



*“What you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”*

*- 2 Timothy 2:2*

Book 9:

# Major Bible Doctrines

TTI Staff

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*TTI Staff Team*

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This workbook is the ninth of ten workbooks which assist in equipping church planting leaders to start churches that saturate a region and help reach every man, woman and child with the Good News of our Lord. Below, is the list of this initial Curriculum.

## TTI Curriculum

Workbook Number/Course:

1. Hermeneutics
2. Homiletics
3. Church Planting (New Testament – Acts, Evangelism, Discipleship, Spiritual Life, T4T)
4. Old Testament 1
5. Old Testament 2
6. New Testament Gospels
7. New Testament Pastoral Epistles
8. New Testament General Letters
9. Major Bible Doctrines
10. Apologetics-Church History-Spiritual Warfare

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Introduction: Preliminary Questions & Thoughts
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## 1. What is Theology?

Suppose someone in your village or city asks you what you believe. You begin to tell them about Jesus and His love for them. You quote Bible verses to them. You answer their questions. What are you doing? You are doing *theology*.

- A. *Theology* is *the science of God*, or *the study of God*. It is the Christian discipline that studies God and His works that are revealed in the Bible in order to apply God's truth to life so as to live for God more consistently, love Him more deeply, and serve Him more effectively.

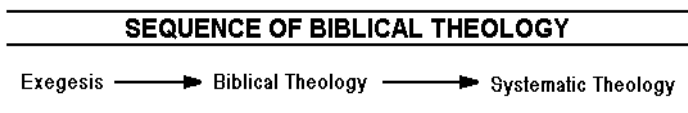
Think about it: *NOTHING* could be more exciting than to study about our wonderful God who has saved us and called us into His ministry, to be on mission with Him to seek and save the lost!

Historically there three are different branches of theology: <sup>1</sup>

- *Biblical Theology* is the study of what the Biblical authors taught and the progress of revelation throughout the Scriptures.
  - *Historical Theology* is the study of what the Christian Church has believed and taught since the first century.
  - *Systematic Theology* is the orderly arrangement of all that the Bible teaches about God and His work on any given topic.
- B. Systematic theology is important to the Church because it gives us a big picture to help us think about God and His purposes in order to live godly lives and engage the various religious beliefs around us.
- C. This study is a basic overview of systematic theology to give a big picture of who God is and what God is doing in our

world to glorify Himself.

- D. Notice the sequence from Exegesis to Biblical Theology to Systematic Theology:



Biblical theology seeks to determine what the Biblical writers said concerning a theological issue, whereas systematic theology pulls together and summarizes what the entire Bible says, giving a doctrinal discussion from a contemporary viewpoint.<sup>2</sup>

## 2. What is doctrine?

- A. The word *doctrine* means *sound teaching*. For our purpose, it is helpful to define doctrine as *what the Bible teaches about particular topics*. For example, what does the Bible teach about sin, creation, or death? Doctrine seeks to trace the main theological themes of Scripture along the storyline of the Bible.<sup>3</sup>
- B. A house built with blocks can illustrate the relationship between doctrine and theology. Doctrines are the building blocks used to build the house, and theology is the house, for it is a more complete picture of God, His purposes and what He is doing.
- C. This survey of major Biblical doctrines contains chapters on individual doctrines. But, as you work through this book, you will see that the chapters relate to one another, and together, they form a picture of God and His purposes for the world that we live in.



### 3. The Relationship between Philosophy, Theology and Doctrine:

- A. Philosophy is the study of the order and purposes of the world that we live in, so that we might become wise and know how to live in our world.
- B. Philosophy is not a negative discipline, as some people might think. It is simply the process of interpreting and understanding the meaning and purpose of life. In fact, it can and should be pursued from a Christian perspective, although sometimes it is not. God has given us a mind to use, His Word to know, and a world in which we live. As a result, it is legitimate to consider how our world works and its purpose from God's perspective.
- C. Further, sometimes philosophy serves Christian theology by supplying apologetic arguments to help answer some objections against the Christian faith and by using reason and logic to better understand what God has revealed in Scripture.
- D. The truth is we all do philosophy. We all make observations about the world around us, and make conclusions about the reasons things happen and the purpose for them.
- E. Theology and philosophy have a mutual relationship.
  - Theology uses reason and logic to help understand God's revelation.
  - Christian philosophy uses God's revealed Word to help us better understand the order and purpose for God's World.

### 4. Foundation of Christian Theology

- A. The foundations of Christian theology are that *God exists* and that *He has spoken to us*. In the first two chapters, we will dig deeper into these two ideas. But here it is important to note that we begin this study with the assumption that God exists, and we can know Him because He has spoken to us through His Word.

B. Christianity teaches that God is Triune (Trinity), which means, God is one and in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. This view of God is different than any other view of God in the world. No other religion teaches that their god is one and exists in three persons. For some people, this creates a challenge for believing that Christianity is the truth. Their criticisms have been varied, but here is a sample of some of the objections:

- It is polytheism: Christianity teaches that there are multiple gods.
- It is a logical impossibility: The doctrine of the Trinity (three-in-one) is a contradiction.

Christian theologians have taught through the centuries that the Trinity is not a problem for Christianity, but rather it is a strength of Christianity. It might be that we have a hard time understanding how God can be three and one. But the doctrine of the Trinity explains a lot about the nature and character of God. It tells us that God is relational (*Let us make man in Our image*) and that He is majestic.

Because God is Triune, He can be the foundation for all things. God experiences within the Trinity perfect love, joy, relationship, communication, etc. Because He is indeed perfect in everything, He could create a world where we communicate, love, relate with each other, etc. Further, because God is perfect and does not lack anything within the Trinity, He has the power to sustain the world that He created.

## 5. Why Should You Study Theology?

A. The simple answer is that God has created the world and He is doing something in this world for His purposes, and because you were created by God and for God, you have the responsibility to know about Him and what He is doing.

- B. Study theology for your worship. The better you know God, the more passionate your worship of Him will be.
- C. Study theology for your faith. Knowledge of God and His purposes will help in times of hardship, doubt, worry, and fear.
- D. Study theology to be more effective in sharing the Gospel with people in your community. Everyone has a view of the world: what the meaning of life is, what the problem with the world is, what the world's solution is. By studying theology, we get a clear understanding of how God's Word answers these basic questions, so we can present God's truth to people who do not know Him.
- E. Study theology to teach your church and your family more about God.
- F. Study theology to be prepared to counsel and comfort the sick and hurting with the truth of God.
- G. Study theology to be involved in God's mission. From the beginning of the book of Genesis, He has been on mission. He invites us to join Him in that mission. Studying theology will deepen your convictions about God's mission and your involvement in it.

## 6. How Should You Study Theology? <sup>4</sup>

*There is no higher activity in which the mind may be engaged than the pursuit of a knowledge of God. Since man through the exercise of his mind alone can never come to a knowledge of God (1 Cor. 1:19-20; 2:14), he is dependent upon the revelation of Himself which God has given to him (1 Cor. 2:9-10).<sup>5</sup>*

Therefore you should approach the study of theology with a grateful heart and a strong dependence on the leadership of the Holy Spirit as you study.

You should study theology:

A. With Prayer and Persistence (*Psa. 119:18; 1 Cor. 2:14*).

- Learning is hard work, and it can be discouraging to learn something new. Most of the time, learning requires time for information to “sink in.”
- Learning theology is a spiritual activity. We are seeking spiritual understanding, which only comes through God, so we must pray that God will open our eyes to help us understand His truth.
- The Apostle Paul was referring to these very things when he wrote out the words of a prayer he was praying for the believers at the church at Ephesus:

*Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe (Eph. 1:15-19).*

B. With Humility and Obedience (*1 Pet. 5:5; Heb. 5:11-6:2*).

- God does not give grace to the proud. But He gives abundant grace to the humble. Humility is required to know God. One test of humility is whether we are willing to obey God whenever we learn what His will is (see *John 7:17*).

C. With the Use of Reason.

- We do not learn about God from our reason. God makes Himself known to us through His Word. God gives us the ability to reason for a purpose. With reason, we take what God has revealed in Scripture about Himself, and we seek to understand it and apply it.

D. With Rejoicing and Praise.

- Theology is for doxology and devotion—that is, the praise of God and the practice of godliness. It should therefore be presented in a way that brings awareness of the divine presence. Theology is at its healthiest when it is consciously under the eye of the God of whom it speaks, and when it is singing to His glory.<sup>6</sup>
- The Bible teaches that the knowledge of God leads to worship, which results in joy and praise to God.

