficult to relate to the five point message of
the last of II Peter, just before Paul, Scriptures, and hard to understand the long-
suffering salvation of God; however, it can easily be considered more of (3) in the
five point message, part of the longsuffering and patience of God. That one of the
prime subjects of Peter is the Word of God, and of a desire for the Word of God
in order to grow, coming back to the Scriptures again, seen in I Peter 1 and 2, with
the obvious applications in a life before the outside world, toward government,
toward supervisors, and about husbands and wives {it seems as though Peter
would take care of the problem of “silent women in the church” of Paul with
OT teachings on submission of women to husbands in the home and on women
as the “weaker vessel” as well as heirs together with their husbands of the
grace of life.}

Our short outline of Peter, then, as a basis of a commentary for Galatians would go
like the following.
I. Respect for the Living Word of God, the Scriptures, as shown by applications in the world, government, toward supervisors, husbands, and the good life: I Peter 1-3:12.


III. Holy Conduct and Godliness for elders, youth, and Silvanus: I Peter 5.

IV. Life and Godliness with escape from the world's corruption, with the resources from God for which, in II Peter 1.

V. Destructive Doctrines and False Teachers, the Scoffers and their Scoffings: II Peter 2.


VII. Paul, the OT, Scriptures, and things hard to understand that some twist to their own destruction: II Peter 3:14-18.

14-3: Defence of Apostleship and the Source of Scriptures.

While we are looking at the teachings of Galatians, and using the above outline from Peter (you see if you disagree with both the Apostle Peter and the Apostle Paul, then your problem is with Apostles in general, rather than with any personalities) as a commentary on Galatians, and on the Gospel of the One Baptism of Galatians, we must find also in Galatians perhaps Paul's largest defence of himself as an Apostle. Why spend so much time on it, when it was he himself in the region of Galatia, like in Corinth, that had first told the church member of Jesus, indeed had led them to Christ to the extent that most of what they knew about Jesus had come through the messages of the Apostle Paul. Why then so much of Scripture on the defence of his Apostleship? Because Scriptures of the Word of God only come from either an Apostle or a Prophet; because to the Jews, as we get from Romans, was given the custodianship of the "oracles of God", Paul recognizing his own part as a Jew of the Jews and as a Hebrew of the Hebrews, a former lawyer of the Jewish nation, of custodianship of Scriptures; and the call of Jesus to have Paul become the chief editor of the New Testament, part of his ministry as we will see in Galatians.

1. The very introduction of Galatians (1:1,2) is a statement (if not defence) of Paul as an Apostle, "(not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead)", this echoed the summary Paul will later make in Ephesians of where the Ascended Christ gave the gifts of Apostles as the supreme authority under His Headship over the total body of the church.

2. The Gospel and where the Gospel Paul delivered came from as defence.

There is little doubt as to the prime subject of the Gospel of Galatians from the statement in Galatians 1:6-9, and as a lead in into Paul's authority of an Apostle. (If we do not appreciate the authority of Paul when he writes Scriptures as an Apostle from Jesus, then we will not doubt no appreciate the 14 letters of Paul...
as having the authority of the Word of God; consequently, it will be easy, especially for women—Bible teaching leaders today to twist these Scriptures to their own destruction—and by the way to the corresponding destruction of those who would listen to them.

“I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel {my, how many different gospels we have today to turn church members away from the original gospel originally given by the Apostles in the writings of Scriptures}, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ {it is likewise amazing the tolerance we afford such perverts and scoffers of the gospel today, the tolerance being more a product of the American Democratic Faith than it is of any recommend believer behavior from Paul or Peter, or Christ--like so much of the false doctrine of the Mormons, Jehovah Witnesses, and many others it is not based on either the God, the Christ, or the Gospel and Holy Spirit of the Bible, rather it is what these scoffers have chosen to believe is in the Bible--and that is a big, very big difference}....But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed {don't welcome them in your home, don't bid them Godspeed, lest you also partake of the curse of another gospel that is on them--how differently we think today than Paul, than Peter, than the Word of God as originally delivered based on the mind and character of God Himself--that is, God never has been and never will be, according to His Word, tolerant of unsound doctrine, another word for unsound teachings except that doctrine includes applications of doctrine with the teachings}....As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed.” (Galatians 1:6-9)

Let me quickly spell it out for you, the Mormons will, when they get away from appearance and into the nitty-gritty of their four other Bibles, tell you of a “restored gospel”--and those are their own words, which adds works for salvation to the Gospel of the Bible. This places one curse on them, the curse above of Galatians 1:6-9; and they have another curse on themselves, the curse of adding to the Word of God with their four other Bibles. Now about the Jehovah Witnesses, who can be neither of Jehovah, for the only God of the Bible is the God of the Lord Jesus Christ; and far from being witnesses to the God of the Bible, they are witnesses to some strange doctrines like Paul spoke of in Timothy, what would happen in the latter times, when “some would depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils”. And the problem that you have with seeing these Mormons and Jehovah Witnesses as representatives of Satan is the same problem you have of recognizing any nonbeliever as under the control of Satan, perhaps based on the fact that you even fail to recognize the reality of Satan as of the prince of this world as the crowning agent of spiritual wickedness in high
places. When we look at the total kingdom of God with such tares of the Mormons and the Jehovah Witnesses, we must see those tares among the wheat as Jesus said with an interpretation of the parable of the seed and the sower, “an enemy has put them there”. “An enemy has put them there” to mislead you from the real gospel, the gospel of the Bible and the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. “An enemy has put them there” at your home’s door to impress and divert you; an “enemy has put them there” with substance and high visibility to make you think that they are as real in the kingdom of God as any other church members, and so--admit it--you have come to think, indoctrinated by the word, the American Democratic faith, and your own desire for tolerance and gullibility.


(1). First the precise statement of how it came, nor from men, but “through the revelation of Jesus Christ”, Galatians 1:11,12.

“But I made known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ.” (Galatians 1:11,12)

(By the way, every time a women stands up to teach and preach in the church, she is calling the Apostle Paul a liar, that women should not “keep silence in the church”; consequently she is calling the Bible as the Word of God a liar, she is calling God Himself a liar in that He never made some such commandment; and in doing so, she is fulfilling the same weakness that lead woman to believe the first lie of Satan, a lie that also called God a liar. Perhaps the same weakness that allows women to trust more in intuition, in the appearances of matters, and of a trust more in things than even men do. You will note that the measure often of the care of a woman is in the presence of things. Much of their comfort and well-being centers around these same things. Much of the activity of their life as according to the expectations of society center around things and what things can do for the family. The plea of the Word of God for spiritual leadership of the men, in church and home, is really a plea for a priority of the Word over things, God over mammon, and the servitude of God over the servitude for Satan. Just the fact that these women like Joyce Myers and Paula White stand before you as Bible teachers and preachers within itself preaches a deep-seated and unspoken message to you that it is okay to ignore and rebel against the Bible teaching of silence of women in the church. While you may have found nothing contrary to sound doctrine in their messages, generally it is there if you will go beyond the appearance, it is their very presence before you that makes a liar out of God.)

(2). Details of the “through the revelation of Jesus Christ”.

---

LEARN CHRIST commentaries 243
How Paul previously as part of Judaism persecuted the church of God; how advanced Paul was beyond most of his peers in Judaism, with zeal for the "traditions of my fathers" (1:14); how the same God who gave him birth also called him, God revealing His Son in Paul, the very beginning of the revelation of Jesus Christ being an inward revealing; how God made this inward revealing of Jesus inside Paul in order that "I might preach Him among the Gentiles" {the very call of Paul for salvation was the call to PREACH!}; how Paul went immediately after conversion to Saudi Arabia to be taught of the Ascended Lord Jesus Christ, not going to Jerusalem to receive instruction of other Apostles (1:17); three years later after Damascus Paul went up to Jerusalem to spend 15 days with the Apostle Peter, recording in the manner of a lawyer, I believe, the testimony of Peter to Jesus to use later as a basis for Mark or Luke to write their gospels; how the only other Apostle Paul saw was James, once again I believe recording his testimony of Jesus to write one of the Gospels, which he passed on as part of the books and manuscripts from Timothy and Troas to give to John Mark and Dr. Luke; how Paul went afterward into the regions of Syria and Cilicia, although unknown to the churches of Judea by face, only by reputation and glorying that the Paul who previously persecuted now preached "the faith"; how 14 years later Paul did go to Jerusalem with Barnabas, remember his companion of the first missionary journey, and:with Titus; but how Paul went to Jerusalem "by revelation" {obviously by a revelation from God, the Holy Spirit, or the Ascended Lord Jesus Christ, all the equivalent}, and the revelation was in order to communicate the same gospel that Paul preached among the Gentiles, of course privately to those of reputation he had known in Judaism; how the law and circumcision became a large part of his battles and message and Scriptures, as contrary to the Gospel, yet how neither he nor Titus did not yield "even for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you" {evidently false brethren were using Paul's circumcision of Titus and what Paul did in Jerusalem as an excuse to preach law and circumcision, law and works, over the true Gospel; how the gospel for the uncircumcised had been committed to Paul like the gospel for the circumcised had been committed to Peter, as those at Jerusalem witnessed; how He that effectively worked in Peter to make him an Apostle, also effectively worked in Paul to make him an Apostle (2:7,8); how the Apostles James, Peter, and John--the pillars of the church at Jerusalem--both perceived the grace that God gave to Paul agreed that Paul and Barnabas would preach the gospel to the Gentiles that they preached to the circumcised; how the request of these pillars was that they would remember the poor saints in Jerusalem, remember one of the big subjects of II Corinthians, and centered around Titus as the collector with an unnamed person from Jerusalem {I think it was perhaps the Apostle John, since as the keeper of Mary, there was some effort to keep him anonymous}; how Paul at Antioch reprimanded Peter to his face for a failure to eat with Gentiles, hypocritically eating with them before some came from James, thereby exerting an influence on other church members and even on Barnabas.
And Paul spends so much time on this as it is important for a non-distorted, not another, gospel.

“knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law (any work, ten commandment or circumcision) but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ {truly here is the special emphasis on the Gospel in Galatians as in Romans, in the “JUSTIFIED BY FAITH IN CHRIST”} and not by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.” (Galatians 2:16)

14-4: The One Baptism of “Believe and Be Baptized” of Galatians 2:20.

Then we have in Galatians 2:20 the great statement of the One Baptism in Christ of the Gospel, based on the cross of Christ and on the justification by faith. By the way, a Gospel of the One Baptism that we would like to compare “baptism” in I Peter 3:18-22, since Peter has become our prime commentary on Galatians.

“There is also an antitype which now save us--baptism {did you get that this is a “baptism” that “now saves us”, so that you know it can not be a work of water baptism as there are absolutely no works in salvation}...(not the removal of the filth of the flesh (you see how this “baptism”, the Gospel of the One Baptism, has nothing to do with water nor the cleansing of water which inevitable happens when one is immersed)...but the answer of a good conscience toward God (this is simple the response in belief of a good conscience when they hear the Gospel; and granted that it is the same good conscience that will also later after the Baptism of the One Baptism of Salvation also want to follow the example of obedience of Jesus in water baptism)...through the resurrection of Jesus {how did the resurrection of Jesus get in here, while it is symbolized in water baptism, it is a basis as the Gospel of the resurrection of Jesus as first fruit for subsequent believers in the resurrection receiving a similar resurrection in Christ--“I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I but Christ lives in me”}...” (I Peter 3:21)

(1). The Gospel of One Baptism is the truth for those who hear the Crucifixion of Christ; it is the receiving of the Spirit by faith, not law; it is the same Spirit at the beginning of salvation as in perfection, not of the flesh; it is your justification for any sufferings you have had by identification with Christ, not in vain; and it is the Gospel of the One who works among you with miracles and the Holy Spirit by the hearing of faith, not of the works of the law, Galatians 3:1-5.

(2). The Gospel of the One Baptism was preached to Abraham and Abraham believed it, Galatians 3:1-18. ONLY those who are of faith of the Gospel of the One Baptism are the sons of Abraham, believing God for the righteousness of the One Baptism as Abraham did.
“just as Abraham ‘believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness.’” (Galatians 3:6 and Genesis 15:6)

The OT Scripture “foreseeing” that God would justify Gentiles by the faith of the Gospel of the One Baptism, also preached the gospel of the One Baptism to Abraham.

“And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, ‘In you all the nations (you see that primarily has to be Gentiles) shall be blessed.’” (Galatians 3:8 and Genesis 12:3; 18:18; 22:18; 26:4; and 28:14)

(3). Law and faith are opposites even as water baptism and the One Baptism of Salvation and of the Gospel are opposites, Galatians 3:10-14.

Don’t you see that water baptism is a work of man? It is both a work that you can do for yourself as you are water baptized, but it is also a work that a pastor or evangelist does on you in order to put you under the water. Contrast this to the One Baptism of salvation which is the same as the “be baptized” by the Spirit, Christ, and God of the great commission after you believe as in the “believe and be baptized” of the Great Commission and of Mark from Jesus.

--If you place water baptism in front of the One Baptism, you place works ahead of faith, and you place yourself under the curse of the law, a place you really do not want to be as you then become a debtor of the law and obligated to keep all the law!

“Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them.” (Galatians 3:10 and Deuteronomy 27:26)

The book of the law we know to be the Law of Moses or the first five books of the Old Testament—Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

--If you place water baptism in front of the One Baptism, you are trying by a law of works to justify yourselves before God.

“But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for ‘the just {the justified and just because of justification} shall live {now and eternally} by faith.’” (Galatians 3:11 and Habakkuk 2:4)

--If you are water baptized for salvation, it is of law and not of faith.

“Yet the law is not of faith, but ‘the man who does them shall live by them.’” (Galatians 3:12 and Leviticus 18:5)

Can you live by water baptism continuously, like being water baptized every day or even “anointed baptized” every day? No, but you can live every day by the One Baptism of salvation.
---Christ becomes a curse for us in the One Baptism, like "I am crucified with Christ..." in the One Baptism, not by water baptism or any other baptism that the Pentecostals have generated by extra-biblical revelations.

"Christ has 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.' )" (Galatians 3:13 and Deuteronomy 21:23)

---In order that the blessing of the Gospel of the One Baptism might come on you even as on Abraham and other Gentiles, you must receive the One “promise of the (One) Spirit through faith”, that promise of the One Baptism. (Galatians 3:14)

---Even as the promise of the One Gospel of the One Baptism was with the One Seed of Christ, the law of Moses given 430 years later can not annul this original covenant of the One Baptism, nor can water baptism as a work which can much later during the ministry of the last OT Prophet, John the Baptist, annul the One Baptism. (Galatians 3:13-18)

---If transgressions had not come from man, there would have been no reason for law at all, even the law of the water baptism of John for “repentance”.

“What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator.” (Galatians 3:19)

---The Scripture, Old and New Testament, Old and Paul, confirm that all of mankind are under sin, and like a schoolmaster can take us by the hand to bring us to Christ, that is in order that those under the law might also take with the curse, the promise of the One Baptism by “faith in Jesus Christ” when they believe (Galatians 3:22)

---You are the Sons of God through faith and by the One Baptism, once again the equivalent of the “believe and be baptized” of Jesus, of Mark, and of the Great Commission.