*Your testimonies I have taken as a heritage forever, for they are the rejoicing of my heart (Psa. 119:111).*

- Notice what the Apostle Peter says as he wrote to believers in the first century who were undergoing severe trials and tests. His words were certainly an encouragement to them – and they should be encouraging to us as well.

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of your souls (1 Pet. 1:3-9).*

- Did you see what Peter said in this passage? In these verses there are numerous references to knowing God,

knowing the truths about our salvation, and knowing the inheritance that God has prepared for us. Such knowledge will cause us to have courage, perseverance and joy in the midst of the trials we endure.

## 7. How Will Knowing Theology Help Me as a Church Planter? <sup>7</sup>

- A. I will know God better. Because good *theology* describes God, His character and His person accurately, I can know Him more intimately as a result of studying theology. I will know more about the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit and therefore love them more, praise them better, and serve them more effectively.
- B. I will know the truth of God better. Knowing the doctrines of salvation, the Scriptures, sin, future things, and other areas will give me a more solid foundation in my study of the Bible.
- C. I will know the mission of God better. Because God is a missional God, I will be able to be on mission with Him better because I know His heart better.
- D. I will fulfill Paul's command to study to show myself approved unto God, a workman who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth (*2 Tim. 2:15*).
- E. I will have more confidence in my message. When you spend the time to understand Bible doctrine on a deeper level, it gives you greater confidence in what you believe.
- F. I will be able to preach with greater accuracy. You will notice a greater depth and power in your preaching as a result of knowing more of what the Bible teaches.
- G. I will be able to answer people's questions better. One of the greatest roles pastors play is helping their people understand the message of the Bible. Knowing Bible doctrine will give you answers to the questions people in your church will have.

H. I will be able to defend the faith better. There are many world-views today. There are many other religions in the world. Knowing Bible doctrine gives you the ability to answer opposing viewpoints and help people who don't yet know Jesus as their Savior to understand His message better.

Studying theology and Bible doctrine will change your life. It will cause you to know God better, trust Him more fully, and proclaim Him more boldly to others in your village or city. It will also provide a solid foundation and give you confidence as you plant and see Him grow a church for His glory.<sup>8</sup>

Are you ready to learn? Let's begin our study together!

## Chapter 1

### The Doctrine of God

*Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!  
How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!  
For who has known the mind of the LORD? Or who has become His  
counselor? Or who has first given to Him and it shall be repaid to  
him? For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom  
be glory forever. Amen- Romans 11:33-36*

#### Introduction

- A. There are three foundational questions for our study of God:
- Is there a God? (Does God exist?)
  - What is God like? (What are His attributes?)
  - How can we know Him? (Can He speak to us? Can we hear Him?)
- B. Every religion and worldview attempts to answer these questions. These answers are very important because they are the basis of how we know God and the relationship we have with Him.<sup>1</sup>

#### 1. God's Existence

- A. There is a God.
- Scripture proclaims that God exists in the very first verse of Genesis. *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth (Gen. 1:1).*
  - The consistent witness of Scripture throughout is God exists (See *Exo. 3:14; Isa. 43:10; Mat. 22:37; Joh. 1:1-3; Rom. 11:33-36*).
- B. Creation Proclaims that God Exists.<sup>2</sup>

*The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork (Psa. 19:1).*



- In the first chapter of Romans, Paul tells us that God has made the fact of His existence plain and evident to all humanity (1:19-20). The beauty and diversity of creation reveals to humanity that God exists. Who is it that sends the rain or sun, brings the night and the day, or separates the land from the sea? From the order of the seasons to the beauty of a flower to the variety of all the creatures, we see God's hand as the intelligent Creator. Even humanity bears testimony to God's existence by being made in His image.
- Creation bears witness to the existence of God. Creation is not part of His existence. God is not materially in nature. He is made known through His creative work. Nature is not God. It is God's creation, and its existence is dependent upon Him.
- The view that God is equal to and materially within nature is called pantheism. We will discuss this view a little later in this chapter, but at this point, it is important to be clear that whenever we are surrounded by nature, we are to appreciate God through what He has made. But we should not worship what He made.
- *Psalm 24:1* says, *the earth is the Lord's*, not *the earth is the Lord!*
- Scripture also tells us that there are many people who have no room for God in their thoughts and desires. Paul says in Romans 1 that humanity willfully ignores that the One, True God exists. An awareness of God is present in all of humanity, even though they deny Him.
  - Our natural desires for relationships.
  - Our desires to make sense out of life.
  - Our desire for something more are all indications in us that God exists. However, sin leads people to ignore that God does exist.
- *Psalm 10:4* says, *The wicked in his proud countenance does not seek God; God is in none of his thoughts.*

- Although fallen humanity sinfully rejects the truth of the God of the Bible, the Holy Spirit opens the eyes of Christians to see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (*1 Cor. 2:7-12; 2 Cor. 4:3-6*). Therefore, Christians can say that we believe God is really there. He has revealed Himself to humanity in many ways:
  - *Generally* by creation and providence.
  - *Verbally* in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.
  - *Personally* in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.
  - *Redemptively* through the work of His Word and Spirit.

### C. Three Traditional Arguments for the Existence of God:

While we do not need other reasons than Scripture to convince us that God exists, there are some additional arguments for the existence of God that can be very helpful in removing barriers to a belief in God. These arguments help demonstrate that it makes good sense to believe that God exists. We will briefly consider three of them.<sup>3</sup>

#### The Cosmological Argument

- The cosmological argument starts with the fact that every known thing in the universe has a cause. It reasons that because creation is, it must have a cause. Someone or something must have put it there. The cause of such a wonderful and beautiful creation can only be the Creator God. This argument is implied in Scriptures (*Heb. 3:4*).

#### The Teleological Argument

- The teleological argument (also known as The Watchmaker Argument), focuses on the order, harmony and design that exists in the universe, and argues that the design indicates the existence of a designer. Since the universe appears to be designed with a purpose, there

must be an intelligent and purposeful God who created it to function that way.

- This Scripture uses this type of reasoning. *Acts 14:17* says, *that God did not leave Himself without a witness, for He sent the rain and gave good food to eat.* When men and women around the world see the created universe, they instinctively know that Someone has to be its designer.
- To illustrate this argument: If you find a watch lying on the ground outside your village, you would assume rightly that a watchmaker made that watch. How else would the watch be made? It would then be proper to reason that if there was a watch, there must be a watchmaker!

### The Moral Argument

- This argument is based on the fact that in every society there is a universal, basic sense of right and wrong and the desire for justice to be maintained.
- The Scriptures prove this, saying the Gentiles, *who did not have God's law, by nature keep the law (Rom. 2:14).* Therefore, the conclusion is there must be an original, absolute source of right and wrong (i.e., God), which gives meaning to our sense of right and wrong.
- We are all social beings as well as moral beings. Just as birds naturally congregate in flocks, and bees in swarms, humanity forms communities. Within these communities, governments have originated. While not all governments are just and wholly good, the desire for moral order is universal and the reality of government is an example of this desire, although no earthly form of government completely satisfies our desires.

## 2. The Trinity

### A. The Doctrine of the Trinity Defined.

- The word *trinity* does not appear in the Bible, but the doctrine of the Trinity is clearly taught throughout the pages of the Bible. The basic teaching of this doctrine is that the Lord is one God in three Persons and three Persons in one God.
- The clear and consistent witness from the Old Testament is there is only one God, who created all things and has revealed Himself to His people and who should be worshipped.<sup>4</sup>

*Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one! (See Deu. 6:4; 4:35-39; Psalms. 86:10; Isa. 44:6-8; 45:5).*

- The New Testament also teaches that there is only one God.

*Therefore concerning the eating of things offered to idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is no other God but one (See 1 Cor. 8:4; Eph. 4:6; 1 Tim. 2:5).*

- There are hints of three divine persons in the Old Testament.

*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" (Genesis 1:26; 2 Sam. 23:2-3; Isa. 63:8-10).*

- The New Testament teaches that there are three divine Persons, who work together to bring about the salvation of God's people.

Two Biblical thinkers write, *In the Gospels we see the entire Trinity involved in Mary's conception of Jesus. Luke 1:35 says, "The angel answered her, The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High (Father) will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy— the Son of God (Jesus)." <sup>5</sup>*

- At the baptism of Jesus we witness one of the clearest pictures of the Trinity. Matthew 3:16-17 says, *"When Jesus was baptized, immediately He went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on Him; and behold, a voice from heaven said, This is my (Father) beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."* All three persons of the Trinity are present, and each one is doing something different: the Father is speaking, and the Son is being anointed by the Holy Spirit to be the Messiah and missionary. <sup>6</sup>
- Throughout Paul's writings we see the same theology of the Trinity:

*But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ (See 2 The. 2:13-14; Eph. 1:3-14; 1 Pet. 1:2).*

## B. The Doctrine of the Trinity Explained.

This doctrine of the Trinity may be explained with seven summary statements taken directly from Scripture. The first four describe God's divine unity, while the last three describe the diversity of the persons of the Godhead.

- The Father is God (*Joh. 6:27*).
- The Son is God (*Heb. 1:8*).
- The Holy Spirit is God (*Act. 5:3-4*).

- The Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit are identified as one (*Mat. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14*).
- The Father is not the Son (*Joh. 3:16*).
- The Son is not the Spirit (*Joh. 16:5-11*).
- The Father is not the Spirit (*Joh. 14:16-17*).

C. The Doctrine Expressed in the History of the Church.

- The Nicene Creed is the creed or profession of faith that is most widely used in Christian liturgy throughout the world. It is called Nicene, as it was adopted in the city of Nicaea by the ecumenical council, which first met there in AD 325. Bible-believing Churches and Christians accept it around the world.
- Notice how clearly doctrinal beliefs were defined as early as 225 years after the completion of the New Testament.

*The Nicene Creed AD 381<sup>7</sup>*

*We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty maker of heaven and earth, of all that is seen and unseen.*

*We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, one in Being with the Father. Through him all things were made.*

*For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven by the power of the Holy Spirit, he was born of the Virgin Mary, and became man.*

*For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered, died, and was buried. On the third day he rose again in fulfillment of the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.*

*We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of Life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets.*

*We believe in one holy universal and apostolic Church.*

*We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.*

Assignment: List what the Nicene Creed teaches about the doctrine of the Trinity.

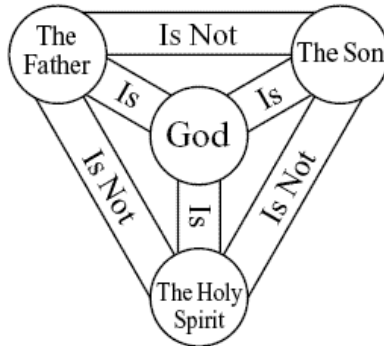
#### D. The Roles of Each Person in the Trinity<sup>8</sup>

- The Father
  - *Creation*: the Father decreed creation (*Gen. 1:26*).
  - *Salvation*: the Father planned salvation and sent His Son into the world (*Joh. 3:16; Eph. 1:7-10*).
- The Son
  - *Creation*: the Son carried out the Father's plan for creation (*Joh. 1:1-3; 1 Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:16-17*).
  - *Salvation*: Jesus obeyed the Father and accomplished redemption for us (*Joh. 6:38; 2 Cor. 5:21*).
- The Holy Spirit
  - *Creation*: the Spirit sustains and manifests God's immediate presence in his creation.

*The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters (See Gen. 1:2; Psalms 104:30).*

- *Salvation*: the Holy Spirit was sent by the Father and the Son to apply redemption, sanctify, and empower believers for service (*Rom. 8:9-10; Act. 1:8*).

#### E. Diagram of the Relationships within the Trinity.



This diagram is very helpful because it explains that the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit:

- Are God in essential nature and united in purpose.
- Are distinct persons, but not separate persons.
- Have distinct roles.

#### F. Common Errors or Heresies about the Doctrine of the Trinity

- *Unitarianism*– This view teaches that there is one person and denies there are three Persons.
- *Tritheism*– This view teaches there are three Gods and denies the oneness of God.
- *Modalism*– This view teaches the Son and the Holy Spirit are merely ways that God expresses Himself and denies that there are distinct persons in God.



### 3. The Attributes of God (The Nature of God)<sup>9</sup>

#### A. Introduction

- If we are to know God, if we are to know what He is really like, we must know His character and nature. God reveals His character and nature to us in the Scriptures. If we love God and want to obey Him, we will want to get to know Him.
- When we speak of the attributes of God, we are referring to those qualities that are essential to the nature of God. These are the characteristics of God that make God great and glorious.

#### B. General Concerns: What is an attribute? How do you classify God's attributes?

- What is an attribute? It is not something we *attribute* to God. It is the recognition of who God is and what He is like; what qualities belong to God or what makes God, God. Thus, they might be properly called perfections. Whatever characteristics He has, He has perfectly, without defect or limitation. God's attributes are His properties, His perfections, and His essential characteristics. He would not be God without them.
- It is helpful to consider that the attributes of God are not *parts* of God. They are descriptions of what God is like. But you cannot simply take all the attributes of God, add them together and come up with God.
- One important reason for us to acknowledge these attributes is that it leads us to honor and worship God for who He is and to give Him the glory that is His, because He is worthy to receive our worship (*Rev. 4:11*).

#### C. There are many ways to categorize God's attributes. We will use three headings:

- His essence.
- His character or moral nature.
- His knowledge.

#### D. His Essence: God Exists Independently of His Creation.

##### The Independence or Self-Existence of God <sup>10</sup>

- God's existence and His character are determined by Himself alone and are not dependent on anyone or anything else. *No one has ever contributed anything to God.* Everything came from God who created all things.
- Paul proclaims to the men of Athens, *God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. Nor is He worshiped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things (Acts 17:24-25).*
  - God has life in Himself. He is self-existent (*Joh. 5:26*).
  - The reason God created us was to manifest His glory according to His will. God didn't have to create us, yet He chose to create us to glorify Himself. The fact that God was not lonely before He created is seen clearly in the relationship of the Trinity. The three Persons among the Trinity share perfect love, fellowship, and communication for all eternity (*Joh. 17:24-26*).

##### Infinity: God is infinite.

- Infinity suggests that God possesses all of His attributes to a perfect degree, and there are no limitations on God's perfections.
- One of God's primary essential attributes is His *omnipresence*. This word is made up of two words: *Omni*, meaning *all*, and *presence*. God is present everywhere with His whole being. God is not limited by space.

*And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist (Col. 1:17. See also Act. 17:24-28).*

- God is distinct from everything. Being a Spirit, God is not subject to the laws of matter, measurable in the form of solid, liquid or gas. The whole of His being is everywhere. He cannot be divided or separated such that one part of His being is here and not there, and another part there and not here.

Eternal: God is infinite in time.

- To speak of God's eternal nature is to claim that God is not constrained by the limits of time. God is not subject to time. He has neither beginning nor end.

*And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And He said, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you'" (Exo. 3:14. See also Deu. 33:27; Psa. 90:2-4; 102:12, 27).*

- There are two helpful ways to view Divine eternity:
  - God is Everlasting: God has always existed and always will exist.
  - God is Timeless: God does not exist in time. He is above and independent of time. But this does not mean that God does not understand or is unaware of time. Further, it does not mean that God cannot enter into time. As we discussed earlier, God is present everywhere. The fact that God is not bound by time does not mean that God is not personally involved in our lives here on earth.

Immutability: God is infinite in His perfections and does not change. God does not change in the perfection of His nature, character, purposes (His will), and promises.

- A word of caution: Immutability should not be conceived as saying that God never changes without qualification, but that God does not change in His character and ways.

- We need to be clear that what makes Him God (His omnipresence, omniscience and omnipotence) will not change.
  - He will never be bound by time.
  - He will never be unaware of what is going on in the universe.
  - He will never be powerless to do His will.
- We should resist seeing God as static or immobile. This is not the case. God enters into human history. God is affected by the actions of humanity. After creation was finished, God said it was good. But by Genesis 6, God says He regrets that He made humanity (*Gen. 6:6*). God does express and feel emotions. He acts and feels differently in response to different situations.
- There are four ways in which God does not change:
  - God's *nature* will not change. He will never possess more of or less of any of his divine attributes (*Psa. 102:25-27; Mic. 3:6; Heb. 13:8*).
  - God's *character* will not change. He will never be more or less moral (*Jam. 1:17*).
  - God's *purposes* will not change (*Isa. 14:24; Psa. 33:11; Job 23:13*).
  - God's *promises* will not change (*Num. 23:19; 1 Sam 15:29; Heb. 6:17*).
- Here are two examples of God responding to the human condition differently:
  - The doctrine of Salvation: Justification and Reconciliation (*Rom. 5:1-11*).
  - The doctrine of the Incarnation: Jesus is what He has always been, fully God, but He is now also what He once was not: fully man (*Joh. 1:14*).