“For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.” (Galatians 3:27)

Could that be any clearer to you that Paul, like Peter, is talking about the One Baptism, and about the Gospel of the One Baptism. Which can you compare best to “put on Christ”, water baptism as a putting on of Christ--certainly not--or the One Baptism of salvation as the putting on of Christ. What does the “put on of Christ” remind you of except Ephesians 4:17-24 where the old man of deceitful lusts is put off, the new man “created according to God in righteousness and holiness” according to God” (4:24), where Christ is really learned if a disciples really hears Jesus and is taught by Jesus.
---If you daily experience that inward experience whereby the Holy Spirit causes your spirit to always cry out "Abba, Father", then you have experienced the One Baptism.

"And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, 'Abba, Father'".  (Galatians 4:6)

And this is the only real “anointing” that you need, the anointing that John speaks of in I John, the anointing not of the extra-biblical revelations of the Pentecostals.

14-5:  Freedom of Choice in Galatians.

The Meat of Galatians for the Galatians, Chose between the Two Covenants, between God and those by nature “not gods”, between the marvelous promises from God and the from the former “weak and beggarly elements”, between freedom and bondage.

“But now after you have known God, or rather are known by God, how is it that you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements, to which you desire again to be in bondage?  You observe days and months and seasons and years.  I am afraid for you, lest I have labored for you in vain.”  (Galatians 4:9-11)

We would compare the children of Israel, fresh from rescue of bondage in Egypt, with their 40 years of wilderness wanderings whereby they desired to return to the "weak and beggarly elements" of security and comfort, to these Galatians and believers today who have become “known by God”.  And perhaps this is a better description of the children of Israel in the wilderness and of church members today, as in Galatians, than “God’s people”, where we know that they did not really “know God” in the full sense of the Word, as there was in them “an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God”, although certainly God had known the children of Israel, by name and number, as He brought them out of Egypt, even as He also knew the Galatians to claimed to have known God and were water baptized as Paul was there, and even as church members today who perhaps are more “known by God” than “have known God”.

(1).  To be known by God more than known of God is makes an Apostle like Paul “an enemy” because He speaks only the truth of God, 4:12-20.

(2).  To be known by God more than known of God is to be children of the bondwoman instead of children of the freewoman, 4:21-31.

(3).  To be known of God more than known by God is to be free rather than to be under a yoke of bondage, 5:1-6.

(4).  To be known by God more than known of God is to be hindered by some unknown somebody, and does not come “from Him who calls you”, 5:7-12.
(5). To be known of God more than known by God is the call to liberty, however not liberty in the flesh; and the fulfillment of liberty in the law is given by “love your neighbor as yourself”, 5:13-15.

(6). Those that are known by God only may “walk in the flesh” while those that are also “known of God” walk in the Spirit, 5:16-26. **(Which by the way is also the walking and living in the Gospel of the One Baptism!)**

14-6: Applications and Implications of the One Baptism of Galatians 6.
Applications and Implications of the Gospel of the One Baptism of Galatians 6, also of the “holy conduct and godliness” of Peter’s commentary.
1. For brethren in the church, 6:1-5.
2. For those teachers “taught the word” to share, 6:6-10.
4. For “as many as walk according to this rule”, 6:16-18.
What the Churches
Don’t Want You to
Hear!

Based on the Gospel of Mark in total context
CHAPTER 15

Acts of Paul and the Holy Spirit

After this chapter, we have only two others on the Scriptures of the Word of God from Paul, Thessalonians and Ephesians. It seems appropriate that we might make a paraphrase of that portion of the book of Acts that applies to the Apostle Paul. Believe it or not, we will get a lot of Paul and his perspective under Christ from the book of Acts; because it is based on a log of their travels that Paul made in a lawyer-like manner and which he passed on to Dr. Luke for the writing of Acts. Where else would Luke have known about the conversion of Saul to Paul on the road to Damascus, known of the period of instruction from the Ascended Christ in Arabia, or of the seven so-called silent years at Tarsus which was really a major reread by Paul of the OT with a recording of those quotes he would need to later write epistles as Scriptures, and known of the places on the missionary journeys where the “we” of Luke disappeared as Paul and him temporarily separated. While it is true that the book of Acts is “the Acts of the Apostles”, and what they did on the first day of Pentecost after the Ascension of Jesus and subsequently and primarily centered around the Apostle Peter with some contributions from the Apostle James, from chapter 13 until the end of the book in chapter 28, it is a focus on Paul and the Holy Spirit. Even before Acts 13, we have a short on (1) Paul’s persecution of the church before his conversion in 8:1-3; (2) we have in 9:1-31 most of one chapter on the conversion of Saul on the road to Damascus, his baptism by Ananias, his first preaching in Damascus, and then from Jerusalem to Tarsus with a footnote in 9:31 of how the environment for church growth had been enhanced by the conversion of Saul.
“Then the churches throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and were edified. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, they were multiplied.” (Acts 9:31)

15-1: Acts 8:1-3, Saul Persecutes the Church.

Stephen was stoned to death while the witnesses against him "laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul". Although young, this would lead us to think that Saul was the supervisor of the death by stoning. Bare minimum as the record tells in 8:1 "Saul was consenting to his death", something that would later haunt Paul as no worthy to be called an apostle as he had persecuted the church. At that time, and here we have a landmark of Christian and church history, "a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem" (8:1); consequently except for the Apostles many disciples were scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria. {It causes us to wonder if the pilgrims to whom Peter wrote of the dispersion, were dispersed way back during the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities or dispersed during this persecution. Obviously from Peter, however, it had come to be known as the Dispersion.}

While "devout men" carried Stephen to his burial and made a great lamentation over him, Saul continued to "make havoc of the church" {contrast this havoc with the peace and edification of the churches of 9:31} How did Paul persecute the church, or make havoc of the church (8:3): (1) by forceful entry, door to door, of every house in Jerusalem; (2) with armed guards and followers from the high priest and the Sanhedrin, he supervised the dragging out of the houses and the off to prison of men and women; and (3) through some kind of legal authority of his own, or through the religious authority of the Sanhedrin as permitted by the Roman government on religious matter, Saul had these first Christians committed to prison.


In keeping with the "believe and be baptized" theme of this volume, we would no way try, as many do, to make the conversion of Saul typical of what most Christians experience or will experience. The Ascended Christ needed another Apostle, a Jew that could write Scriptures for the nation to which care of the oracles of God were committed, a lawyer with a firm background in OT Scriptures from which the veil of blindness could be removed with conversion; and He also need, with the Holy Spirit, a short period of peace for the church while the last Jews were saved, then an Apostle especially for the Gentiles, Paul's background as a Roman citizen and his training with many languages and much history of Israel would help. In short, Paul's talent and call to be an Apostle with a ministry as chief editor of the NT was not like the call of a typical disciple; nor would his conversion be typical. Hardly anyone in the history of Christianity during their conversion experience, first sees a "light shine around" them from heaven, hardly ever hears an audible voice {most
often in most conversions the voice is inward and not audible}, and hardly anyone is ever blind for three days because of the experience.

We do get in 9:1-2 some insight into the legal process Saul used with his breathings of "threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord" (9:1). It started based on authority from the high priest. Paul asked letters of the high priest from him to the synagogues of Damascus so that when he found any of "the Way", men or women, he might put them in chains and bring them to Jerusalem. Even as Jesus said that a cup of water given to even the least of His own children is a cup of water given to Him, so the Ascended Jesus asked Saul, "why are you persecuting Me?" (9:5) And there is one way that the conversion of Saul was similar to that of all disciples in that he had been under conviction according to the convicting work of the Holy Spirit long before the experience on the road; that is, "it is hard for you to kick against the goads." (9:5). This convicting work made it possible under the supervision of Jesus Himself to obtain instant "repentance", the instant response was a call of faith as Saul used the word "Lord", knowing He had authority and knowing that He identified with the faith of the Christians; and then with repentance and faith based on those few minutes--this is also unlike most conversions where the new birth like the physical birth takes 9 months or more--trembling and astonished as this whole new world of repentance and faith opened up to him, asked, "Lord, what do you want me to do?" Saul had just receive a turn around in directions, accepting new directions from the Lord Jesus Christ of the Way, a Way he had come to learn much about from his captives like Stephen.

The initial instruction from Jesus to Saul was to go into the city, then he would be told what is the next step. For three days Saul prayed, not eating or drinking as being a religious man under God he knew how to pray and fast, also a Pharisee and leader of the Pharisees who believed in the principle of the resurrection of the dead; and while this was going on Jesus was working with a certain disciples in Damascus named Ananias in a vision, telling him to go to a house of Judas on Straight street to meet with a person called Saul of Tarsus. {While Saul was praying at Judas house for three days, he also had a vision of Ananias coming to put his hand on him in order that he might see again.) Ananias was terrified.

"Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he has done to Your saints in Jerusalem. And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Your name." (9:13,14)

"But the Lord said to him, 'Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name's sake.'" (9:15,16)

Even as Paul in the subsequent Scriptures he wrote, and also Peter, would stress the sufferings of discipleship and of an Apostle with the sufferings of Christ, even so
now the message to Ananias that he would convey to Saul would be of both ministry and suffering.

While the intensity of Saul’s One Baptism had more side-effects, the process was the same as the “believe and be baptized” that Christ would commission him to preach throughout the world, the same as the great commission given to all Apostles and disciples. Ananias when he arrived told Saul that the same Jesus who appeared to him on the road had sent him (this established clearly in the mind of Saul the three-way communication that included Jesus and Ananias); and Ananias stated his purpose in being there: to lay his hands on Saul that He might both receive his sight and that he might receive the One Baptism, “be filled with the Holy Spirit”. That is, the being filled with the Holy Spirit as a response from Jesus to “believe” is the same: what is different is that few, if any, are blind for 3 days. But immediately something like scales fell off the eyes of Saul; he arose, and he was baptized; this later baptism being a water baptism. Why did Jesus want another like Ananias involved? To lay on his hands, to secure the identification between Jesus and those of the Way, like Ananias, who were His disciples, and to water baptize Saul. Saul ate and spent “some days with the disciples at Damascus” (9:19).

15-3: Saul Preaching, Escaping, and on to Jerusalem and Tarsus.

Saul preaches, escapes a Plot of the Jews against him, goes to Jerusalem and then Tarsus, Acts 9:20-31.

“Immediately he preached the Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God.” (Acts 9:20)

What a surprise this must have been to the leaders and people of the synagogues in Damascus! Like Ananias and the other disciples of the Way, they knew that Saul had come with letters to those synagogues with authority to take prisoners any Christians of the Way; now, he was preaching the Christ as the Son of God, that he had persecuted through Jesus’ followers.

“Then all who heard were amazed, and said, ‘Is this not he who destroyed those who called on this name in Jerusalem, and has come here for that purpose, so that he might bring them bound to the chief priests?’” (Acts 9:21)

As for Saul: he increased the more in strength, the implication being of both physical and spiritual strength; he confounded the Jews of Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah of the OT that must come for the salvation of Israel and the world; that very Suffering Servant of Isaiah. And we are not surprised how that after many days, no doubt motivated by their own observations and communications with the high priest of how Saul had deserted to the other side, the “Jews plotted to kill him” (Acts 9:23). (Jesus said that since they tried to kill Him, they would also kill disciples faithful to Him; and later Paul would...
write that “all who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.”} Saul learned about the plot as he still had many friends and supporters in Judaism; and although the plotters watched the gates day and night to kill Saul, the disciples helped him to escape by night by lowering him down the wall in a large basket.

“And when Saul had come to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples; but they were all afraid of him, and did not believe that he was a disciple. {You see how it helped at Damascus for Saul, Jesus, and Ananias to develop common communication. But Barnabas knew the story of what happened at Damascus: how Saul had seen the Lord Jesus Christ on the road; how the Lord Jesus had spoken to Saul; and how Saul had preached boldly in Damascus in the name of Jesus.) So he was with them at Jerusalem, coming in and going out.” (Acts 9:26-28)

Saul: (1) spoke boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus at Jerusalem; and (2) disputed against the Hellenists. There was another plot to kill Saul so that when the brethren there found out, they took Saul to Caesarea to put him on a ship for his home town of Tarsus. Then Saul becomes silent for seven years--but we know that he is doing a major reread of the OT to record quotes for the Scriptures that we already know he will write. And the churches of Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had rest, peace, and were multiplied in number of church members.

15-4: From Damascus to Arabia to Damascus and then Jerusalem.

It is Galatians 1:11-21 that fills in some of the gaps of the life and ministry of Saul {or Paul} as recorded in Acts: Paul's starting point in his own autobiography, after the preaching of the Gospel of the One Baptism, is the call from the Ascended Jesus, “through His grace” (1:16)--and how it was important to Paul that he did not confer with flesh and blood Apostles, rather with the Lord Jesus Christ Himself in Arabia, and no doubt at the leadership from the Holy Spirit as always--from Damascus he went to Arabia then back to Damascus, this side trip to Arabia not being recorded in Acts; after 3 years in Damascus with the side trip, Paul did go to Jerusalem where he visited with the Apostle Peter 15 days {it seems that these two apostles were always close, Peter testifying to all church members that Paul wrote Scriptures and of how they were as hard to understand sometimes as the OT Scriptures, and as tradition has it they were both martyred at the same time in Rome}. I believe recording in his lawyer-like fashion a written testimony of Peter to Jesus to later write a Gospel, which of course running out of time he had to deliver to John Mark and Dr. Luke so that they could write for him as part of his ministry; likewise when he saw the Apostle James in Jerusalem, he recorded another life of Jesus for John Mark and Dr. Luke; then Paul went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia {which you will recognize from Acts as the beginning of the first missionary journey, starting where we will come to shortly in chapter 13}; 14 years later, between the first and second missionary journeys, and with Barnabas and Titus went up to Jerusalem for the Great Jerusalem Conference where Peter and
James spoke (it is important to Paul to note here in Galatians 2:2 that “I went up by revelation”, that here as in most cases of his life after conversion, he went the place and time as dictated by the Holy Spirit and the Ascended Christ, also with encouragements from God the Father Himself in visions of a dream and it is here that we learn of how he spoke the gospel of the one baptism privately in Jerusalem to Roman leaders and leaders of Judaism from previous acquaintances, called those “of reputation” (Galatians 2:2); and how when the Apostles Peter, James, and John recognized the grace in Paul and Apostleship, gave them the “right hand of fellowship” (2:9) to go again to the Gentiles. We will save the autobiography and justifications of his own Apostleship of I and II Corinthians after we look from Acts at some of the sufferings, labors, and ministry to the churches.)

(Saul starts being called Paul, after evidence that he was filled with the Holy Spirit in Acts 13:9).

“And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem when they had fulfilled their ministry (it is also important to Dr. Luke and Paul, that they fulfilled “their ministry” in Jerusalem before leaving, once again under the leadership of Christ and the Spirit—it can be called Acts of the Holy Spirit even more than Acts of the Apostles), and they also took with them John whose surname was Mark. (This is the same John Mark who was a close friend of Peter, called in Peter’s epistles “his own son in the faith”, the same author of the Gospel of Mark who as a young man ran naked from the Garden of Gethsemane, and who on the first missionary journey deserted Paul and Barnabas; yet who Paul told Timothy was “profitable to me for the ministry”, asking Timothy to bring him to the prison in Rome with books and parchments that Paul might pass those on to John Mark, and Luke, for the writing of the Gospels of Mark and Luke).

“Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets (we must face “prophets” as contrasted to OT Prophets with the corresponding implications of whether their gifts came from the Ascended Christ as stated in Ephesians, and how connected they are with the “prophecies” of I Corinthians that were designed to exhort, edify and comfort the churches) and teachers (I really think that here since we find the Ascended Christ giving in Ephesians only gifts of Apostles, prophets, teachers, and evangelists, that these prophets and leaders of disciples were more pastors than Prophets): Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrach, and Saul. (We learn that Herod the tetrach, Saul, and Manaen were companions of youth.)
The Holy Spirit called them through Jesus, and the Holy Spirit of Acts called them for a specific work. What the Holy Spirit wanted these prophets and teachers, pastors and teachers, at Antioch to do was to “separate” Barnabas and Paul; that is, dedicate them, fast and pray with them, and then lay their hands on them with a blessing to go away, further into the Roman world.

1. Preaching in Cyprus, 13:4-12.
4. Lystra and Derbe, 14:8-20.

“Now when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia. From there they sailed to Antioch, where they had been commended to the grace of God {the original commission called separation by the Holy Spirit is here called “commended to the grace of God”, no doubt from the prayer and fasting of the pastors and teachers with the blessings of the laying on of hands, sort of like the right hand of fellowship, but more}...for the work which they had completed {completion of the first missionary journey}.

“Now when they had come and gathered the church together {their leadership is more obvious now as more early disciples comes to recognize the work to which the Holy Spirit had called them}, they reported all that God had done with them {to God be the glory}, and that He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles {once again the open door and leadership of God, but a great door in that at this point in history and through these men God had opened up salvation for the Gentiles: although predicted many times in the OT, and by Jesus, and even iterated to the first disciples on a smaller scale, this was the big IT; and there would be a demand about this from Jerusalem and with the Great Jerusalem Conference to come}. So they stayed there a long time with the disciples.” (Acts 14:25-28)

The Jerusalem Council is also explained by Paul in Galatians and Corinthians. The real issue was not whether to circumcise the Gentiles, but a matter of salvation by works or by grace.

“Afterward I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia.” (Galatians 1:21)

Paul takes Silas and Barnabas takes John Mark.

2. Region of Derbe and Lystra with Timothy, 16:1-5.
3. A vision and closed doors by the Holy Spirit while in the region of Phrygia and Galatia, 16:6-10.

We truly see much work of the Acts of the Holy Spirit here, forbidding Paul and company to go two places—to Asia and to Bithynia; and then leading them in a vision to cross over to Macedonia in Greece, subsequently the party taking sail from Troas, to Samothrace, to Neapolis, and then to Philippi, a colony and the foremost city in Macedonia. (16:11,12)

9. Sailed for Syria, cut his hair off in Cenchrea as the signal of a vow, left Priscilla and Aquila in Ephesus after reasoning with the Jews there for a short time, sailed to Caesarea greeting the church there, then went down to Antioch; then went back over the region of Galatia and Phrygia strengthening the disciples there, Acts 18:18-23.

10. Apollos comes to Ephesus behind Paul, an eloquent and mighty in Scriptures man, instructed in the way but knowing only the baptism of John, Acts 18:24-28.
11. While Apollos is at Corinth, Paul passed from the regions above Ephesus to Ephesus, so that for 2 years Paul continued to work in Ephesus and all Asia, Acts 19:1-41. {This gets here in Acts somewhat confusing; and it is meant to be confusing partly by way of a cover up of controversies between Paul and Apollos, or with Dr. Luke and other companions not agreeing as much with Paul in the defence of his Apostleship as what Paul would express by letter to the Corinthians, and about Apollos. Also right here in these chapter of Acts we have Paul expressing the intention to get immediately to Jerusalem, which evidently did not happen, and several unusual moves by Paul and his companions.}
12. Back to Macedonia and Greece, in Greece 3 months, back through Macedonia, Luke and Paul after 5 days meeting several important companions {Sopater of
Berea who had gone with Paul to Asia, Aristarchus and Secundus of Thessalonica, Gaius of Derbe, Timothy, and also Tychicus and Trophimus of Asia--names of which we will find both in the salutations and farewells of the Paul's letter epistles--although difficult I know that Paul hopes we will date the epistles based on such companions, also that they will become authenticators as the NT Canon is formalized among the early churches) at Troas where they all stayed for 7 days, Acts 20:1-12.


14. Sailed to Cos, then to Rhodes, then to Patar, then sailing to Phoenicia, to Syria, landed at Tyre where they stayed with disciples for 7 days {this was the first warning by disciples not to go to Jerusalem}, sailing from there to Ptolemais where they stayed with brethren 1 day, going “with companions” to Caesarea and the house of Philip the evangelist staying there many days, then they packed and went to Jerusalem, Acts 21:1-15.

That there were prophets in NT times, not the same as the OT Prophets, is evident here in Acts 21 as well as from the total context of the NT. That the gifts from the Ascended Christ included prophets as well as apostles, pastors and teachers, and evangelists: had to be prophets of the NT since these gifts from Christ were given after His Ascension. We know that the Prophets of the OT, the only other group and gifts to write Scriptures, were moved by the “Spirit of Christ” rather than the Ascended Christ. We also know the event that marked the beginning of the last days, the Coming of the Holy Spirit extensively to take the place of Jesus on earth, also marked a more democratic time of prophesy by prophets young and old, male and female. We find here at the home of Philip the evangelist, which the record reminds us was also one of the 7 deacons (21:8)--this telling us that some first believers received more than one grace {the individual received the grace, the church receives the gift} from the Ascended Christ--that Philip had 4 virgin daughters that prophesied. If they prophesied they were prophets, and further we know from I and II Corinthians that to prophesy is to edify, exhort, and comfort. Another prophet came from Judea named Agabus with a word of prediction.

“And as we stayed many days, a certain prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. When he had come to us, he took Paul’s belt, bound his own hands and feet, and said, ‘Thus says the Holy Spirit {notice the source}, ‘So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man who owns this belt, and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.’’” (Acts 21:11)

What we really have in such predictive prophets is another category of prophets which unlike in I and II Corinthians which is more like preaching, that is more related to the office of OT prophets with predictions, reminding us not only of John the Baptist--generally considered as the last of the OT Prophets--but also of cer-
tain men through whom predictions about Christ came: (1) there was Zacharias, by the way a priest, to whom an angel appeared to predict the birth of John the Baptist, who would go before Christ in the “spirit and power of Elijah”, (2) later Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, in the same manner as the judges in the OT, “and prophesied” (Luke 1:67) about the future for John and Jesus.

15. Conference with the Apostle James and the elders of the Jerusalem church, Paul asked to keep a vow of the law with four others, and after 7 days the Jews from Asia saw him in the Temple, and Paul arrested, Acts 21:15-21.


There is no grounds for the argument that God has changed His mind on human pride. I recall in Lexington Park Maryland a few years ago teaching a men's Sunday school class of military officers and civil service workers--probably typical middle income Americans and successful according to the world's standards of success--but being surprise as in the course of Bible teaching, I routinely brought up the necessity of "humility" in the sight of God. The response of the group was natural and instantaneous as they said, "Humility in this day and time, huh, people will run over you." While I tried to stress that "humility" in the Bible was more a relationship between a person and God, we all knew that it also had to have implications between man and man; and I know from similar training in Aerospace big business on practical management dynamics, that the dominant concept in the class--and no doubt typical of in any and all churches today, is that somehow the Biblical concept of humility had become outdated. Management dynamics, primarily today based on behaviorism but with also the elements of the cognitive, and always with the Machiavellian motivations in mind, is dominate in education, in educational psychology, in big government, big military, and big business. It is perhaps the dominant movement in the American free enterprise system, and certainly a dominant and practical thought pattern in the American Democratic Faith.

Somehow with this practical psychology of management dynamics aided by all the self-help, self-growth, and self-improvement books, we have somehow come to think of "humility" as being outdated, and as pride being much more acceptable. Indeed the American Style of life and thought has rationalized and justified, even devel-
oped, human pride to the extent that it has become an idol. However, the Word of God stands firm, although faintly or seldom heard today, that God hates human pride. The Bible is still valid on the "six things the LORD hates" (Proverbs 6:16-19): it is still indelible recorded in God's Word of Proverbs 6:16-19 that "seven things are an abomination to God" with "a proud look" leading the list of sin and seven; and it is still as applicable to any human on this earth as it was, based on the character and personality of God, as the day God through the Prophet Solomon had it recorded in His book. You might as well expect the changing of the tides, or the force of gravity and gravitational attraction, or any other natural laws of God as seasons, day and night, as to really expect that God's attitude has changed on human pride and humility.

"These six things the LORD hates, Yes, seven are an abomination to Him. A proud look, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that are swift in running to evil, a false witness who speaks lies, and one who sows discord among brethren." (Proverbs 6:16-19)

God, who is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow, does not change His mind on his expectations for human behavior and attitudes, nor does He repent of them since the words of the Bible are really reflections of what God is like. His holiness and righteous demands will not permit, men today or in the past, of the luxuries of discord among "brethren", of the devising of plans for control in a local church independent of that of Jesus and Jesus through the Pastor, and of a "proud look".

16-1: II Timothy versus Philippians on Church Behavior.

Even as II Timothy can be considered as the book of bad church behavior and attitudes, so Philippians can be considered the book of recommended good church behavior.

You get that right after the long preamble, as is most often the custom of Paul in writing Scriptures, and with Philippians 2:3.

"Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself." (Philippians 2:3)

Think of how many problems are caused in your local church by one member or a group of members, riding hard on Democratic expressions and self-improvement, allow themselves to be controlled by "selfish ambition"--in other words actions that promote only themselves--and "conceit"--where self is put before the welfare of the total church body, before the welfare of Christ, and before the welfare of the pastor. {Here, I think Rick Warren with his concept of "protect the church" would be more Scripturally valid if this was protect the pastor, protect Christ, and protect the total church body rather than to protect the "cover-up" of the church.} While not based on Scripture, if you read the 40 day
purpose books you will find that Bible is only added as an appendage to the previous extra- and non-biblical conclusions, sort of like window dressing but subtle enough for readers not to realize that it is the opposite of exegesis, the protect your church movement based on PR, cover-up, agreement with Warren and his staff, it is far from being based on a "lowliness of mind" among church members and church leaders, and it is far from an "esteem (for) others (as) better than himself. It rather picks a certain group of members that have sold themselves to a man-written church covenant as the basis for the esteem to other church members. It is more consistent with the management dynamics of American Society than of Philippians and Philippians 2:3.

In this time of history during the Falling Away, where the rising tide of "sin and lawlessness" sweeps over the church, churches, as well as over the world, can we really expect such church behavior among church members as that recommended by the Apostle Paul in the book of Philippians. I doubt it; as except for periodical revivals, the love of many more in the churches will wax cold as the rising tide of sin and lawlessness overwhelms us to the point of--to use the words of Daniel about the historical period of the Falling Away--until "the power of the Holy people is completely shattered". It is shattered now, I think you would admit if you were honest, but it is not "completely shattered". It will be completely shattered according to II Thessalonians when the Holy Spirit is withdrawn from this earth. Suddenly some week, in the not too distant future, we are going to have the sick feeling among God's people that things have so changed drastically that they can never be the same; and that will be the week that the Holy Spirit is quietly withdrawn by God the Father from doing His work here on earth, the only remaining work of the Spirit will be in the lives of individual Christians. There will no longer be the work of the Spirit in the world to convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment; and even as it would be a drastic work of history if suddenly the influence of all churches in America were removed, so that removal of the restraining work of the Spirit will be more so drastic and sickening among those who have any love left for righteousness.

Well, since revival is a special blessing and work of the Holy Spirit on a group of people, then we can still have revival right up to the time of the Holy Spirit's withdrawal. It will hardly make an difference when the Spirit is withdrawn in the Pentecostal and charismatic practices of many, for they have so simulated and faked true worship, a loud and show-off worship with the lips and mouth in song, praise, tongues, and shouting, that they will carry on as if nothing happened. But real revival as summarized in the famous quote of II Chronicles 7:14 about which we seldom here today, because the simulations have taken the place of the realities, is still possible for short periods of time and in certain places, as long as the Spirit is still on earth. (To list just a few of the simulations: increased church or Sunday school attendance which is falsely considered to be the same as real church growth like in Ephesians --this is where we have been faked out by Saddleback Church and
Rick Warren, not realizing that even the Mormons and the Roman Catholics can fill churches with empty people—excitement on Sunday or at other meetings for an hour or two as a replacement for living up to the calling of Christ for six other days, highly organized endeavors of a denomination which can make God’s people feel good as a substitute for obedience to Christ, going to retreats and mountain-top conferences of large numbers and lead by those who would take first place in the kingdom, that is in their own mind and in the mind of those easily lead astray by the popular-itching ear Bible teachers, and so on and on such as with extra-biblical revelations.\}

“if My people who are called by My name {don’t you and your church call your-selves by the name of God or of Christ, most do}...will humble themselves {oh, there is that word again “humble” and “humility”, how did that sneak into our Bibles}, and pray {much of the little of prayer that is heard in churches today gets no higher than the ceiling of the church, because it comes out of the mouth of a church member that is active by their church behavior and atti-tudes in the grieving of the Holy Spirit}...and seek My face {it takes much more prayer, it takes the seeking of the face of God, the opposite of the OT and common today practice of substituting loud lid and moaning mouth to com-pensate for a heart that is far from God--you know I have observed through fifty years in churches that as the closeness of a human heart to God goes down, the outward demonstrations of simulated sincerity especially in worship services goes up; and it is as though some of God’s people knowing their own hearts and fakeness in worship, want to keep others from suspecting what they already know to be true.}, and turn from their wicked ways {well, this is too much:  for God’s people at the Temple where Jeremiah preached at the gate to stop their weekly evil practices in order for God to honor “We Are Safe” and “the house of the LORD...the house of the LORD”; and likewise for God’s people in the churches today to really seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, put the seeking of things in second place...well, that is too much.  Let us have a Gospel of Peace, Security, and Comfort...let us be encouraged with self-achievement, self-improvement, and the Gospel of Prosperity.}, then {then....then....then, we don’t want the “then” today, and per-haps that is the reason that we so seldom here about it any more coupled with the ways in which we can fake and simulate revival}...then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal there land.  (II Chronicles 7:14)

Part of the reason we don’t hear this prayer much any more in the churches, is because we do not believe that the present drought in Texas and New Mexico has come from God.  We do not believe that God sent hurricane Katrina, and other earthquakes; and we do not believe that God allowed 911 to happen in an effort to get our attention before the Falling Away is complete and the Second Coming is here.  However, also still part of God’s Word is the thirteenth verse before II
Chronicles 7:14 {and which by the way is from God to the one of the wisest men that every lived and in an answer to his prayer to bless the temple of God}...

“When I shut up heaven and thee is no rain, or command the locust to devour the land, or send pestilence among My people…” (II Chronicles 7:13)

16-2: Good Church Behavior and Good Church Attitudes in Philippians.

There is both something “cognitive”--“for as man thinketh in his heart, so is he”--and something of “behaviorism” in Philippians. Even the useful paragraph headings of your Bible tell us this with subjects like: “Thankfulness and Prayer {first an attitude of thankfulness this a behavior or action of prayer}; “To Live is Christ” {a life style of attitudes and actions like Christ}; “Striving and Suffering for Christ” (“not only to believe in His name, but to suffer for Him” (Philippians 1:29)); “unity through humility” {the setting aside by church members of personal conceit and petty personal ambitions in the church in favor of a certain mental attitude called “lowliness of mind” with subsequent actions and attitudes of esteem for other church members as better than yourselves}; “Example of the Humbled and Exalted Christ” {whose humility led Him to the complete obedience of the Cross}; “All for Christ”, “Pressing Toward the Goal”, Improve your attitudes by “Meditating on These Things”, and it would help if you thought of your true citizenship as in heaven, beyond your own church doors.