Omnipotence: God is infinite in power. <sup>11</sup>

- This word is made up of two words: *Omni*, meaning *all*, and *potence*, meaning *power*. God is all-powerful. Omnipotence refers to God's ability to do all things consistent with His will and nature. However, this does not mean that *God can do anything*. There are several things that

God *cannot* do. For example, God cannot lie (*Tit. 1:2*) or break His promise (*Heb. 6:17-18*). To do so would be to violate His nature.

- Omnipotence means that God is able to do anything He chooses to do. Even though God is powerful enough to do anything, it is not necessary to God's being that He always and in every way exercises His power. He can stop hurricanes, volcanoes, or earthquakes, but if He does not, it does not mean that He cannot.
- God's omnipotence is demonstrated in:
  - *Creation* (*Psa. 33:6, Isa. 45:12*).
  - *Preservation and Providence* (*Col. 1:17*).
  - *Redemption* (*Rom. 1:16, Eph. 3:20-21*).
  - *Judgment* (*Rom. 9:22*).
- We can be comforted by God's omnipotence. When we are persecuted and oppressed (*Psa. 27:1*). Or face difficult temptations (*1 Cor. 10:13*), we can have confidence in God's ability to answer prayer (*Eph. 3:20-21*), and confidence in all God has promised He will fulfill (*Jud. 24-25*).

#### E. His Character or Moral Nature:

These attributes describe the nature of God and tell us what He is like.

Holiness: God is holy.<sup>12</sup>

- The word *holy* means more than moral purity and perfection, though it certainly includes those concepts. The root word *holy* means *to be separate*. The holiness of God refers to the fact that He is separate from all that is impure and sinful and that He is perfectly right in all of His plans, actions, and desires and thus ethically distinct in His character from all others.
- It may be helpful to compare the idea of holiness to healthiness in understanding what we mean by God's holiness. What does it mean to be healthy? It is the absence of disease and sickness. It is also the presence of

energy and strength. Holiness is the absence of sin and evil, and also the presence of right and good desires, will, and *Act.* .<sup>13</sup>

- God wants to be known as holy (Jos. 24:19).

*For I am the LORD your God. You shall therefore consecrate yourselves, and you shall be holy; for I am holy. Neither shall you defile yourselves with any creeping thing that creeps on the earth (Lev. 11:44).*

- The Scriptures declare that He is holy.

*But as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct (1 Pet. 1:15).*

- God's holiness is captured in the imagery of *light*.

*This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all (1 Joh. 1:5).*

- We are to ascribe worship and praise to God.

*The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying: Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come! (Rev. 4:8).*

- God's holiness demands that all humanity acknowledge that we have sinned.

*In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple. Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one cried to another and said: Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory! And the posts of the door were shaken by the voice of him who cried out, and*

*the house was filled with smoke. So I said: "Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts" (Isa. 6:1-5).*

- A vision of His holiness should:
  - Inspire us to worship Him.
  - Sustain our character in righteousness.
  - Fuel our passion for truth.
  - Encourage persistence in doing His will and calling upon His name in prayer.
- Justice and Righteousness:
  - Justice and righteousness means perfect conformity to the law. God's law is a reflection of His character and nature.

*He is the Rock, His work is perfect; For all His ways are justice, A God of truth and without injustice; Righteous and upright is He. Deu. 32:4.*

- Because God is righteousness, He requires that His creatures live according to His will. We are to reflect God by walking justly and righteously (Mic. 6:8).
- Justice means that He deals with human beings according to their obedience or disobedience to His laws (Gen. 18:25; Psa. 36:6; Act. 17:29-31).
- The very rationale for the death of Jesus Christ on the cross is found in the justice and righteousness of God.

*[Jesus Christ] whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus (Rom. 3:25-26).*

- In Romans 3:25, Paul uses the word *propitiation* to

describe an important aspect of the death of Jesus Christ on the cross. This word refers *appeasing the wrath of God toward sin*. Jesus' death on the cross makes forgiveness of sin possible, but it also satisfied God's anger toward sin, so that He might be reconciled to those who believe in Jesus Christ for salvation. Because of Christ's death on our behalf, God can remain perfectly just and at the same time forgive us.

- Goodness, Mercy, Grace and Love
  - The *goodness* of God means that God is the final standard of good, and that all God is and does is worthy of approval. He Himself declares His work good (*Gen. 1:3-31*).
  - *Mercy* refers to God's dealing with those who are in distress regardless of the fact that they do not deserve His kindness.

*And the LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation" (Exo. 34:6-7).*

- *Grace* is closely linked to mercy. It is God's favor given to those who deserve only punishment (*Tit. 3:3-7*).

*But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, <sup>5</sup>even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved) (Eph. 2:4-5).*

- *Love* is the perfection of God demonstrated as He seeks the good of His creation. The greatest display of His love is in the offering of salvation where He gives Himself for the good of those who rebel against Him.



*In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins (1 Joh. 4:9-10).*

- God's goodness and love are demonstrated in two ways:
  - His goodness and love in restraining sin (*Gen. 6:3; 1 Pet. 3:20; Act. 17:30*).
  - His goodness and love shown in his blessings on creation (*Psa. 65:9-13; Gen. 39:5; Act. 14:16-17*).
  - God's goodness and love are demonstrated in God's saving grace to redeem humanity from sin and death (*Eph. 2:4, Tit. 3:5*).

#### F. His Knowledge

God is the Lord over all knowledge. It is only because God knows all things that there is a foundation for truth.

##### Omniscience<sup>14</sup>

- This word is made up of two words: *omni*, meaning *all*, and *science*, meaning *knowledge*. God is all knowing. God knows everything there is to be known. What does this include? It includes things past, present and future, in a comprehensive, certain and immediate fashion.

*Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually (Gen. 6:5. See also Exo. 3:7; Psa. 139:1-4; Mat 10:29-31; Heb. 4:13).*

- Whereas we learn by way of observation, reasoning, comparison, induction, and deduction, God's knowledge is intuitive. It is natural and immediate. God does not

learn. He knows all things, in all comprehensive way, and at all times.

- God's knowledge is perfect, not subject to mistakes. God is always correct in what He knows.

*But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy (Jam. 3:17).*

- God's knowledge is complete. There is nothing lacking in what He knows.

*The LORD by wisdom founded the earth; by understanding He established the heavens; by His knowledge the depths were broken up, and clouds drop down the dew (Pro. 3:19-20).*

### Wisdom

- God has perfect wisdom. Wisdom is the practical use of knowledge. God's wisdom means that God always chooses the best goals and the best means to accomplish those goals. God's wisdom is displayed generally and specifically.
  - God's wisdom is displayed generally throughout creation.

*O LORD, how manifold are Your works! In wisdom You have made them all. The earth is full of Your possessions. (Psa. 104:24).*

- God's wisdom is displayed specifically in redemption (1 Cor. 1:18-29).

*To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who*

*created all things through Jesus Christ; to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him (Eph. 3:8-12).*

- God's wisdom is displayed specifically in our individual lives.

*And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose (Rom. 8:28).*

### Truthfulness

- God's truthfulness means that He is the true God, and that all His knowledge and words are both true and the final standard of Truth. That is why God is completely dependable and reliable. It can also mean *faithfulness*.
  - He is the true God.

*For all the gods of the peoples are idols, But the LORD made the heavens (Psa. 96:5. See also Psa. 115:3-7; 1 The. 1:9).*

- He is the standard of Truth.

*For the word of the LORD is right, And all His work is done in truth (Psa. 33:4. See also Jer.10:10; Joh. 17:17).*

- God's Word is true and reliable. *God always speaks Truth when He speaks (Heb. 6:18; Psa. 12:6). God's Words are the final standard of Truth (Joh. 17:17). Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life (Joh. 14:6).*

## G. The Glory of God

The glory of God is not really an attribute of God. Rather, it is a way to capture *the greatness and perfection* of who God is. The glory of God refers to the whole picture of God's character and nature displayed in all of His attributes. It might be called a "summary attribute." It also refers to God's "honor" and "excellent reputation" (See *Isa. 43:7; Rom 3:23; Joh. 17:5*).

- God's glory is reflected in His uniqueness (*Isa. 42:8*).

*Who is like You, O LORD, among the gods? Who is like You, glorious in holiness, Fearful in praises, doing wonders? (Exo. 15:11).*

- Creation demonstrates God's glory.

*O LORD, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth, who have set Your glory above the heavens! (Psa. 8:1).*

- God demonstrates His glory on the earth as an indication of His presence and His power.

*The sight of the glory of the LORD was like a consuming fire on the top of the mountain in the eyes of the children of Israel (Exo. 24:17).*

- The glory of God is to be declared among the nations.

*All the kings of the earth shall praise You, O LORD, when they hear the words of Your mouth. Yes, they shall sing of the ways of the LORD, for great is the glory of the LORD (Psa. 138:4-5).*

- The glory of God is to be praised (*Psa. 29:1-3*).
- Everything God does is glorious (*Psa. 111:3*).
- The glory of God is demonstrated in the sending of the Son of God, Jesus, to the earth (*2 Cor. 4:5-6*).

- The Glory of God is the delight of the people of God and will be for all eternity (*Rev. 21:23-24*).
- The glory of God is the goal of creation. He wants to be praised for this greatness and goodness (*Isa. 48:11. Eph. 1:7-12*).

#### 4. The Names of God <sup>15</sup>

In Scripture, a person's name identified him and stood for something specific about him. The names of God are like miniature portraits of God and promises from God. The names used to speak of God reveal something about who He is and what He does.

The process of naming in the Scripture had special significance. The person who assigned the name had authority and power. This is also seen in the fact that God often changed the names of His people: *from Abram to Abraham, from Sarai to Sarah, and from Jacob to Israel*. When Adam named all the animals, it was seen as a sign of his authority over them (*Gen. 2:19*). It is worth noting that God Himself revealed His names to His people rather than allowing them to choose their names for Him.

The names of God are simply titles. They are God's own descriptions of Himself. They therefore reveal aspects of His character and contain insights into His nature.

##### A. Elohim

- This name means *Strong One*. It is especially used of God's sovereignty, creative and mighty work for Israel. (*Gen. 1:1; Deu. 5:23; 8:15; Isa. 45:18; 54:5; Jer. 32:27; and Psalms. 68:7*).

B. Combinations of El: The following names are compound names, taking the Hebrew *EL* and adding another adjective to it.

- *El Shaddai*: God Almighty. This is the name that God used to reveal Himself to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to

give comfort and instill confidence in the covenant God made with Abraham (*Gen. 17:1, 28:3, 35:11*). It is also used in Ruth *1:20-21* to speak of God chastening His people. The idea behind this name is of God's loving provision and comfort and of God's power as the Almighty, as well as one who corrects and chastens (*Psa. 91:1-2*).

- *El Elyon*: The Most High God. This name stresses God's strength, sovereignty, and supremacy (*Gen. 14:19; Dan. 7:18-25*).
- *El Olam*: The Everlasting God. This name emphasizes God's unchangeableness and is connected with His inexhaustibleness (*Gen. 16:13; Isa. 40:28*).
- *El Roi*: The God who Sees. This compound name emphasizes God's personal presence and care (*Gen. 16:13*).

#### C. Adonai

- Like *Elohim*, this word is also a plural of majesty. The singular form means "master, owner." *Adonai* stresses man's relationship to God as his master, authority, and provider (*Gen. 18:2-3, Jos. 5:14, 1 Sam. 1:15, Isa. 6:8-11*).

#### D. Yahweh (YHWH)

- This name comes from the Hebrew verb meaning *to exist*, or *to be*. It stresses God as the independent and self-existent God of revelation and redemption (*Gen. 4:3; Exo. 3:12-14, 6:3*). This is the covenant name that God gives to His people to assure them that He is able to keep His promises to them.
- Many times you will find this name written YHWH. This is because there are no vowels in the Hebrew language. Its alphabet is simply made up of consonants – therefore the "A" and the "E" are left out, leaving the four letters YHWH.

Compounds of *Yahweh* are titles that reveal additional facts about God's character.

E. Compounds of Yahweh <sup>16</sup>

- *Yahweh Jireh*: The Lord will provide (*Gen. 22:14*).
- *Yahweh Nissi*: The Lord is my Banner. This name stresses that God is our means of victory; the one who fights for His people (*Exo. 17:15*).
- *Yahweh Shalom*: The Lord is peace (*Jud. 6:24*). This name points to the fact that God is the means of our peace and rest.
- *Yahweh Sabaoth*: The Lord of hosts (*1 Sam. 1:3*). This name contains military imagery, portraying the Lord as the commander of the armies of heaven.
- *Yahweh Rohi*: The Lord my Shepherd (*Psa. 23:1*). This name portrays the Lord as the Shepherd who cares for His people as a shepherd cares for the sheep of his pasture.
- *Yahweh Tsidkenu*: The Lord our Righteousness (*Jer. 23:6*).
- *Yahweh Shammah*: The Lord is there (*Eze. 48:35*). This name declares the Lord is present, and in particular, its usage refers to the coming millennium kingdom.
- *Yahweh Rapha*: The Lord who heals, referring both to the physical and spiritual healing that God provides (*Exo. 15:26*).

5. The Works of God: Creation, Providence, Decrees, and the Covenants <sup>17</sup>

A. Creation

- God created the universe out of nothing. God created without the use of pre-existing materials. This means that before God began to create the universe nothing else existed except God Himself. (*Col. 1:17*).

*By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth. He gathers the waters of the sea together as a heap; He lays up the deep in*

*storehouses. Let all the earth fear the LORD; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast (Psa. 33:6-9).*

- These verses show that God is eternal. And in contrast, they also show that the universe is *not* eternal. The universe had a beginning. It is temporal. God alone is eternal.
- God created the universe by His Word. God calls things into existence by his Word. Six times in the Genesis account of creation we read, *And God said....* God spoke, and it was done (*Gen. 1:1-3*).
- God created all things—both visible and invisible, both in the heavens and the earth (*See Joh. 1:3; Col. 1:16*).
- God created humanity (*Gen. 1:26-27*).
- God is distinct from creation; yet God is involved in creation and creation is dependent on God (*Eph. 4:6*).

*Nor is He worshiped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things. And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, For we are also His offspring (Acts 17:25-28).*

- The Bible teaches that God is distinct from creation. He is not part of it because He made it and rules over it. The term often used to say that God is much greater than creation is that He is transcendent.
- Transcendent: God is far “above” creation in the sense that He is greater than creation and He is independent of it. To say that God is transcendent is to say He is



*awesome, majestic and powerful, far above all of His creation.*

- God is also very much involved in creation. Creation is continually dependent on God for its existence and its functioning. A term used to speak of God's involvement in creation is the word immanent.
- Immanent: God "remains in" creation, as to be involved in it continually. The word *immanent* emphasizes that God is *personal, loving and gracious to us*. The God of the Bible is clearly involved in creation, particularly with the people in it. He is not an distant deity removed from and uninterested in His creation.
- Common errors in thinking about God's involvement in creation:
  - *Materialism* – This view states that the material universe is all there is and denies the existence of God, as well as His transcendence and immanence.
  - *Pantheism* – Pantheism is the idea that everything in the whole universe is God, and so God has no distinct personality.
  - *Dualism* – Dualism is the idea that both God and the material universe have eternally existed side by side.
  - *Deism* – Deism is the view that God is not presently involved in the creation. He created but is now distant from what He made.
- God created the universe to show His glory (*Isa. 43:7*).
- God created the universe to demonstrate His excellence. He did it for the praise that goes to His glory. Creation shows God's great wisdom and power, and ultimately it reveals something of His other attributes as well.
- The universe that God created was *very good* (See *Gen. 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31*).

## B. Providence

When we speak of God's providence, we are speaking of His ongoing relationship with His creation. God is continually

involved with all created things in three ways: Preservation, Cooperation, and Sovereignty.

- Through God's providence we see God being actively involved in His creation at each moment. God did not abandon his creation after He made it, but He sustains it by His infinite power and sovereignty. God's providence maintains what has already been called into existence.

### Preservation

- *Preservation* is the term used to say that God maintains and keeps all that He created in existence. He is *preserving* His creation (*Heb. 1:2-3*).

*Who gave Him charge over the earth? Or who appointed Him over the whole world? If He should set His heart on it, if He should gather to Himself His Spirit and His breath, all flesh would perish together, and man would return to dust (Job 34:13-15).*

### Cooperation

- God cooperates with free decision of people and natural order to accomplish His purposes with created things in every action (*Gen. 50:19-20*).

### Sovereignty<sup>18</sup>

- God has a purpose in all that He does in the world and He directs all things in order that they accomplish His purposes (*Rom. 8:28; Phi. 2:9-11; Eph. 1:11*).

### Decrees

- Now that we have considered God's providence *after* creation, let us turn to thinking about God's decree *before* creation. God's decree is defined as the eternal plan of God, when He determined to bring about everything that would happen. God is not making things up as He goes along. All of His actions are rooted in an eternal plan. God knows the end from the beginning and will accomplish all of His good purposes (*Eph. 1:3-4*).

- God has predestined all events to take place. Nothing happens outside of God's will. This can be a great comfort to us, particularly as we go through trials.