1. Actions and Attitudes consistent with “to live is Christ”.

To be able to based on the start of a good conscience toward God that started with the Gospel of the One Baptism, and what the Apostle Peter meant, to continue with a good conscience toward God and Christ that can say when I speak and live in the church or elsewhere, it is the equivalent of Christ living through me. In other words, the people who listen and see me, are reminded of the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. Conduct yourselves worthy of the Gospel of Christ.

Everyone knows of the greatness of the Gospel of Christ, even some of the greatness of the Gospel of the One Baptism; well, here is an Apostle of Christ, Paul, and with Words from God as Scriptures, admonishing us to live worthy of that Gospel.

“Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come {and Paul will certainly be among those who sleep in Christ who come with Christ as the Second Coming: I think then you will recognize his authority as given by Christ as he with other apostles governs part of the new earth even if you do not adhere presently to the authority of the Apostles and Prophets as given in Scriptures, as authority from God and Christ} and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs {how are you affairs, do they seek things or the kingdom of God and His righteousness?}, that you stand fast {even more important during the Falling Away, only now you have to find a select group in
How long, if ever, has it been since you could say that your local church was of “one mind”; or that the attitudes of your fellow church members was such that it could be considered as “one spirit”. Well, you see we don’t even look at it that way anymore. We stress the personality individuality and personal differences of all human beings; we stress how not persons even church members are perfect, and that some human frailties often prevail which we must overlook. Well, that is far from the one mind and one spirit recommended, yea even commanded by the Apostle Paul with authority from Jesus and God.

3. Take the mind of Christ for actions and attitudes.

“Let this mind be in your which was also in Christ Jesus...but made Himself of no reputation {how long has it been since you have seen a church make himself of no reputation, rather than seeking to promote his own reputation and status in your local church, regardless of the gifts he or she may or may not have received from the Holy Spirit}...taking the form of a bondservant...He humbled Himself and became obedient to the death...” (Philippians 2:5-8)

May I make a suggestion based on Scripture that instead of praying like the extra-biblical revelations of Jim Baker and “Praise the Lord” where you thank God for every mud puddle that you can step in or see, you should pray as any “care” comes into your life: “God through Christ, As I humble myself under your mighty hand that You may exalt me in due time {it may be here on earth or it may be in heaven, leave that to God the Father}, casting all my care upon You because you care for me, I now cast this particular care {mention in by name no matter how small or large} upon you.” We know Christ taught us to pray this way; we suspect that Baker’s prayer like the famous Baker’s dozen is extra-biblical and even non-biblical.


Yes, shock of all shocks, and contrary to many of your church conversations and your personally held attitudes, YOUR SALVATION IS NOT COMPLETE. What has been worked for in and what has been worked in you has to be worked out in the open by you.

This is the Gospel of the One Baptism

You continue in the beliefs of the “believe” of “believe and be baptized” and God continues to “work in you” (2:13) according to His good pleasure and will to the extent that you will allow Him to continue to work in your for His good will and pleasure. Never say die, or never say complete, or never say saved until the Second Coming of Christ, and then your salvation with sanctification and glorification of the new resurrected body is complete.
Volume 3: Believe and Be Baptized

(1). Believe it or not part of the working out of your own salvation, is not to complain or dispute in church meetings or with church people, or even anywhere.

"Do all things (that is the anywhere--church, work, or otherwise) without complaining and disputing…" (Philippians 2:14)

(2). That is, if you really want the end results of working out your own salvation:
(a) become of such a character as to be "blameless" and "harmless"; (b) to be called a child of God without fault in a world that excuses most faults; (c) to shine like a light in the darkness of American Society and the rest of the world; (d) hold fast and faithfully to the Scriptures of the Word of God, all of them and not only your favorites if you would work out your total salvation with fear and trembling (Paul said in the last of Hebrews that it is a "fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God", especially if you have not worked with the salvation that God gave you as a gift); (e) so that you and Paul, or anyone else had anything to do with your initial salvation might rejoice in "the day of Christ"--the Second Coming of Christ (the Day of the LORD of the OT becomes in the NT the Day of the LORD and Lord, LORD God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ). This sort of summarizes the answer of a good conscience, toward God and more so than any justification or rationalization of the American Conscience--if it seems right to me, I do it--as the One Baptism, not "the putting away of the filth of the flesh" as in water baptism, or the theoretical second, etc. "anointing" baptism of the extra-biblical revelations of the Pentecostals and other charismatics.

5. In the place of seeking "your own things", seek the things of Christ.

"For all seek their own, not the things which are of Christ Jesus." (Philippians 2:21)

Paul saw this behavior and attitude in young Timothy so that Paul called him "like-minded". Sometimes you will notice in the epistles of Paul that there is the "we" of Timothy, Titus, and others, almost as if they also were apostles; although Paul never really defends this position as He does his own Apostleship, it seems that he considers them to be so like-minded that when they bring a message it is as though Paul Himself, or really Christ through Paul, is speaking to them. It is like a faithful ambassador of the US to another country, like-minded with the government in power; but these are ambassadors for Apostles and Prophets, for Christ and God.

6. Seek out such men that strive after the examples of Paul, Timothy, and Titus; and having found those in a pastor or other church leader "Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness, and hold such men in esteem." (Philippians 2:29)

We might contrast such men as Paul, Timothy, and Titus that we should hold "in esteem" with the ones that we most generally, even in church, hold with esteem. Would you not give a movie star or other famous person, or person of position in our society, a better seat in your church that a man poorly dressed? Yes, and by doing
so we have become a “respecer of persons”, condemned by the Word of God in the book of James as in the same category of murder or adultery. You see what accepted church behavior has departed almost entirely from the Word of God!

7. “Beware” as an attitude that becomes church members: “Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers {that are, and increasingly will be as we plummet more deeply into the Falling Away, more “evil workers”:} beware of the mutilation.” (3:2)

Well, today in America we do not have to worry about the mutilation of circumcision. That is not one of our problems, although we do have the power of who are the real people of God, those “who worship God in Spirit”--this is the real circumcision that sets the real people of God apart, the real Israel of Romans and of the real Jews; and related to that is our problem with the mutilation of the Word of God whereby today many popular Bible teachers and preachers {another characteristic of the Falling Away, that is of itching ears teachers} mutilate what was given in the Word of God of the Prophets and Apostles with their extra-biblical revelations of “God told me” or “God gave me”. Why don't you next time when a pastor or leader, tells you be “forget” any unsound doctrine or practices in your church, simply because it is for his personal benefit for you to do so even though a compromise, while pragmatic of Scripture, to respond in term to him by saying, “BEWARE”.


9. Walk with a pattern, not like the enemies of the cross of Christ--whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly {I bet that is an idol, the belly, that you never thought about}, and who glory in what they should be ashamed of, that pattern determined by faithfulness to your real citizenship in heaven.

“For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.” (Philippians 3:20)

10. Wow, would you not like to so live in the church and otherwise, so that the Apostle Paul Himself, or even better Jesus Himself, might say of you, “and the rest of my fellow workers, who names are in the Book of Life.” (4:3).

There is no judgment for you if your name is written in the Book of Life. At the Second Coming, before Jesus sends out the angels to the four corners of the earth to collect and separate the living and the dead “tares” and “wheat”, the angels do their homework in heaven to decide who is a tare and who is a wheat; and then those already written in the Book of Life of heaven, with this record of their citizenship in heaven, automatically are picked up by the angels as wheat.

Thessalonians, Second Coming and Prerequisites

17-1: Thessalonica.

While a great multitude of the devout Greeks in the city of Thessalonica were persuaded by Paul about Jesus Christ, there were also a few Jews, and some of the "leading women". (Acts 17:1-4) Since there also was a synagogue of the Jews, that is where Paul started his ministry in the city, which was his custom when possible, and the record says that he reasoned with them from the Scriptures about Jesus: (1) that the Christ, the Messiah, had to "suffer and rise again from the dead"; and (2) that the Jesus they preached is the Christ. As everywhere most of the Jews were not persuaded, and like everywhere they stirred up a mob. (Actually the Scriptures tell us that they were envious of the crowd of Greeks attracted to the preaching of Jesus.) Their method this time was to gather "evil men" from the market place, use them to gather a mob, consequently setting the whole city in an uproar, then they attacked the house of Jason where they thought Paul and Silas were staying. Not finding Paul and Silas there, they dragged Jason and some of the other Christian brethren to the city rulers where the accusation was, "Those who have turned the world upside down (the reputation of Paul and company obviously preceded them) have come here too"; and Jason has harbored them; and all of these are guilty of "acting contrary to the decrees of Caesar" because they claim that there is another king--King Jesus. It appears that although this troubled the rulers
and the crowd when they hear this, no punishment was meted out, only the equivalent of bond money had to be put up for Jason and the other Christians. Luke tells an interesting thing about the ministry of Paul in Thessalonica in Acts when he writes how Paul "explained and demonstrated" the Christ, leading one to think that when we come to I Thessalonians 1:5 where Paul first recalls in writing the ministry at that city, he writes, "For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit..." that the power and Holy Spirit was the "demonstration" part of the preaching of Christ.

18-2: Previous Ministry of Paul at Thessalonica.

Paul's description in I Thessalonians 1 and 2 of the Previous Ministry at Thessalonica. We get more details from Paul himself about the ministry at that city.

1. The church of the Thessalonians were ever since in the prayers of Paul as he gave thanks to God for them.

2. Paul remembers about that church: (1) their work of faith, (2) labor of love, and (3) their patience of hope in Jesus and God.

3. Paul recalls how the Gospel came to them (1) in word, (2) in power, (3) in the Holy Spirit, and (4) "in much assurance" (I Thessalonians 1:5).

4. How they became followers of both Paul and Silas at the same time they were become followers of Jesus. (I think it is important to realize that as we become today followers of Jesus, we also become followers of the Apostles and Prophets that were commissioned by God and Jesus to give us the Scriptures.

5. They "received the word in much affliction", but also with the joy of the Holy Spirit (1:6)

6. For some reason or reasons Paul sets them up as example church members for all who believed "in Macedonia and Achaia". (1:7) Evidently even as Paul's reputation had preceded him into Thessalonica, so also the reputation of the new church members there had preceded them out into the Roman Empire.

"For from you the word of the Lord has sounded forth, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place. Your faith toward God has gone out, so that we do not need to say anything. For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come." (I Thessalonians 1:8-10)

This is outstanding for Paul as in only 10 verses he has introduced what will be the main subject of I Thessalonians: that Day of the Lord when the Son of God comes from heaven, what we and they are waiting for, and how when He comes He will deliver us from the wrath to come. To understand the obvious to Paul based on the
Volume 3: Believe and Be Baptized

OT understanding of the connection of how the Son will deliver us from the wrath to come with the Second Coming of Jesus, we must consider both the Day of the LORD of the OT where judgment and punishment were obvious in the light of the Day of the Lord of the NT where the focus is on the Second Coming of Jesus. {The Day of the LORD God the Father and of the Lord Jesus Christ were the same, are the same, but some things are more prominent than others when they are mentioned in either Testament. IT IS THE SAME PERIOD CALLED A DAY! It is a day of reckoning for unbelievers and a day of rejoicing for believers!}

17-3: Day of the LORD and Lord.

As always in the Bible, the capitalized version of LORD refers to God the Father while the lower case with a first capital letter refers to the Lord Jesus Christ. You already know from our studies in I Corinthians 15 of how the Lord Jesus Christ at His Second Coming will establish reign over all on earth as in heaven, and then how He will deliver that kingdom of LORD God the Father in order that God the Father might be all in all. {We should not have any problems with that in spite of our often neglect of this doctrine of the Bible, since Jesus Himself taught us to pray to God the Father as “Our Father which art in heaven...” and taught us that it would be through Him in that He would be after Ascension at the right hand of God the Father to ever make intercession for our sins.}

1. Day of the LORD is mentioned in Joel 2 where: an alarm is to be sounded from God’s holy mountain that all the inhabitants of the land might tremble, “for the day of the LORD is coming” (2:1), yea it is at hand {you see quite often in the Prophets as here in Joel there is a more immediate day and a more distant day of the LORD, both have in common the elements of disaster, judgment, and punishment}. {It is obvious that right here the Day is the more immediate judgment day, a day of invasion from a foreign army.} (Joel 2:2)

Yet it is obvious that the Day passes from the immediate to the more distant Day in Joel 2:10-11 for several reasons, the main one being that the common physical disasters of the Day of the LORD as found in both testaments are mentioned--alias, earthquakes, shaking of the heavens as well as the earth, and diminished light from the stars, sun, and moon. However the LORD “gives a voice before His army” since His camp is very great, and strong is “the One” {obviously the Lord Jesus Christ} “who executes His word”. Thus is apparent that in this Day of the LORD we have also the more clearly taught Day of the Lord Jesus Christ of the NT, although veiled
somewhat in “The One”: it also being obvious that God is about to rescue at the same end time, the army of His own large camp {this reminds us of the camp of the saints near Jerusalem that God Himself through Christ intervenes to save, at the great battle of Armageddon.}

“For the day of the LORD is great and very terrible; who can endure it?” (Joel 2:11b)

2. We know of the famous quote by the Apostle Peter from Joel 2:28-32 given as an explanation of the coming of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost in which Peter not only establishes firmly {that is Peter and the Prophet Joel and the Word of God} the day of the LORD as “the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD” but also the beginning and end of the last days. (Acts 2:14-21)

(1). Peter clearly defines the beginning of the last days as that very day, marked by the coming of the Holy Spirit in special power and a special way. It is the same as the famous binding of Satan of the book of Revelation; and consequently the loosing of Satan after a figurative one thousand years, is when the Holy Spirit is withdrawn as we will look at more closely in II Thessalonians.

(2). There is a little difference in time between the end of the last days at the famous Day of the LORD and of the Lord, alias the second coming of Christ with subsequent judgment and punishment, and the time when the Holy Spirit is withdrawn from the earth. That short period of time is somewhere in the historic period of the Falling Away, also of II Thessalonians, perhaps approximately 40 years. The withdrawal of the Holy Spirit although made clear in II Thessalonians is somewhat veiled in Daniel as when “the power of the Holy people is completely shattered.”

(3). On that first day of Pentecost after the Ascension of Jesus, you know how the Holy Spirit more democratically came on male and female, young and old, while in OT times it was more isolated like when the Spirit came on Samson and the other judges to meet certain specific problems.

(4). The period of the last days will be marked from beginning to end with the signs (a) in the earth beneath, (b) blood, (c) fire, and (d) vapor of smoke. Note that with any disaster you witness on TV there is those three elements of blood, fire, and vapor of smoke, whether God sends an earthquake, a hurricane, a tornado, or whatever natural disaster. It is all part of the continuous from beginning of the last days to the end of the last days “groaning of all creation like a woman in travail”, often called as it comes to an end of the last days as not only a shaking of the earth as previously during the flood but also a shaking the last time of the heavens and the earth.
(5). Just before the coming of the great and awesome Day of the LORD and of
the Lord, then the lights are diminished, of sun and moon and stars, the sun into
darkness and the moon into blood.