### C. Covenants

God makes covenants with His people. There are four main covenants in the Bible. The covenants that God makes with His people are not exactly the same, but they are related to one another.

- The Abrahamic Covenant – God's Covenant with Abraham (See *Gen. 12:1-3*).
  - God makes three unconditional promises to Abraham.
    - God promised to bless Abraham and make him great.
    - God promised to make Abraham a great nation and to give him a great land.
    - God promised to bless all the people on the earth through Abraham.
  - God makes this Covenant with Abraham (*Gen. 15:1-21*). Abraham accepted God's covenant and promises through the rite of circumcision (*Gen. 17:1-22*).
  - The covenant that God made with Abraham is the foundation for all God's covenant with His people and the promises that He has for them. God's plan for the nation of Israel and His plan to offer salvation through Jesus Christ are built off of this covenant. New Testament picks up this covenant, showing that salvation through Jesus is the fulfillment of this covenant (*Gal. 3:6-18, Rom. 4:1-25*).
- The Mosaic Covenant – God's Covenant with Moses (See *Exo. 19:1-6*).
  - This covenant was made between God and His people immediately after Israel had been delivered from Egypt. God made it with His people at Mt. Sinai.
  - This covenant serves a number of purposes:
    - It establishes Israel as a nation.
    - It reveals the holiness of God.

- It reveals the sinfulness of humanity.
  - It demonstrates how people should relate to God and obey Him.
  - It leads people to realize their need for Jesus Christ as they see how far short they fall in keeping God's holy law.
- The blessings of this covenant are conditional upon obedience. The sign of acceptance of the Mosaic covenant was keeping the Sabbath.
- There are the three components of the Mosaic Covenant:
  - To make the children of Israel His special possession among all people if they obey God and keep His covenant (*Exo. 19:5*).
  - To make the children of Israel a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (*Exo. 19:6*).
  - To give the children of Israel the Sabbath as the permanent sign of this covenant (*Exo. 31:12-17*).
- The book of Deuteronomy is a restatement of the covenant made at Sinai for a new generation of Israelites. The law as the means by which God relates with His people ended at the cross (*2 Cor. 3:1-18*; *Gal. 3:15-25*; and *Eph. 2:13-18*).
- The Davidic Covenant – God's Covenant with David (See *2 Samuel 7:4-17*).
  - The covenant that God made with King David is like the Abrahamic covenant. It is a one-sided commitment from God to preserve David's throne forever.
  - In the Davidic covenant, God promises to make King David a house.
  - God promises that He will establish and build David's kingdom.
  - God promises that He will keep David's throne forever.
  - Other Bible passages that reflect the Davidic covenant are *Psa. 2:1-12* and *Rev. 20:1-6*.

- The New Covenant - God's covenant with believers that is fully revealed in the New Testament.

*But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. Because finding fault with them, He says: "Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah – not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the LORD. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. None of them shall teach his neighbor and none his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more." In that He says, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away (Heb. 8:6-13 See also Jer. 31:31-34; Eze. 36:22-38; 2 Cor. 3:1-18; Rom. 11:28-29; Heb. 8:6-13; 9:14-18).*

- The New Covenant is unconditional and a one-sided promise from God to His people. This promise was made right before Israel went into 70 years of Babylonian captivity. This covenant is the fulfillment of the Abrahamic and Mosaic covenants.
- Components of the New Covenant are:
  - The New Covenant is established by God Himself.
  - The New Covenant is made with the *house of Israel* and the *house of Judah*.

- The New Covenant is not like the broken covenant made with Moses at Mount Sinai. Unlike the broken covenant (*Jer. 11*), the New Covenant is kept by its members.
- The law of God is written on their hearts (in their thinking and their affections) through the giving of the Spirit of God.
  - The LORD will be their God, and they will be His people.
  - Every single member of the New Covenant *knows the LORD* in an intimate way.
  - The sins of the members of the New Covenant are forgiven by God, and will never be recalled.
- Conclusion to the Covenants:
  - The main idea behind each of the covenants that God makes with His people is His lovingkindness. In the Hebrew, this idea is captured by the word *hesed*, which describes God's special love for His redeemed people (*Hesed* is best defined as God's loyal covenant love). It is a love that is marked for covenant faithfulness.
  - The lovingkindness of God is not based on emotion, but rather on divine choice. It includes:
    - Unconditional loyalty.
    - Unfailing faithfulness.
    - Undeserved kindness.
    - Unending love.

*And the LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation" (Exo. 34:6-7).*

- Other Bible passages that describe God's covenant love are *Exo. 2:23-25*; *Deu. 7*; *Jer. 31:3*; and *Hos. 2:19*.
- Summary: The basic aspects of the covenants that God makes with His people are:
  - God establishes the relationship.
  - God makes promises.
  - The people of God depend on their relationship with God and His promises.
  - Their obedience to God demonstrates their dependence upon Him.

### Questions for Reflection/Discussion:

1. Why did God decide to reveal Himself to creation?
2. **How does the glory of God differ from God's other attributes?**
3. Can you name the four works of God discussed in the final section of this chapter?

4. What attribute of God is most important for understanding **God's covenantal nature**?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. God chose to reveal characteristics about Himself through His names. Why are names so important? What do they tell us about God and His relationship to us?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. What did you learn about the missional nature of God through this chapter? Why is God so concerned about missions and reaching the lost with the Gospel of Jesus Christ? Why is *mission* so close to the heart of God?



## Ideas for Preaching about the Doctrine of God

### Sermon #1 – from Exodus 15

- A. God's Victory over Egypt (*Exo. 15:1-12*).
- B. God's Victory over future enemies of Israel (*Exo. 15:13-21*).
- C. Israel's Protests at the Waters of Marah (*Exo. 15:22-27*).

#### Application:

- A. God is mighty for His people and He remembers the covenant He makes with them.
- B. Israel did not understand that their redemption and worship was to carry over in their daily lives.

### Sermon #2 – from Psalm 19:1-7

- A. The Words of Creation Describe its Beauty (*Psa. 19:2-6*).
  - Day to day pours out speech, Night to night reveals, A tent for the bridegroom, The sun's rising.
- B. The Words of Creation Describe its Creator (*Psa. 19:1*).
  - The heavens declare God's glory.
- C. No One Can Ignore this Message.
  - Their voice goes out through all the earth, Day to day and night to night, There is nothing hidden from its heat.
- D. The Glory of God is clear in the heavens but the sin of the human heart is indiscernible to the sinner (*Psa. 19:12*).
  - We need God to speak to us to make our sins known.
  - The Word of the Lord is ... (*Psa. 19:7-11*).

## Chapter 2

### The Doctrine of Scripture

*But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 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 3:14-17*

#### 1. Introduction and Importance of the Doctrine and Scripture

The Bible is the authoritative text for the Christian faith. It is regarded as the very Word of God. God spoke creation into existence (*Gen. 1*), and He has spoken to us through the revealed and inspired written Word (*Heb. 1:1-4*). He reveals to us His purposes and deeds through the Bible. God reveals Himself in general ways through nature, but Scripture is God's specific and particular revelation. Through Scripture, God reveals the truth and knowledge required for salvation through the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Perhaps the greatest statement about the inspiration and authority of the Bible is found in *2 Tim. 3:14-17*, which was quoted above.

*Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever, because "All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, and its flower falls away, but the word of the LORD endures forever." Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you (1 Pet. 1:22-25).*

## 2. The Nature of Scripture

### A. Scripture is Revelation <sup>1</sup>

- In Chapter 1 on the Doctrine of God, we discussed the ways that we can know God. We discovered from Scripture that God can be known through creation, the nature of humanity and historical events. These are forms of General Revelation (*Psa. 19:1-6; Rom. 2:12-16; Act 17:24-28*).<sup>2</sup> These forms of revelation are non-verbal, and the fallen nature of humanity disrupts our ability to know God in truth for salvation through these means of revelation.
- In order to know God personally and fully, we must have more than General Revelation. We must have Special, or full, Revelation. God has personally and specifically revealed Himself in two ways:
  - The person of Jesus Christ (*Joh. 1:14-18; Heb. 1:1-3*). Through the Person of Jesus, God became man and dwelt among us. We will discuss this aspect of Special Revelation further in the next chapter of this book.
  - The written Word (*2 Tim. 3:15-17; 2 Pet. 1:21*). The written Word is Special Revelation that attests to God's revelation in the person of Jesus Christ. Scripture is verbal and written down. Through the Scripture, God reveals to humanity Himself and His plan for salvation.