(6). Now the good news is not only that the Holy Spirit will be there during most
of these last days to restrain against the flood of sin and lawlessness, by convicting
the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment--doing the same work that Jesus
did when He was on earth except on a larger world-wide scale--but also it is a time
of salvation for many", "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved."
(Acts 2:21 and Joel 2:32)

3. The Prophet Joel also in the context of Joel 2 and 3 having announced in 2:32
that plan of salvation as a "deliverance in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem", obviously
the life, message, and death of Christ for salvation; also mentions how God will call
only "a remnant" (2:32), and before that coming of the Messiah {it is veiled of
course}, there will be the restoration of the Captives.

"For behold, in those days and at that time, when I bring back the captives of
Judah and Jerusalem, I will also gather all nations, and bring them down to the
Valley of Jehosphaphat; and I will enter into judgment with them there...."
(Joel 3:1,2a)

What is not apparent until you take it in the context of the whole Bible is that
between the restoration of the captives and the gathering of all the nations for a
great battle and judgment, alias the distant Day of the LORD, has a large gap of
time in it that Revelation choses to describe figuratively as one thousand years. You
see how it could have been if precise 2012 years, or 2007 years, or something simi-
lar; and you will recall how the one thousand years between the coming of the Spirit
in power and the withdrawal of Spirit is not exactly the same one thousand years
{long and indefinite or unidentified period of time} of the last days. We would
estimate that there must be about 40 years at least of the Falling Away before the
end of the last days, and the Second Coming, with some where during that Falling
Away the withdrawal of the Holy Spirit from work on earth.

4. Again the final and distant Day of the LORD with typical describers is mentioned
in Joel 3:14-16.

"Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! The sun and moon will grow
dark, and the stars will diminish their brightness. The LORD also will roar from
Zion, and utter His voice from Jerusalem; the heavens and the earth will shake;
but the LORD will be a shelter for His people (for a complete description of
"His people" at this time as Jews and Gentiles, the real Israel, the real Jews,
the real children of Abraham and of God, the reader is referred to the book of
Romans), and the strength of the children of Israel.” (Joel 3:14-16)

17-4: I Thessalonians on The Day of the Lord.
What Scriptures Paul offers us in I Thessalonians 4:13 through 5:11 about the Day of the Lord, called "the day of the Lord" in 5:2 and "this Day" in 5:4 and "the day" in 5:8. (Needless to say as always what Paul says is based on the OT, with quotes or without. I and II Thessalonians are two books without quotes.)

1. That Day is called by several words and phrases in chapters 4 and 5.

(1). It is called the "coming of the Lord" in 4:15, which Paul declares "by the word of the Lord", with a reference of how those who are alive when Christ comes again will not get ahead of those who are asleep in the Lord, as He will bring them with Him. (I don't know which is better to go ahead and die in the Lord, going to sleep as it is called, the spirit going to be with the Lord until the body is awakened at this second coming; or to hope for a life long enough to be here on earth.)

(2). It is called "for the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, the voice of an archangel, and the trumpet of God" in 4:16. The dead will rise first, be caught up in the air to meet the Coming Christ, then those alive will be also caught up in the clouds.

(3). It is called "the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night" in 5:2, so Paul does not even try to get into the times and the seasons here, although in the second letter of II Thessalonians he will find it necessary to get into the times and the seasons to the extent of several historic events that must come before the second coming: (1) the Falling Away of God's people; (2) the visibility to the world of the final man of sin, the son of perdition; (3) the rise of the tide of sin and lawlessness; and (4) the withdrawal of the Holy Spirit from earth.

(4). It is called a time of "sudden destruction" in 5:3 on those who at the time in the world are crying "peace and safety" even as God's people in the temple in Jerusalem were crying the same with "we are safe" and "the house of the LORD...the house of the LORD". It will come as labor pains on a woman, suddenly; and this is another time that Paul compares labor pains which start gradually and suddenly step up and then increase in intensity until birth with the end of this earth with heavens and the birth of a new heaven and a new earth.

(5). It is called in 5:4 as "this Day [which should not] overtake you as a thief" since believers should not be in the dark about it even as Paul considered the church members at Thessalonica not to be in the darkness about it, for he had told them. (The fact of the Day of the LORD and Lord as the Second Coming of Christ with judgment and punishment for unbelievers and rejoicing for believers Paul told them, what he must make clear in II Thessalonians is what must happen before that Day. In order words the prerequisites for the Second Coming.)
“Let no one deceive you by any means, for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition…” (II Thessalonians 2:3)

How much clear does this need to be to church members today that you can not have the Second Coming of Christ until: (1) First the Falling Away, and (2) also revelation in the world of the man of sin. I know the confusion and confusions that are thrown up around the man of sin of Daniel, and the confusion with the Anti-christs which many like to think are the Pope. Well, in reality, and we will look in a few moments at Daniel—which is the real basis for Paul on these doctrines, along with what Jesus gave him in Arabia and the leadings of the Holy Spirit to write Scriptures. You see, we must also always keep in mind God’s promises in the Prophets not to do anything without warning His people. The problem is that His people are not listening today. You hear about the Second Coming of the Day of the Lord; you hear of the judgment of the Day of the LORD and Lord of unbelievers with the punishment of eternity in hell; you hear of how all believers written in the book of life will not be judged, only go to meet the Lord Jesus Christ in the air; and you hear of eternity in heaven and hell; but you do not hear of what must come before that great and notable day of the LORD and Lord—that is, today there is silence on the Falling Away and the revelation of the man of sin, even silence on the withdrawal of the Holy Spirit and the period before it as the flood of sin and lawlessness increases. And this silence on the sound doctrine of the Falling Away and the related world-wide events is within itself evidence that we are already in “the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own desires shall they heap to themselves teachers with itching ears; shall turn away form the truth and turn into fables.” (We just never thought that it could happen in the SBC until approximately 20 years ago as the fundamentalists started to take over the convention. Why the fundamentalists? Because they under the discipleship and captive to the theories of Darby and Scofield have been the dominant influence in the silence and ignorance on these events that must take place before the Second Coming. From them you will hear of a kingdom on earth for a thousand years, not so; and you will hear of the Second Coming; you will hear of heaven and hell; but you will not hear of the Falling Away and the corresponding events. Why, because the Bible here does not fit into their little schemes as well as does not fit into their claim to have both the Message for the times and all the answers, that is THE SOLUTION. How in the world can a church or churches be a leader in the Falling Away, and truly church members have more to fall away from of God, Christ, and the Bible even while their attendance is going up because of the appeal to the world of their unsound doctrines, while at the same time they claim to have the answer, the solution, and the message!) Look at the Bible facts, these inevitable events of
world history, that must happen, below as clearly given in II Thessalonians. (The only alternative which I think is what Jack Graham and the 23,000 member Preston Road Baptist Church in Plano do, is to throw out the epistle of II Thessalonians as not part of the Word of God, and then likewise you have to deal with Daniel, and on and on until you do not have much of a Bible left.)

1. Bible fact #1 from II Thessalonians 2:3--THE DAY OF THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST CAN NOT TAKE PLACE "UNLESS THE FALLING AWAY COMES FIRST. Yes, the Falling Away actually prevents the Second Coming as you will notice in the wording of II Thessalonians 2:3.

   "for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first..." (2:3)

You probably never thought of the Falling Away as preventive of the Second Coming, if you thought about the Falling Away at all.

2. Bible fact #2 from II Thessalonians 2:3--THE DAY OF THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST CAN NOT COME UNTIL IT IS CLEAR TO BELIEVERS AS TO WHO IS THE MAN OF SIN, THAT IS AFTER HE MAKES HIS APPEARANCE.

   {Don't confuse the Antichrists, many of which even existed in the day of John the Apostle, with the three men of sin, nor the other two of the Greek and Roman times with the last man of sin of Daniel and II Thessalonians, obviously the man of sin just before the second coming.) This man of sin of here in II Thessalonians, and based also on Daniel, does have the same characteristics as the first two men of sin: (1) who opposes all that is called God and is worshipped; (2) who exalts himself above all that is called God and is worshipped; and (3) who sits like God in the temple claiming to be God. But the time in history separates the final man of sin, or call him the final Antichrist if it helps you, and the supreme Antichrist, as just before the Second Coming, as in the words of II Thessalonians 2:8 as the man of sin doing his dirty work when Christ comes again, "whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and desire with the brightness of His coming". When does this man of sin live and make himself a visible revelation to the world; well, in time for the brightness of the Second Coming of Christ to consume him. We will find other identifying characteristics in a later look at Daniel such as he is a man of war, he despises and mistreats women, and he is a king from the north with certain movements between countries near the end of time.

3. Bible fact #3 from II Thessalonians 2:6--the man of sin has his own time as he rides onto the world sin on the tide of sin and lawlessness, assisted by the intolerance of God's people toward sound doctrine.

   "And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time." (2:6)

4. Bible fact #4 from II Thessalonians 2:7--the Holy Spirit presently "restrains" the rising tide of sin and lawlessness, and He will continue to do so until He is taken
out of the way. It is as though the Holy Spirit with conviction on sin, righteousness, and judgment is a giant dam that holds back this flood of sin and lawlessness, which the Bible calls the mystery of lawlessness (a mystery already at work during the time of Paul and increasing, but which will increase more rapidly during the time of the Falling Away, especially as the Holy Spirit is withdrawn).

“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.” (II Thessalonians 2:7)

5. Bible fact #5 from II Thessalonians 2:8--shortly after the revelation of the man of sin, “the little while” of Revelation and the “halftime” of Daniel, the Second Coming of Christ will consume the man of sin.

“And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming.” (II Thessalonians 2:8)

6. Bible fact #6 from II Thessalonians 2:9--this son of perdition (and once again do not confuse him with Judas who was also a son of perdition, this is the last man of sin) has signs of his coming just as Jesus has signs of His coming, and well into the Falling Away the signs will intermingle.

“The coming of the lawless one is according to the workings of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders.” (II Thessalonians 2:9)

7. Bible fact #7 from II Thessalonians 2:10-12 and II Timothy--the “unrighteous deception among those who perish”, those recipients of “strong delusion”, those who perish because they fail to love the truth (the same of whom Jesus said because sin and lawlessness will abound “the love of many will wax cold) includes all of God’s people and all other unbelievers who by way of unsound doctrine come to believe “the lie”, the all who are condemned because they do not believe the truth. Recall that the Falling Away, the first in the wilderness and the second in Hebrews as well as here and in II Timothy, is God’s people who “have an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God.”

{And you that would hold to the Security of the Believer as part of your “the lie” should please read my commentary, “Snatching, Stumbling, and the Falling Away”, which is a reconciliation of the Security of the Believer with the Falling Away based on the details of the parable of the Seed and the Sower. Bottom line of the parable is that 50% of the seed sown among God’s people that creates the tares among the wheat, and which is not separated until the end, is unfruitful for eternal life: either it is superficial in the individual hearer because there is no root to their faith, or difficulties because of their faith cause them to stumble, or the cares of this world with other things choke out the Word. In short at least 50% or more of those who call themselves God’s people and church members have not learned Christ in the manner that we will
discuss in the last chapter on Ephesians. They truly did not experience the salvation of the Christ by hearing Him personally and by being taught of Him. Crude, yes; but realistic yes; and quite often the teaching of the Apostle Paul, and the Word of God.
You have no doubt noticed the similarities between the epistle of Ephesians and the epistle to the Colossians. It is almost as if Paul had the same outline or parchment for both, and did a rewrite to address any special problems that he both remembered from his ministry there and the words about the churches that came to him from messengers, especially from his own sons in the faith like Timothy and Titus.

We do know from the history of the development of the New Testament Canon of 27 books that when church councils met to decide on which books would be in the list for the Canon, one of the most decisive criterions was how generally accepted were all the epistles and books for the Canon in practice among the churches. In other words the councils only put a stamp of approval on what was widely circulated and accepted in the early churches, which immediately tells us of a practice whereby the church at Laodicea would also share the epistle to the Colossians, etc. We see the beginnings of this in Colossians 4:16.

“Now when this epistle is read among you, see that it is read also in the church of the Laodiceans, and that you likewise read the epistle from Laodicea.” (Colossians 4:16)

Since we do not have in our Canon an “epistle to the Laodiceans”, and since the ministry of Paul to Ephesus was really a ministry to all of Asia Minor—“And this continued for two years (the ministry at Ephesus), so that all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks”—is it then possible that Colosse like Galatia was a region and one of the specific churches of the region was the church
at Laodicea. We certainly know that as near the end of the first century as persecution of Christians increased, and as the Apostle John—which tradition has as the pastor of the church at Ephesus—wrote from exile on the isle of Patmos, just off the coast of Asia Minor and Ephesus, that both Ephesus and Laodicea were two of the seven churches of Asia Minor to be specifically addressed in the book of Revelation.

“What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia: to (1) Ephesus, (2) to Smyrna, (3) to Pergamos, (4) to Thyatira, (5) to Sardis, (6) to Philadelphia, and (7) to Laodicea.” (Revelation 1:11)

We also know for the context of Revelation 1 that the Ascended Christ, “the Son of Man”, chose for John to write to these seven churches, perhaps not only because of the unique problems of unsound doctrine and practices in each church as presented in Revelation 2 and 3, but also because that these seven churches, seven is always a number of completion in Scripture, were typical of the problems in all the churches of Asia. While we know of the specific problem in the church of Laodicea during the life of the Apostle John was lukewarmness—“So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of my mouth.” (Revelation 3:16), we do not either how seriously the church at Laodicea took the epistle of Colossians when Paul wrote it, if indeed Colossians was written to them; nor how seriously they took the message from Christ through John to be “zealous and repent” (Rev 3:19). We are encouraged by the oft mentioning in early church history of a Bishop at Gaul (France) who came out of the church of the Laodiceans. 

(By the way, we also have encouraging words of faithfulness from Bishops in Antioch, Smyrna, and Alexandria. We are discouraged by the developments in the church at Rome whereby, under the decree of the Roman Emperor Constantine, the bishop of the church at Rome was declared in 313 A.D. to be a head bishop of all bishop, a “Pope”. We are also discouraged that secular government had such control over early church affairs, although we might be encouraged that this Emperor made Christianity the official religion of the state, mostly for unity in the Empire reasons, which stopped the persecution of Christians according to Fox “Book of Martyrs”. We find that persecutions of Christians and churches the first three centuries were by the government of the Roman Empire, and encouraged by Jews throughout the Empire, the persecutions then well after 313 AD came more from Rome and the Roman Catholic Church as they attempted to force a conformity and orthodoxy on churches throughout the Empire that was based on unsound doctrine, practices, and extra-biblical revelations based on an authority of the Pope and his officials who took to themselves an authority of writing Scriptures that were the Word of God; and in some cases, making orthodox only these interpretations of Scripture from Rome.)

The only mention in Scripture of the word “Colosse” is in Colossians 1:2 where Paul addresses “the saints and brethren at Colosse”, obviously not addressing a specific church in the city of Colosse. Young's Concordance provides this definition of “Colosse”: “A city of Phrygian Pactiana, on the confines of Caria in Asia Minor, near the conflux of the Lycus and the Maeander.” (Does this mean that the church in the city of Colosse to whom Colossians was written is the church at Pergamos of the seven churches?) The church of Revelation 2:12-17 that: (1) how they held fast to the name of Jesus in spite of environmental and governmental efforts to make them deny the name of Christ in favor of the name of the Roman Emperor; (2) suffered much persecution as sort of a center of opposition to Christianity, having one of the first martyrs, Antipas, and how in spite of this intense persecution in their city did not deny the faith of Jesus; (3) had some unsound doctrine in the church which they allowed to be taught, perhaps more by a minority than the majority, the doctrine of Balaam which allowed God’s people to eat meat sacrificed to idols and to commit sexual immorality in the name of idol worship; and (4) they also allowed a group of church members to hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, a doctrine hated by the Lord Jesus Christ.

Some maps of early Christian churches [before 100 A.D.] do show a church at Colosse, just below a church at Laodicea in Asia Minor, while the church at Pergamos is shown between Troas and Thyatira. One of our great conservative and trustworthy Bible scholars of all time, recently passed away, F. F. Bruce notes how the intense missionary activity of Paul and companions spread the word from Ephesus to all of Asia from 52-55 A.D., and how through the ministry of Paul's companions the work went beyond Ephesus to many churches where Paul never visited. “Among these last,” Bruce writes in his commentary on Colossians in the NEW INTERNATIONAL COMMENTARIES, “were the churches planted in Colossae, Laodicea and Hierapolis, which appear to have the fruit of the missionary activity of Epaphras. This is plainly to be inferred from the references to Epaphras in Paul’s Epistle to the Colossians (1:7f and 4:12f).” And you know how we love the informative, preachy, and more expository than exegetically style of B.H. Carroll in AN INTERPRETATION OF THE ENGLISH BIBLE; well, Carroll always a lover of history and knowledgeable on history, writes--

“Colosse is only sixteen miles from Hierapolis and only six miles from Laodicea—all right there together, all on the Lycus, a tributary of the Meander. The man who planted these three churches—who directly established them—was Epaphras, an evangelist, who lived at Colosse. He established the churches, but Archippus, the son of Philemon, was the pastor at Colosse—a rather slow-going pastor. He had to be stirred up right sharply, and Paul takes occasion in two of his letters to stir him. These people ethnologically were Phrygians, but politically they belonged to the Roman province of Asia.”
While we are in Carroll on Colossians, we should also get the benefit of his insight from history and the Bible about the reason for the writing of the epistle to the Colossians.

“The occasion of the letter to the Colossians was the visit of Epaphras to Paul in Rome, giving him an account of the state of affairs in the Lycus valley {so the problems being dealt with in Colossians at Colosse as well as in Revelation in the church at Laodicea would be problems of the Lycus valley}. The conditions were much sharper at Colosse than elsewhere, but the same errors prevailed somewhat in the whole province. Hence, while he wrote a special letter to Colosse, he used the main thoughts of the letter and elaborated them into a circular letter. {You see, we did notice similarities between Colossians and Ephesians, not to mention the also noticeable and oft mentioned in this commentary place of Ephesians as a summary of the doctrine and the first ten epistles from Paul}.”

“The letter to the Ephesians was certainly not addressed primarily to Ephesus. A great many copies were distributed among the churches of Asia....There is a reference in Colossians to a letter which they would receive from Laodicea, which doubtless is the circular letter which we call the letter to the Ephesians. As the letter to the Romans elaborates the line of thought presented in Galatians, making it an abstract discussion, so Ephesians elaborates the line of thought in the letter to the Colossians, making it an abstract discussion. {Don’t you just love the boldness, generalizations, and comments of Carroll in a set of commentaries not verse by verse or strictly exegetical, but more topical, practical, and a total look at all of the Bible as well as some of the best of scholarship?}

One more thing from Carroll before we get into the messages of Colossians and Ephesians; and that is a definition of what Carroll and others consider to be the problem about which the epistles primarily deal, the problem of “Gnosticism”, which is so important to us today because it is very similar, if not the same, as the many “extra-biblical revelations” that we are hearing from Pentecostals and other charismatics today. {You know what I mean, “God told me”, or “God gave me a special word for you”, or something similar not specifically based on any Scripture.} Paul calls “Gnosticism” the common problem of the Lycus valley which, of course, would include Colosse and Laodicea. {Thus the problems of Colosse and Laodicea would be similar to those of the book of Revelation; in fact when in approximately 250 AD a council of churches was held at Laodicea, the same heresies dealt with there were the heresies dealt with the epistle of Colossians.}
“Gnosticism is derived from the Greek “gnosis”, which means “knowledge”, like “agnosticism,” which means ignorance—not knowing. The knowledge to which they pretended was a mystical knowledge above that which was written {extra-biblical and away from the Scripture, at least beyond the Scriptures without any pretense otherwise}, and it took the place of the written word. {Oh how horrible we would say, for what any Bible teacher or preacher would say to take the place of the Word of God; but yet so subtle of the many itching ears Bible teachers today of the Falling Away, that we fail to recognize what they say, while sounding good, as taking the place of the Written Word.}.”

From NT times to now there have always been men and women, inspired by Satan and his disciples, who practiced such “gnosticism” but who have used different words. In the time of B.H., it was “The Spirit moves men now as well as he did in bible days”, so that they go on “Spirit knowledge”, saying things in Carroll's day like “I just feel that it is so”, or they spiritualize, saying “the letter is nothing, the Spirit is everything” and “you must not interpret the Bible literally”.

I don’t know about you; but I am getting anxious to get into both epistles for an exposition of the Word itself. All these historical and background matters hardly make any difference at all as long as we get the messages of the Word, to be used where possible and if possible to assist us in the understanding of that Word. Where I think it is helpful is to see that even as Solomon said of his time, “there is nothing new under the sun”, that the problems faced by Christians in Colosse, Laodicea, in Ephesus, and in Carrol’s day are so similar, often only modified by the words used to express the same heretical thoughts.

18-2: OT quotes in Colossians and Ephesians.

Even as the Amplified version translates the words of description of the work and ministry of Paul in Thessalonica and in Acts 17, where Luke records of the preaching and demonstration of the word, the demonstration interpreted by Amplified as how Paul quoted OT verses to prove the Christ, so also those OT quotes in both books can prove some of the similarities and differences.

1. OT quotes in Ephesians.
   “When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men.” (Psalm 68:18 and Ephesians 4:8)
   Paul uses that as a basis of authority to support the authority of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers as authority from the Ascended Christ, the head of the church. Christ gives the gifts for such and gives the authority for such ministry of the gifts; and the implication is that there are to be no other authorities of gifts. (Recall also how we discussed in I and II Corinthians of how the gifts are given to churches, not individual churches, even as the members like a toe,
foot, eye, and ear are members of the total body rather than each local church having all the foot/eye/ear etc. members of the body; therefore how also some churches proliferated for extra-biblical reasons may not have any or all of the members, thus may not also have any of the gifts.

(2). Zechariah 8:16 in Ephesians 4:25.

"Therefore, putting away lying, 'Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,' for we are members of one another." (Zechariah 8:16 and Ephesians 4:25)

Even as the region of "neighbors" grew throughout the Empire, the extent of the one body of the one church also grew and the many neighbor-members of whom the church at Ephesus was spiritual joined. However, it should be added that the dominant thought of the Ephesians 4:25-32 passage is not to "grieve the Holy Spirit". 

(I have often wondered why it is necessary for God to withdraw the Holy Spirit from the earth before the end of the last days, although of course it is not my place to question God as the clay should never question the potter; but often wondering that if somewhere in the recesses of the OT is not a simple statement to explain a reason for the loosing of Satan by the withdrawal of the Spirit. I could do without it, for one; and the only reason so far I can think of is in order that Satan and his leader, the man of sin, might collect all the unbelievers in the world for the great and final battle in the valley of Jehoshaphat. The gathering of such a large group of nations of unbelievers would otherwise not be easy, and it does facilitate God's work of separation between believers and unbelievers as well as making it easy for the Returned Christ and His angels to in one swift blow destroy all the rebellious and unbelievers, that is, that live at the time of the Second Coming. This kind of speculation is always dangerous as it gives the wind bag with all the answers an opportunity to step in with a solution! Of course, he has an answer just like he or she has answers on all questions, difficult or otherwise.)


"Be angry, and do not sin: do not let the sun go down on your wrath." (Psalm 4:4 and Ephesians 4:26)

Not easy but it is possible to get righteously mad and not sin. One way to guard against the kind of angry that does sin is by not letting the sun go down on that angry. In other words deal with it like any other problems with action and prayer, and do not allow the devil to take advantage of you here as in any other problems. Even as it is possible to get angry without sinning, and to not let the sun go down on your wrath, so it is also possible to judge righteous judgment. (Don't you know that you will be judges in the life to come, and that God has placed you here on earth as unique creatures that are afforded the authority to make righteous judgments on many matters.)
Volume 3: Believe and Be Baptized


"For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church." (Ephesians 5:31,32 and Genesis 2:24)

Always and ever in the Scriptures of the Word of God, Paul wants every local church and every member of every local church to know that they are first of all members of the total body of Christ, the church; and as such become members of Christ with the necessity of first of all recognition of the authority of Christ over the church, then also of apostles and prophets through Scripture, and the pastors, teachers, and evangelists to propagate the Scriptures consistent with what Christ, the Apostles and the Prophets put in there. "Wives submit yourselves to your husbands in the Lord" should primarily be wives submit to the authority of Christ and Scriptures; "husbands, love wives as your own bodies" should first of all be husbands love Christ and the total body of Christ more than your self; and so on.

(5). Deuteronomy 5:16 and Ephesians 6:3.

"that is may be well with you and you may live long on the earth." (Ephesians 6:3 and Deuteronomy 5:16)

You know what this is another way of saying: obey the Word of God as well as the teachings of your father and mother from the Word of God. Acknowledge and respect the authority of the Scriptures!

2. OT in Colossians.

Well, this is easy as there are not direct quotes of OT Scriptures in the book of Colossians, so momentarily we will look at the possible paraphrases on the five quotes n Colossians that Paul uses in Ephesians; and we will look for other possible paraphrases as well as references to the OT. (Although it really does not make that much difference, and with all due respect to Carroll and others, this lack of similarity of quotes between Colossians and Ephesians--especially this lack of any quotes in Colossians which puts it in a category of when Paul stopped quoting and summarized in epistles--leads me to think that Ephesians was written before Colossians, although the distribution to the churches may have been vice versa, perhaps Paul writing Ephesians as a preliminary parchment at Tarsus before the missionary journeys.)

(1). Colossians 1:15.

The "He "Christ" is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation" of Colossians 1:15 reminds us of Hebrews if not of OT, especially of the first chapter of Hebrews where there are so many OT quotes. Like the "You are My Son, today I have begotten you" of Hebrews 1:5 and Psalm 2:7; like Romans 8:29 where we are to be "conformed to the image of His Son" by the One Baptism, also Christ as the
Volume 3: Believe and Be Baptized

firstborn among many; like II Corinthians 4:4 where Christ is the image of God; and like in Hebrews 12:23 where the total body of Christ is called the assembly of the firstborn.

(2). Colossians 1:18, Christ remains the head of the church.

“And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.” (Colossians 1:18)

We might consider this as necessary in our study flow on Colossians and Ephesians as a definition of the firstborn as "the firstborn from the dead”. Also we might note that Carroll considers the book of Hebrews to be a supplement to and a commentary on Colossians and Ephesians. Increasingly as we progress through the first 10 epistles of Paul with the foundation in all the OT quotes, and progressively as those quotes peter out in Philemon, Colossians, and Philippians, we also have sufficient foundation in the OT and NT Scriptures combined of the first ten, to start to use them as authority on other NT Scriptures, like on Colossians and Ephesians. {The old guideline of comparing Scripture with Scripture gets additional justification in the internal evidence of the Bible itself.}

(3). While we would have difficulty in summarizing all of the OT Paul had in mind as he wrote of "the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge", we know it is OT based even as we know all wisdom and knowledge like treasures and mysteries, were based on OT Scriptures. We also know that this knowledge and wisdom was supplemented in the life and ministry of Paul when He met Jesus on the road to Damascus, when he was taught by the Ascended Christ in Arabia, and when the Spirit worked with him back during the so-called 7 silent years at Tarsus as he read back through the OT with the help of the Spirit and based on what had previously been taught and learned, recording all the OT quotes that he intended for the epistles like Colossians and Ephesians to come. In short, I think Paul knew at the time in Tarsus, even in Arabia, and as you can see written here in Colossians of his ministry as chief editor of the NT. Don't you see that in Colossians 1:25?

“...of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God which was given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God.” (Colossians 1:25)

To "fulfill the Word of God" would be to complete the Word of God by writing personally 14 books of the 27 of the New Testament and then to sponsor three more with parchments for John Mark and Dr. Luke. And certainly you see in the larger context of Colossians 1, especially in 1:26 with "the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints", an awareness of Paul that part of his ministry was revelation, “to reveal” those mysteries to the saints.
Volume 3: Believe and Be Baptized

(4). The “Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit” bespeaks of both Paul’s total education as a Roman citizen as well as a lawyer of the Hebrew nation, requiring extensive knowledge of the law and the Prophets. How would this “philosophy” from the Greek education and this empty deceit from both the Greeks and the education of the Romans come, even of the Jews who denied the Christ? (a) According to the tradition of men, and even today, what is considered the best of the traditions of men up to this point in history come to us in education—philosophy, government, law, ethics, and etc.; (b) According to “the basic principles of the world”—that is, much of what we learn of custom and tradition are of the world, come from the world, and is considered like the wisdom of the ages; and (c) not according to Christ—that is, where we must often part company with custom, tradition, the world, and education when it is not according to Christ. When it obviously contradicts Christ and all we know of the teachings and life of Christ, all that comes to us from the Apostles of Christ in the Word of God. We have problems when we start listening to this extra-biblical proponents, then called the Gnostic, now called Pentecostals and other charismatics. It is the very same problem that Paul dealt with in I and II Corinthians where women and other church members acted as either (a) the Word of God came to them only, and that is what the Gnostic did with their unique knowledge above and beyond the written words of the Apostles; or (b) the Word of God came out of them only, and that the Gnostic readily admitted to, would also that so many extra-biblical Bible teachers today would do the same. What and ego, to think when surrounded by all the Wisdom of the Word of God, that we in our little time and generation could come up with some new Word of God! That is sacrilegious, heretical, and is an avenue for profit-taking and ego building, the same problem of which Paul spoke to the Ephesian elders of how after his ministry would come some from both within the churches and from outside the churches who like wolves would scatter the flock, making disciples to themselves.

(5). We will find in the “circumcision” discussions of Colossians 2:11-23, really a discussion and presentation of the One Baptism, both much Old Testament about circumcision, law, and the real covenants with God and much of the NT previously presented by Paul in epistles where OT quotes were made. Paul often and ever tries to make it clear that even as the primary and One Baptism is “hands-off” so also is the true circumcision that really matters.

“In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands (you, when you hear the word “circumcision” you think immediately of the circumcision of the OT that definitely required other hands; but this spiritual circumcision is “made without hands” even as the One Baptism is a spiritual baptism without the hands required in a water baptism), by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.” (Colossians 2:11,12)
Surely you do not think that you are buried with Christ in water baptism, and surely you do not think that are raised with Christ in water baptism. You are raised with Him “through faith in the working of God”, that working of God being salvation, and the salvation coming through faith: that is the One Baptism. How in the world the church of Christ got water baptism mixed in here as a requirement of salvation is beyond me; but any people who can claim to be the only Christians because they had placed a sign in front of their church building which says “the church of Christ” show the foolhardiness of their understanding of Scriptures. They are the same people that can hardly face up to spiritual circumcision and spiritual baptism. The One spiritual baptism that comes immediately after “believe”; the One spiritual baptism, the true identification with the death and resurrection of Christ, that is as far from water baptism in importance as the spiritual circumcision is from the physical circumcision of the Hebrews.