### B. The Definition of Scriptural Revelation

- The Bible is God's written Word that reveals who He is and what He is doing to save humanity from sin.
- The Nature of the Biblical Revelation
  - The Scripture claims to be written at the command of God (*See Exo. 17:14*).
  - The Scripture claims to be the Word of God (*See Acts 4:24-26, 13:32-33*).
  - The Scriptures are used as authoritative in the Old Testament and New Testament.<sup>3</sup> (*See 2 Chr. 17:9-*

10; Mat. 5:17-18; Luk. 24:27, 44-45; Rom. 3:4; 1 Cor. 14:37-38).

- Two leading evangelical thinkers write:

*God continues to reveal Himself today, and the primary way He reveals Himself is through the divinely inspired, inerrant, and authoritative Bible. The Bible is uniquely and solely God's completely trustworthy revelation to us today. Scripture is the court of highest authority for Christians and their leaders, by which any alleged revelation from God is to be tested.*<sup>4</sup>

### 3. The Nature of the Bible

The Bible is the Word of Truth. God inspired it. There are no errors contained in it. It is free from all falsehood. The Scriptures are authoritative and enough for belief and practice in doctrine and ministry.

Inspiration, authority, and inerrancy are concepts used to explain the nature of the Scriptures, and these ideas are closely related to each other. Each one is helpful in unfolding the nature of the Scriptures and establishing the Church's historic conviction that the Bible is the basis for our belief and practice in life and ministry.

Inspiration, authority and inerrancy confirm the fact that the Scriptures are God's Word, that it is true, and that we are to obey them. Each of these characteristics is based on the fact that the Word of God claims to possess the characteristics of God. The Bible teaches that because God is perfect, His word is perfect (*See Psa. 18:30, 33:4; Pro. 30:5; Joh. 17:17*).

#### A. Inspiration<sup>5</sup>

- Inspiration is the process by which God makes Himself known. This idea comes from *2 Tim. 3:16-17*, which states that the Scriptures are *inspired by God*. The literal translation is that they are *God-breathed*. They come

from His mouth, from His very breath. God is therefore the origin of the very words in the Scriptures. This is also pictured for us in the following passage:

*And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit (2 Pet. 1:19-21).*

- The creation story shows an important reality about God's Word coming from His mouth. God spoke and the world was created. He said, *Let there be light* and there was light. When God speaks, He performs (and accomplishes) what He says (See *Gen. 1:1-3*).
- *Gen. 1:1-3* demonstrates that God not only speaks, it also suggests that God has complete power to act according to His will. *God speaks, and God Acts*.
- God speaking and acting are involved in the process of inspiration. God speaks, and Human authors record God's words. God is speaking and acting in the lives of the human authors to inspire the written Scripture.

There are three false views of inspiration:

- False View #1: Human Authors were inspired men. Inspiration does not refer to an inspiring work of God in the lives of human authors, so that they might write inspiring words. It means that the Holy Spirit inspired what they wrote.
- False View #2: Ordinary human words are changed into Divine speech. Inspiration does not refer to God breathing upon the writing process to convert ordinary human writing into divine speech.
- False View #3: Readers of the Scripture are inspired while reading the Scripture. Inspiration does not mean to suggest that the reader is somehow inspired in the

process of reading, and it becomes God's word. It was the authors' writings that were inspired by God.

- Inspiration means that the words themselves are the words God spoke, and the human authors wrote what God spoke.

There are two distinct ways that God inspires the writing of Scripture:

- At times, God dictated His message to human authors who recorded the exact words God spoke to them (See *Deu. 31:19*).
  - When God's words are dictated in this way, it is typically noted by the biblical author. Most of the Scriptures are given to us from God according to the second way God inspires His Word.
- He works alongside the human authors, using their writing style, personality and actions under His inspiration and direction, to produce His inerrant words (See *1 Cor. 14:37*; *2 Pet. 1:20-21*).
  - In this process, God does not override the freedom and expression of the authors, but He works *through* them to inspire the very words that He intends for His people. God directs the authors to write His words, the exact words that He purposes to be written, but the experiences, perspective, personality, and style of the human authors are preserved.

#### B. Inerrancy<sup>6</sup>

- Inerrancy means that the Bible is without errors or contradictions in the original manuscripts of Scripture.
- This view of the Scriptures is held for two reasons:
  - The Scriptures are God's inspired words and He intends for them to be an authoritative guide for His people. There is no error or untruth in God, and He would not lead His people astray.
  - Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him (See *Pro. 30:5*). Your Word is Truth (See *Joh. 17:17*).

- The Scriptures use Scripture as if the Scriptures are true and without error.

*While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, "What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?" They said to Him, "The Son of David." He said to them, "How then does David in the Spirit call Him 'Lord,' saying: 'The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool" '? If David then calls Him 'Lord,' how is He his Son?" And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare question Him anymore. (See Mat. 22:41-46; also Psa. 110:1; Joh. 10:34-36 (Psa. 82:6; Mat. 22:29-32; Deu. 6:5).*

### C. Authority

- The authority of Scripture means that all the Scripture are the words of God, so we are to obey them, and therefore, to disobey them is to disobey God. The words of Scripture are God's words, and because they are God's words, they are true.
- The doctrine of inspiration confirms that God makes Himself known. The doctrine of inerrancy affirms that the Scriptures are true without error.
- The issue of the authority relates to the fact that the Scriptures are God's Word and the Scriptures are true. Authority therefore relates to what role Scriptures should play in life and ministry of Christians and the appropriate response Christians should have to it. Since the Scriptures are the very words of God, they teach us to understand God's plan, purpose, and will. The right understanding of these things is supposed to shape our life and ministry.
- Jesus serves as an example of one who affirms the authority of Scripture.

*So He said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life,*

*keep the commandments." He said to Him, "Which ones?" Jesus said, " 'You shall not murder,' 'You shall not commit adultery,' 'You shall not steal,' 'You shall not bear false witness,' 'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" (Mat.19:17-19).*

#### 4. The Characteristics of the Scriptures

##### A. The Scriptures are Active and Alive.

*For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart (Heb. 4:12; See also Act. 7:38; 1 Pet. 1:23).*

##### B. The Scriptures are Enduring and Eternal.

*Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever (1 Pet. 1:22-23; See also Psa. 119:89, 152, 160; Isa. 40:6-8; Mat. 5:17-18; 24:35).*

##### C. The Scriptures are Holy.

*Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good (Rom. 7:12; See also Rom. 1:2; 2 Tim. 3:15).*

##### D. The Scriptures are Illuminating. The Scriptures give us understanding to know what the truth is and how to live it.

*Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path (Psa. 119:105; See also Psa. 119:130, 133; 2Pet. 1:19).*

##### E. The Scriptures are Precious.

*The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired*



*are they than gold, Yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb (Psa. 19:9-10).*

F. The Scriptures are Trustworthy.

*And now, O Lord GOD, You are God, and Your words are true, and You have promised this goodness to Your servant (2 Sam. 7:28; See also Psa. 19:7; 111:7; 119: 42, 86, 138; Rev. 22:6).*

## 5. The Purposes of the Scripture

A. The Scriptures are for Salvation (See *Eph. 1:13; 2 Tim. 3:14-15, Jam. 1:18*).

B. The Scriptures are for Correction (See *Psa. 17:4; 19:7-11*).

C. The Scriptures are for Assurance, Encouragement and Hope (See *Psa. 119:49; Rom. 15:4, 1 Joh. 5:13*).

D. The Scriptures are for Comfort (See *Psa. 119:50, 76*).

E. The Scriptures are for Sanctification and Edification (See *Psa. 119:28; Joh. 17:17; Act. 20:32; 1 The. 2:13; 1 Pet. 2:2*).

## 6. The Theme of Scripture

A. A popular evangelical theology is seeing the unity of the Old Testament around the theme of promise.<sup>7</sup>

B. This approach sees the promise of the Abrahamic Covenant in Genesis 12:1-3 in which God set apart a special people to Himself. This is seen in the phrase *I am the Lord your God who brought you up out of the land of Egypt* – a formula mentioned in whole or in part 125 times in the Old Testament.<sup>8</sup>

C. This theme is developed in the establishment of Israel as the people of God in the Mosaic era, the promise of the Messiah

in the Davidic era, and the promise of the future kingdom in the prophetic era.

- D. The promise is ultimately fulfilled in the New Testament through Jesus Christ, the promised Messiah.