What follows in 2:12 of the formerly “dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh” and then the “made alive together with Him”, you must see as the same argument of the Before In Christ (BIC) and the After In Christ (AIC) of Ephesians 2.

“And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins...and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus...” (Ephesians 2:1-6)

Ministry of the Mystery

And that Colossians was written before and it partly the summarizing basis for Ephesians is seen in Ephesians 3 where Paul writes about “the mystery” previously written to them, and of how the recording of this mystery was part of His designated ministry. And as always, part of that Ministry in Ephesians and Colossians, is that Gentiles are fellow heirs of the same total body of Christ, the church.

“How that by revelation {always the writings or epistles of Paul are by revelation so that they are Word of God, Scriptures in the same category as the OT Scriptures, as also Peter testified to} He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)...” (Ephesians 3:3,4)

Here is the way it goes: an Apostle like Paul or a Prophet by “revelation” is given some understanding of the mysteries of God and Christ, which is not similar but not exactly the same as the understanding that any reader must have in order to know what it is all about. The similarity is a matter of degree rather than of kind, in that the Holy Spirit is both the common source of the Revelation to an Apostle and the source of the illumination of that same Revelation to a reader. I think if you nowhere else in this commentary saw the Ministry of Paul as both writer of Scriptures and chief editor of the NT, you should begin to see it here. The call to any Apostle is the call to write books of the Word of God even as the call to a
Writing Prophet of the OT was the call to write Scripture; and what was unique in the call of Paul to the ministry of Apostleship was the fullness of his understanding of the plan of God, not only for one body of believers of Jews and Gentiles, but also of the place the complete Bible Canon, of which Jews were made custodians, would play in the Fulness of the Gentiles as the Gospel was preached to every nation.

The Form that the Gnostic Special Revelations were Taking

We spoke of how gnosticism was a movement, much like the "God told me" charismatic movement of this day and much like those of the time of Carroll, that claimed special and extrabiblical revelations to supplement and replace the written Word of God which can come only through the 12 Apostles. We know the problems it creates in the kingdom and church today, and in the time of Carroll, and know we come to the problems that it was creating in the early churches like Ephesus, Laodicea, and Colosse (Colossians 2:16-23): (a) little matters of formality and imposed regulations for worship were placed forward as important as true worship, like certain food or drink, or about a special festival, new moon, or Sabbath--all more in the category of II Timothy as proofs of "a form of godliness without the power thereof {these are shadows not the substance}; (b) false delight and humility in the worship of angels which God never intended to be worshipped as Hebrews makes clear; (c) "not holding fast to the Head", that Head of the church is of course Christ, and any time that Christ is not allowed to run the local church, we have a practice of extrabiblical revelations; (d) don't subject yourselves to special regulations that are man-made like "don't touch, don't taste, and don't handle" as these are "according to the commandments and doctrines of men" (2:22); and then a summary in 2:23.

"These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom {you know how when you hear these special revelations on TV, etc. they do have that "appearance of wisdom", with a real problem for the hearer to tell where they have departed from the Written Word to get into special revelations--of course a key is always words like "God told me", or "God gave me a word", or "The Spirit told me" as in the day of Carroll) in self-imposed religion (you must see much of this from the itching ears teachers of TV and best selling books is SELF-IMPOSED religion, and if that is what you want that is exactly what you can get; however remember that it can "cheat you of your reward" (2:18)), false humility (this is certainly a humility that we do not want), and neglect of the body (it is not even physically healthy as God has ordained these meats and drinks for our own welfare), but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh." (Colossians 2:23)

NOTE: Brother and brothers if we want the SBC back of our youth, we must get back to the Bible and the Christ of Carroll and Truett and Scarborough, of Dr. R. G. Lee; and of the Apostle Paul.

18–3: The One Baptism Presentation of Colossians 2 and 3.
As we come near the end of the 14 letters of the Apostle Paul, near the end of this commentary on “Believe and be baptized”, the great commission and one of the prime messages of the Apostles as well as the topical subject of this commentary, as we make our last effort to deal with the doctrine of the One Baptism in Colossians and Ephesians, we are also talking about the general subject of the 5 commentaries entitled LEARN CHRIST FORM THE APOSTLES AND PROPHETS. That is the twin subject of both how to learn Christ, and how to do it according to the only designated manner by God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, according to the Revealed words through the Apostles and Prophets.

1. Not only is the One Baptism fundamental and consistent throughout all the letters of the Apostle Paul, of Peter, and the whole Bible; but here in Colossians 2 and 3 it permeates every other doctrine as you will see it does when we come later to the Seven major ONEs and doctrines of Ephesians 4:4-6. Salvation, another way to say the One Baptism, depends on all the other six major doctrines; and salvation for every man that believes is the natural outgrowth of all the other doctrines. God is the God of salvation; God the Holy Spirit is the effecting cause of salvation in the world and in our hearts; Jesus Christ is the author and finished of the faith of our salvation; and so on and on as we will discuss in the seven ONEs of Ephesians. If Ephesians is a summary of all Paul has previously written, and I believe it is, then the Seven ONEs of Ephesians is a summary of both Ephesians and all previously written by Paul where he quoted so often to prove the ASI, that is that “no Scripture is of any private interpretation”. You interpret I Corinthians and Hebrews and Romans in the ASI light of the OT; then you interpret Colossians, where there are no OT quotes in the light of the previously 10 written epistles of Paul; and then you come to interpret all in Ephesians. Here, even as in I and II Corinthians and as at the beginning of Ephesians 1, Paul challenges the reader and the hearer for “understanding”, understanding on “the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ”. You Greeks of Asia Minor and elsewhere, in Corinth and Athens and Thessalonica, want some wisdom; okay, find your wisdom from God and Christ as the Source, find it in the mystery God has made known through such foolish Apostles as Paul.

“...and attaining to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” (Colossians 2:2,3)

Look to Christ in whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden!

2. Go back to the fundamentals of Christ and the Word rather than “anyone should deceive you with persuasive words” (2:4).

“As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him”. (Colossians 2:6)
You know how “to walk” and “walking” is a favorite word of both Colossians and Ephe-
sians as a description for our style of living and life, and before we conclude this
final chapter we must summarize much of how both books tell us of “how to walk”.

(1). “Rooted and built up in Him” (2:7) which will take you out of the category of
seed planted on stony ground where there is no root so that when any adversity
comes because of the Word, there is stumbling.

(2). “Established in the faith” (2:7) as on a solid rock and foundation.

(3). “as you have been taught” (2:7), much like the LEARN CHRIST of Ephesians
4:21 where “if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth
is in Jesus”, the teachings of the Apostles, Jesus, and the Prophets.

(4). “Abounding in it with thanksgiving (2:7), the “it” being abounding in the faith;
by the way the One Faith.

3. If you have been “raised with Christ”, the second phase of the One Baptism and
after death with Christ, then a natural outcome of such an inward commitment and
experience is: “seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the
right hand of God”. (Colossians 3:1)

(1). “Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth”. (Colossians 3:2)
The One Baptism causes this natural focus above where Christ is as in the ONE Bap-
tism “you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God” (2:4).

(2). As the final outcome of the One Baptism will come glorification in your life,
that final aspect of salvation, where you will appear like Christ at His Second Com-
ing.

“When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in
glory.” (Colossians 3:4)

(3). What dies with Christ is the initial phase of the One Baptism?
The members which are on this earth: fornication, uncleanness {this is an unclean-
ness, not the filth of the flesh in the sense that water can wash it off, but is
an uncleanness that the death with Christ, much like repentance, can wash off},
passion, evil desire, and covetousness which is idolatry {often today you as a
church member and an American may not think that you commit idolatry, but
according to the Word of God if you covet anything--say your neighbor’s wife
or house or job, etc.--then you are also an Idolater}.

(4). Put off all these things, and again we recognize the similarity to Ephesians:
anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth, and do not lie.
As your One Baptism of salvation continues in Christ, the process we like to call
sanctification, an opposite of no root and stumbling and the cares of this world,
these bad identifications with death should fall by the wayside.
(5). Ah, the famous "new man" of Colossians and Ephesians.

"...and have put on the new man, who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all in all." (Colossians 3:10,11)

"...and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness." (Ephesians 4:24)

18-4: How To Walk?

Whatever you do in the home and at work under supervision, do all "in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him" (3:17) based on Colossians 3:18 through 4:18.

1. How to Walk in Ephesians?

   (1). Walk by "not grieving the Holy Spirit" (Ephesians 4:25-32)

   Goodness we will be without the Holy Spirit here on earth soon enough well into the Falling Away, as according to Daniel "the power of the holy people is completely shattered", having then only the Spirit that remains in our heart. Let us not also cause His withdrawal from our own heart!

   (2) Walk in Love (Ephesians 5:1-7).

   Walk in love as Christ also loved us and gave Himself for us.

   (3). Walk in Light (Ephesians 5:8-14).

   Part of the rising from the dead of the One Baptism, a matter also of waking up to the differences between light and darkness, is that as you ask for it "Christ will give you light." (Wow, there are a lot of implications of the Gospel of the One Baptism; far too many, to give over to the unnecessary and man-made requirements of extrabiblical revelations.)

   (4). Walk in Wisdom (Ephesians 5:15-21).

   Walk with a positive goal and goals and then circumspectly, carefully choosing each decision and each path of your life, asking for and receiving the guidance of Christ and the Spirit.

   (5). Walk in the pattern and guidelines of marriage, church, and supervision as originally given by God, as reinforced by Christ, as echoed again here in the Word of God through the Apostle Paul (Ephesians 5:22-6:9).

   (6). Live daily by each day putting on practically the whole armor of God (Ephesians 6:10-20).

2. How to Walk in Colossians?
You will find even as the whole content of Ephesians and Colossians are similar, so also is the how to walk of Colossians similar to the how to walk of Ephesians.

(1). Put on tender mercies, kindness, humility (oh, there is that word again), meekness {now, how can a civil service worker or a military man be meek today if he wants to get anywhere, although bearing the name of Christ--I jest according to what the men's Sunday school class at Lexington Park told me}, longsuffering, bearing with one another and forgiving one another. (Colossians 3:12,13)

18-5: One Hope of the Christian Calling, the Message of Ephesians 4:1-16.

It is easy to get lost in the details of Ephesians 4:1-16, not recognizing the connection between the first words of “walk worthy of the calling with which you were called” to the last words of a (1) unity of individual growth “to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ”; and (2) unity of church growth (a) the growth the whole body, “joined and knit together” as every joint (every member and every gift and every grace), and (b) with every member of the total body doing their share, the whole body grows.

Rich Warren with his now famous “protect the church” concept based on the seemingly rapid success of an isolated local church called Saddleback has missed completely the difference between a stable unity built on borders and extrabiblical requirements and a dynamic and growing unity as we find in the message of 4:1-16. For one thing you can only have the peace and unity of 4:1-16 when it is the total church body: it can not possible apply to such an isolated church as at Saddleback. Not only do they not have and can not have all the members--recall the arguments of I and II Corinthians--where it takes all the toes, fingers, eyes, and ears of the larger body of Christ, alias all the gifts, all the graces, and all the members.

As we consider again Ephesians 4:1-16, let us proceed in such a manner as to keep the first connected to the last, the one calling to the one church fulfillment in this life. {Remembering that Paul’s knows that this will be his last if not one of his last opportunities in the writing of Scriptures to promote understanding of how the call of one Christian can find the dream of the fulfillment of “growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love”.) What Warren seeks is “protection”: what the Apostle Paul seeks is “promotion”! With all the denominations and churches in America, is it futile to even have such a dream, muchless to expect to realize it. Just the vast denominational organizations alone would prevent such a fulfillment in the name of survival of their own positions and organization. Yet, I think, the message is that we can operate in our own “hope of the one calling” as if it is so and as if it is possible! It will not happen on earth, especially during this time of the Falling Away as the gap between church members and local churches and the Christ widens; but our focus comes more on the kingdom of Christ where it should be in the first place, and on the church which is the “assembly of the firstborn written in heaven”. Mr. Warren, one overwhelming reason that you can never have the unity in your local
church ordained for only the unity of the one church is that you will never be able to contain the Apostle Paul alone to Saddleback, much less Peter and James and John, nor will you be able to have all gifts and graces in your church, nor will you even be able to say we have all the members of the physical body in our local church, surely you will at least be missing one finger, toe, eye, or brain that is in another local church.

1. First and last, from “endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” to “may grow in all things into Him who is the head—Christ”. This was not even achievable during the time of Paul as we know all the divisions and disputes in local churches and lack of unity with other first century churches. Yet this is our goal. This is what we work for; and as we work for it and make it a primary goal, we will come much closer than if we ignore it completely, or work against it. Any local church can, or any denomination as far as that goes, can just go so far in the achievement of this goal, although each may start with the “one hope of the calling”. A local church like Saddleback or Prestonwood gets quickly to their limitation, not based on the quantity of their members, but based on the quality of their members in having all the graces. A small local church with all the gifts, graces, and physical members could come closer to achievement of the goal; however, it is still impossible for any one local church to get all the way to the goal.

2. First and last, from “with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love” to “speaking the truth in love” in the larger body.

Something no local church or church pastor wants to admit, that he and his local church are accountable to the total church body. He needs their approval for what he does and says, as does every deacon and semi-member of that local church. You see, though, if you think you have all the truth, then this becomes difficult.

3. First and last, from even as there is one hope of your calling with the inherent unity of one body and one Spirit (4:4) to “for the edifying of the body of Christ” (4:12).

4. First and last, from “one Lord, one faith, one baptism” (4:5) to “till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God” (4:13).

5. First and last, beginning and fulfillment, from “one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all” (4:6) to “for the equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry” (4:12).

6. First and last, beginning and fulfillment, from “to each of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ’s gift” (4:7) to “a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (4:13b).

7. First and last, beginning and fulfillment, from “He gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers” (4:11) to “that we should no longer be children (be children in our group), tossed to and from and
Volume 3: Believe and Be Baptized

carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting..." (4:14).

18-6: A "Learn Christ" equivalent in Colossians of Ephesians 4:17-24?
This is critical as it is maintained by this writer than "Learn Christ" is the main theme of Ephesians even as it is used as half of the main theme of the five LEARN CHRIST commentaries, LEARN CHRIST FROM THE APOSTLES AND PROPHETS.

1. The LEARN CHRIST of Ephesians.

It is impossible to learn Christ properly if you learn any of Christ by the examples of the other Gentiles around you, church members or not. You just can not walk or live like the majority of Gentile Americans.

"This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness." (Ephesians 4:19)

Even if you desire to be nice to your American neighbors, this is the adequate description of all who have not made a wheat and sheep commitment to learning Christ: (1) although wisdom seeking often and miracle seeking also it is the walk of a Gentiles without Christ, though American and based on the American Mind and character, it is a "futility of the mind"; (2) dark understanding is hard to measure but it is there in the American Gentile mind; (3) alienated from the life of God, and that is most often obvious to you as God is never spoken of, thought of, or considered, though they may be called "good people" and may be a community of good ole boys; (4) yes, it is based on the ignorance of God, Christ, and the Bible; (5) but their heart was blind before their minds became ignorant as people do more what they want to, based on the heart, than they do what they should, based on the mind; (6) long ago your American Gentile neighbors ceased to have real feelings on these spiritual matters of God, Christ, and the Bible; and (7) becoming the victims of lewdness, uncleanness, and greediness.

You must be different from the American Society and community around you.

“But you have not so learned Christ, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus...” (Ephesians 4:20,21)

How do you learn Christ? (1) You must hear Christ for yourself, personally and in your own heart; (2) You must be taught by Christ, as He and God the Father knock on your door and come in to live with you and teach you; and (3) as the truth is in Jesus, the job of communicating the truth to you today is the job of the Holy Spirit. And we will explain these aspects from the teachings of Christ Himself below as given in
John 14. It revolves around three apostles—Thomas, Philip, and Judas (not Iscariot); around three questions asked by these 3 apostles near the end of Jesus life; and in particular on the three answers of Jesus Himself to the three questions.

2. The LEARN CHRIST of Christ and of John 14.

   (1). Question #1 from the Apostle Thomas.
   "Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?" (John 14:5)

   (2). Answer from Jesus to the question #1 of Thomas.
   "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one come to the Father except through Me." (John 14:6)

   (3). Question #2 from the Apostle Philip.
   "Philip said to Him, 'Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us.'" (John 14:8)

   (4). Answer from Jesus to the question #2 of Philip.
   "Jesus said to him, 'Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves." (John 14:9-11)

   (5). Question # 3 from the Apostle Judas.
   "Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?" (John 14:22)

   (6). Answer from Jesus to the third question from the Apostle Judas.
   "Jesus answered and said to him, 'If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make our home with him." (John 14:23)

3. The LEARN CHRIST of Colossians.

Since I hope we have come to believe that Colossians was written after Ephesians, then with what we have of the Learn Christ in Colossians will have to be the bottom line for us. We can recognize where the passage is in Colossians by identification with the new man of Ephesians, with the putting on and putting off.

"...that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind (yes, your mind has a spirit), and that you put on the new man which was
Volume 3: Believe and Be Baptized

created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.” (Ephesians 4:22-24)

The beginning of the end Colossians version is in Colossians 3:10 and following.

“...and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him...” (Colossians 3:10)

(1). Put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, and longsuffering (3:12)

(2). Bearing with one another and forgiving one another even when there is a legitimate complaint for that is the way Christ forgave you (3:13).

(3). The individual bond of personal and individual perfection is love, so put on this bond of love (3:14).

(4). Let the peace of God rule in your heart as that is the calling of the one body (3:15a).

(5). Ever and in always and in all words of prayer, be thankful to God (3:15b).

(6). Allow the word of Christ and of God (the teachings of Christ and of God in the Word) dwell inside of you like God and Christ want to dwell inside of you, and teach you, but make sure that it is based on the revealed wisdom that is in the Word, not any extrabiblical wisdom (3:16a).

(7). Then you can teach and worship properly (3:16b).

(8). Whatever you do in word and deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ (3:17).


By the way, three of the last epistles from Paul--Philemon, Colossians, and Philippians will not be covered in this volume as they were covered as part of the harmony between the little epistles of the Apostle John with some of the last epistles from Paul under the chapter headings of "The Security of the Believer" in the second volume of the LEARN CHRIST FROM THE APOSTLES AND PROPHETS commentaries, the "Christ for Individuals" that deals primarily with the five books written by the Apostle John. Those five, which I like to call the new Pentateuch since there are five and because of the preface of the book of John where "while the law came by Moses, grace and truth came by the Lord Jesus Christ, of course, are in the order most likely written if not distributed of Revelation, the Gospel of John, and the three little epistles of I, II, and III John. And why does it take 19 chapters to cover only 14 epistles of Paul which he personally wrote; that is with the three of Philoemion, Colossians, and Philippians not covered in this volume for deference to volume 2, why does it take 19 chapters to cover 11 epistles. Well, I could blame it on the wordiness of Paul, and myself, especially in I and II Corinthians where three chapters were required to be adequate on Bible understanding, Revelation and wisdom, and with
many other problems caused by an inadequate concept of where Revelation came from and how they came; likewise by the necessity to include some of the Old Testament from which Paul so often quoted in two chapters, one on Isaiah and one on “The Message of the Writing Prophets”, you guessed it most of the 16 major and minor Prophets. Always, the effort has been to keep in total context, that of the OT and NT, that of the book of Acts, and to follow the flow of the life of the Apostle Paul as he carried out his commission as chief editor of the NT, a Ministry of an Apostle that was called and commissioned and trained by the Ascended Christ Himself to complete the profitable work of the Hebrew and Jewish people as “custodians of the oracles of God”. A part of the Ministry of an Apostle, the Apostle Paul, that has reached more people and exerted more influence on the churches and Christians; that is as chief editor of the NT, than has even the missionary journeys of Paul. (In the first few centuries were converted in the short period after the Crucifixion, 5,000 at the first day of Pentecost after the Resurrection.) Paul would be the Apostle of choice by the Ascended Christ, and His “alter ego”—the Holy Spirit—to take the Gospel of the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ to the Gentiles; at the same time, explaining what both happened to the Jews as the former chosen nation of God, and how the Gentiles would with the “Fullness of the Gentiles” take their place in the kingdom of God. {That mantle of Gentile leadership we know from history and church history fell on the United States, until recently, as America became the leader among the believers of the world; and as the US sent missionaries to every nation of the world in obedience to the great commission.}

“Believe and be baptized”, words from Jesus Himself, best summarize the message that Paul delivered to the Roman Empire. It also best summarizes the many messages that Paul delivered in Jewish synagogues and Gentile houses throughout the Empire in two missionary journeys; and in the most significant and lasting influence in the Gentile world with a few Jews, the writing of 14 New Testament books and the sponsorship of 3 more. You know how a decision made by early church fathers about a New Testament Canon included the criterion of authorship by an apostle or an associate of an Apostle; but a little known fact which can only come out of the internal evidences of the New Testament is the supposition that Paul left manuscripts and parchments {those same books and parchments that Paul requested Timothy to bring to prison in Rome while Dr. Luke was there, and at the same time to bring John Mark since he was profitable to Paul’s ministry as chief editor of the New Testament (II Timothy 4:11-13)} for John Mark and Dr. Luke to write respectively Mark, Luke, and Acts. Stop to think about it a few moments since hindsight is better than foresight; and since we can look back over the actual history of the last two thousand years, realizing that the total influence the books of the Apostle Paul is much greater, by any measure you might chose, than the influence of his missionary journeys. Instead of extending approximately
one century as did the influence of His immediate life and journeys, the 14 letters with three supplements have extended for over two thousand years. And to think that this was not in the plan of God and the implementation in the kingdom of Christ is as foolish as overlooking the ways God has worked and continues to work in history as the Great Maker of History, the same truth noted by the Apostle James at the great Jerusalem conference when after quoting from Amos 9:11,12, says “known to God from eternity are all His works.” (Acts 15:18)

"Believe and be baptized" best summarizes the message that is needed today to explain why the local churches and denominations are about to be overwhelmed by the tares as in the Falling Away of II Thessalonians and Daniel, as “the power of the holy people is completely shattered” (Daniel 12:7). We in the kingdom of God and of Christ have never learned the details of the parable of the seed and the sower, or some of the details of that parable has become part of the time and doctrine we will no longer be endured during the Falling Away. Remember the part where church members, whose hearts like seed sown on stony ground, receive initially the Word with so much enthusiasm (the exact words of the explanation of Jesus in Mark 4:13-20 is “immediately receive it with gladness”) that it is interpreted by the evangelist and local church as a conversion, then how Jesus explains that, having no root and because of persecutions and tribulations for the word’s sake, they endure only for a time and stumble. Like the citizens of Jerusalem during the day of the Prophet Jeremiah, who lived as they wanted during the week then came to the temple on the Sabbath to say “We Are Safe” (Jeremiah 7:10), we also think we are safe in our beautiful, comfortable, and many church buildings, not realizing that the bad behavior of church members, like of the temple attendees, has overtaken us (II Timothy 3:1-9), that our intolerance of sound doctrine has sealed the God determined fate of our demise (II Timothy 4:1-4), that we have completed our usefulness as a nation to God in the evangelization of the world and in the Fullness of the Gentiles, and that our pride in Bible knowledge, Bible teachers, and preachers has really become more the vast “heaping up of teachers with itching ears” (II Timothy 4:1-4) of the end time false prophets and teachers more than any signs of revival. What we really have in our nation is not signs for encouragement among the few truly members of God’s kingdom who remain, sort of like the thousands who had not bowed to Baal during the time of Elijah, is a like in all the times of the OT Prophets a lot of false prophets saying peace when there is no peace, a lot of pastors and teachers convincing their audiences that they are the people of God when there is only a remnant of those people left in the whole nation, and an innumerable heaping up of misleading teachers that help place a fortress of protection and security, and by the way ignorance, around the so-called "people of God" of many churches and denominations.
We are far too “tolerant” today and in our country to admit that Satan has placed the tares in the churches and kingdom for the very purpose of subversion and destruction. Look again carefully at the parable of tares and wheat taught by Jesus and as explained by Jesus to His disciples, and if you can not find eyes to see and ears to hear this parable with explanation then you like most religious leaders of Jesus’ day do not have the spiritual understanding of the ASI (Authorized Semi-Public Interpretation). What you see and hear Jesus saying is that “the enemy who sowed them is the devil” (Matthew 13:39), and if the Devil sowed those tares in the churches as well as in the larger kingdom then like the nature of Satan Himself as destructive and as a liar, then the tares in the local churches and denominations have the same goals as Satan himself, that of THE LIE and lies, deception, and destruction. Of course, if your sound doctrine has never progressed to the extent of believing in Satan as the prince and power of this world, then your doctrine will also “be slow to believe” all the Prophets and Apostles said of both Jesus and Satan!

“Believe and be baptized” is the message that Jesus wants to spread His influence in this time as in the time of the 12 Apostles. It is the complete message that will go beyond initial “belief” only which can not save to the “uttermost”; that is, can not save to the extent of a corresponding inner change which is nothing less than a 9 month new birth, a progressing sanctification, and then a glorification that is a real visual of Christ in the finalized kingdom of the new heavens and new earth! As I told a Chinese friend recently, one who was surprised that a simple belief could bring salvation, there are two “beliefs” in the Bible as the Apostle James makes clear. There is one belief which the devil have and tremble, knowing the facts of hell and their God determined fate there and of their fall; and then there is another faith, one which shows itself in works and that is a righteousness by faith apart from works. This later faith which saves and coverts all the way, and with an adequate concept and more importantly practice of a 9 month new birth as contrasted to an instantaneous new birth of the fundamentalists and of the immediate joy of the seed on stony ground, is the “believe” of Jesus that is coupled with the power of God acting on that individual belief summarized as “and be baptized”. Sorry if you thought “and be baptized” related to water baptism. NO, NO, and NO, NO, NO. It is the “baptism” that Paul speaks of most often in the book of Romans; it is the baptism that Paul writes of most often in his 14 letters; it is the “one baptism” of Ephesians; and most importantly it is the “and be baptized” that Jesus gives to all His disciples as a great commission. If you do not see this on the positive side of Mark 16:16 where you have the two divisions in “believe and be baptized”, one you do in the exercise of your freedom of choice and then the second which God does on you in response to the proper belief and attitude of repentance and belief which when He sees, He starts an act of God in you; then you should see it in the negative side of Mark 16:16—that is, in the “but he who does not believe
Volume 3: Believe and Be Baptized

You know and I know if Jesus had made water baptism necessary for salvation, in spite of all seeing it as a work rather than of grace, he would have said something like, "but he who does not believe and be baptized will be condemned". Right, you know it to be true even though you must face up to an onslaught on unsound doctrine to the contrary.

Popularity of Bible teaching, like a best-seller, is now a bad sign; and the popularity of many Bible teachers, both male and female, is a sign of how far we are into itching ears and the time of itching ears teachers as in "the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables." (II Timothy 4:3,4) I would have to say, like Jesus said of His first disciples who at first would not endure the sound doctrine of His resurrection, that you "are slow to believe" the signs in your local churches, in the denominations, and in particular the signs of the warfare in the SBC, if you can not see in all this, and more, the signs of the Falling Away as given by the Apostle Paul and the Holy Spirit of God in the two verses of II Timothy 4:3,4. What you do see in your local churches, denominations, and the larger kingdom of God is: (1) a vast heaping up of popular Bible teachers in conferences, on television, and in books and on the radio {have you ever seen or heard of so many Bible teachers and preachers, and does it not for even one second make you stop to think of how Jesus and the Apostles, especially Paul, told you that there would be many false prophets and teachers—and where do you think those are coming from}; (2) the motivation for such church members is twofold—(a) they have passed beyond ignorance of sound doctrine to a point of no return where they "will not endure sound doctrine", and this intolerance toward sound doctrine is aided by an increased popularity in the churches and denominations which they detect so that they "can come out", so to speak; and (b) it is motivated by "their own desires" for comfort, security, inertia—in that they have a desire for things to stay like they know them, they like their lack of root convictions, they have become comfortable with their cares of this world and the things of this world, they like the deceitfulness of riches of the Gospel of Prosperity and the corollary of success; (3) the turning of ears away from truth while like the religious leaders of Jesus' day practicing vain worship with a substitution of the teachings of men for the doctrines of God came so slow and gradual with years as to be unnoticed, and they like the people of Plato who lived under ground so that they though the reflected light to be the real light, the vast number of church members today do not know that they have turned into fables.

Jesus said certain "signs" would follow along with the believers.
“And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.” (Mark 16:17,18)

Instead of these signs in our churches today, we have the signs of the Falling Away such as (1) distortions of God’s concept of marriage among church members; (2) the taking of God’s name in vain as a common practice among church members so that like in Romans 1, men consider by themselves as teachers of the law have become something else, the name of God is blasphemed throughout the world; (3) the popularity of Bible teachers with itching ear teachings, especially as related to the Gospel of Prosperity, success, the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, in churches and outside in the larger kingdom; (4) the rebellion against the authority of Christ in churches as trusted in the pastors with the unheard of large number, in the name of democracy, who run off their pastors, choosing ones less demanding in the preaching of the Word; (5) the accepted but bad church behavior of church members like that enumerated in II Timothy 3:1-9 where they exhibit a form of godliness but deny the power and presence of God; (6) the unrighteous and rebellious gap between churches and Christ that most see with any spiritual understanding at all; and (7) the warfare between “fundamentalists” and “moderates”, between the Texas State Baptist Convention and the present leadership of the SBC, a warfare that started in this largest Protestant denomination in the world 20 years ago as Criswell announced for his cohorts like Stanley, Rogers, Falwell, and LeHaye that “they would keep fighting until one side or the other won”, and which the fundamentalists did until they took control of the SBC, the kind of fighting which shows a bad spirit even if you can not see the non-conservative nature of the fundamentalist’s superficial, hunt and peck method of Bible interpretation, a method based more on Scofield notes than on real ASI Bible. {You don’t think this has hurt the SBC; well, it is all over in a matter of a short time for the SBC unless the real southern Baptists rise up to take control of their own convention, which can hardly take place during the time of the Falling Away as the Holy Spirit is withdrawn and as the power of the holy people is completely shattered. In other words, don’t plan for it to happen!}

Granted that some of the signs which follow legitimate believers mentioned above are still going on with a very small scale and hidden from most, even like the healing work of God that Jesus said He saw God doing before His life on earth and which is still going on. Granted likewise that many tares and the leaders of tares have learned to simulate the signs of Jesus, like Jannes and Jambres to simulate the works of God up to a certain point, and then join the people of God when they can no longer simulate. However these signs did follow the life, teaching and preaching of the Apostle Paul as we have looked at in this volume from the book of Acts.