## 7. Questions about the Scripture

### A. Can I Trust the Bible?

- We believe that what the Bible teaches is true. As a result, we come to the Bible with a commitment to receive truth from God.<sup>9</sup>
- Unlike the Bible, however, those of us who read and study it are not inerrant in our understanding. The Bible itself gives us much cause for humility as we approach the Scripture.<sup>10</sup>
  - God's thoughts are much higher than ours (*Isa. 55:9*).
  - God has secrets that He has not revealed to anyone (*Deu. 29:29*).
  - Sometimes we see the truth as if through a dirty and fogged window (*1 Cor. 13:12*).
  - We are prone to resist God's truth because it forces us to repent, and sometimes we are simply hard-hearted (*Rom. 1:18-19*).
  - We know in part (*1 Cor. 13:9*).
  - Some parts of the Bible are hard to understand (*2 Pet. 3:15-16*).
- Therefore, if it appears that there is a contradiction in the Bible, we should first dig deeply into the Bible to see if what appears to be an error is, in fact not an error once we have examined it more closely.<sup>11</sup>
- Can I trust my Bible? Yes. It has withstood attacks from critics down through the centuries. Its truth has been proven in people's lives and in the growth of the Church.

## B. Can Scripture Be Written Today?

- No. The only people who could write Scripture were prophets and apostles – people who were witnesses of God’s revelation in Jesus, or authors like Luke who based his Gospel on eyewitness testimony (*Luk. 1:1-4*) and on the report of the apostles who were eyewitnesses (*Act. 1:1-3, 9*).
- Books of the Bible cannot be written today for two primary reasons:<sup>12</sup>
  - The Old Testament ended with the prophet Malachi promising that the next major event in redemptive history would be the coming of John the Baptist, who would prepare the way for Jesus (*Mal. 3:1; 4:5-6*).
  - There were then four hundred years of silence in which no book of the Bible was written until John came, as promised (*Luke 1:11-17*). In addition, the New Testament ends with its final book, Revelation, telling us that no other books of the Bible are to be written after it (*Rev. 22:18-19*), and that we will again have silence until Jesus comes for the second time (*Rev. 22:20-21*).
  - The Bible tells us that Jesus is God’s final word to us (*Heb. 1:1-2*) and that we should not add anything to the Bible (*Rev. 22:20-21*).

## C. How Does Scripture Affect our Lives?

- God speaks to us through the Scriptures as a perfectly loving Father. Therefore we must listen to what it says, learn what it teaches, and make every effort by the Holy Spirit’s empowering grace to repent of our sins, renew our minds, and redeem our lives.<sup>13</sup>
- Christians worship God, not the Bible. But the Bible informs us of whom God is and how He is to be worshiped. Therefore it is essential to our worship. As a result, we come to the Bible for transformation, not just for information.
- One of the great leaders in church history, Martin Luther, said, *When the Scripture speaks, God speaks*. Because

Scripture is God speaking to us, we memorize it, meditate on it, study it, teach it, and share His truth with anyone who will listen.

- Remember, every time we read the Bible, we hear God speaking to us. Become like the Bereans in the first century who tested all they learned *with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so (Act. 17:11).*

Questions for Reflection:

1. **How do we know that the Bible is God's Word?**
2. What is the difference between inspiration, inerrancy, and authority?
3. Name some of the purposes for Scripture.

## Ideas for Preaching about the Doctrine of Scripture

### 1. *2 Timothy 3:16-17*

- A. The Nature of Scripture
- B. The Functions of Scripture
- C. The Goal of Scripture

### 2. *1 Peter 2:1-3*

- A. Take off evil and unloving ways towards one another (v. 1).
- B. Hunger for the Word and its spiritual nutrients (v. 2).
  - This is the same word preached to you when you were saved (*1 Peter 1:21-25*).
  - This is the same word that will endure forever (*1 Peter 1:21-25*).
- C. This is the Word from a good and gracious God (v. 3).

## Chapter 3

### The Doctrine of Jesus Christ

*Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*  
*Philippians 2:5-11*

#### 1. Introduction

One of the main purposes of the four Gospels (*Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John*) is to introduce us to Jesus Christ. One of the most moving passages in these Gospels is when Jesus asked His disciples, *Who do you say that I am?* (*Mat. 16:15; Mar. 8:29; Luk. 9:20*). It was Peter, one of the twelve disciples, who answered Jesus. He said, *You are the Christ, the Son of the living God* (*Mat. 16:16*).

Even though Peter answered this question correctly and this truth is recorded in Scripture, Jesus' question did not go away. The early church struggled with the question of who Jesus is for nearly 450 years until the Chalcedonian Creed. This statement did not answer all the questions, but it became the orthodox position of the Church on the person of Jesus Christ.

The Chalcedonian Creed: <sup>1</sup>

*We, then, following the holy Fathers, all with one consent, teach people to confess one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the same perfect in Godhead and also perfect in manhood; truly*

*God and truly man, of a reasonable [rational] soul and body; consubstantial [co-essential] with the Father according to the Godhead, and consubstantial with us according to the Manhood; in all things like unto us, without sin; begotten before all ages of the Father according to the Godhead, and in these latter days, for us and for our salvation, born of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, according to the Manhood; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, only begotten, to be acknowledged in two natures, inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably; the distinction of natures being by no means taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one Person and one Subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son, and only begotten, God the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ; as the prophets from the beginning [have declared] concerning Him, and the Lord Jesus Christ Himself has taught us, and the Creed of the holy Fathers has handed down to us.*

The Chalcedonian summary of the incarnation is the position held by all Christians, including Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant Christians. To summarize it's teaching, the Chalcedonian Creed tells us: <sup>2</sup>

- Christ has two distinct natures: humanity and deity.
- There is no mixture or intermingling of the two natures.
- Although He has two natures, Christ is one person.

The nature of Jesus Christ is of critical importance. The Bible teaches that He accomplished redemption for sinful humanity. He was qualified to be the Redeemer, because He was both fully human and fully divine. In His humanity, He lived a perfect and sinful life, identified with all humanity and was able to take upon Himself our penalty for sin (*Heb. 2:10-12*). In His deity, He represents and satisfies the eternal holiness of God (*Heb. 2:17*). He died for sin, but not for His own sin (*Heb. 7:26-27*). As God, He is life, and His life cannot be taken from Him (*Heb. 7:16*).

## 2. The Person of Jesus Christ

The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man.<sup>3</sup> He is the God-man. It was by the incarnation that God became man in the person of Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit and born to the Virgin Mary (*Luk. 1:26-38*).<sup>4</sup>

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God (Joh. 1:1).*

Jesus existed before He was born at Bethlehem.<sup>5</sup> He is fully God and has existed from all eternity past (*Joh. 8:58; Col. 1:16*).

*And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth (Joh. 1:14).*

### A. The Deity of Jesus<sup>6</sup>

- Jesus' divine nature is demonstrated in the Bible in a number of ways. When all this evidence is considered, we have an overwhelming case for the divine nature of Jesus.
- God the Father announced through the power of the Holy Spirit that Jesus was His Son.

*[Jesus was] declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead (Rom. 1:4; See also Mar. 1:10-11).*

- Jesus is identified with God.
  - Jesus and God the Father are One: *"I and My Father are one."* (*Joh. 10:30; See also Mat. 10:40; 11:27; Joh. 3:35; 14:1-11; 16:28; 17:10, 21-23*).
  - Jesus reveals God the Father: *"No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him"* (*Joh. 1:18; See also 2 Cor. 4:6; Joh. 7:16-18; 12:49-50; 17:25-26*).



- Jesus is the exact image of God: *“For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily”* (Col. 2:9; See also Heb. 1:1-3; 2 Cor. 4:4).
- Jesus claims to be God’s counterpart on the Earth: *“O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me. And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them”* (Joh. 17:25-26; See also Mat. 11:25-27; Joh. 3:16; 8:19, 38).
- The Spirit is from God and from Christ: *“But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His”* (Rom. 8:9; See also Phi. 1:19; 1 The. 4:8; 1 Pet. 1:11-12).
- Jesus is the power and wisdom of God *“For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God”* (1 Cor. 1:22-24).
- Jesus Possesses Divine Attributes.<sup>7</sup>
  - Jesus is *eternal*: *“I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End,”* says the Lord, *“who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty”* (Rev. 1:8; See also Joh. 1:1; Act. 3:15; Col. 1:17).
  - Jesus is *omnipotent*: *“And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth”* (Mat. 28:18; See also Eph. 1:19-21; Col. 2:10; Heb. 1:3; 1 Pet. 3:22).
  - Jesus is *omnipresent*: *“For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them”* (Mat. 18:20).
  - Jesus is *omniscient*: *“Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one’s praise will come from God”* (1 Cor. 4:5; See also Act. 1:24; Col. 2:2-3; Rev. 2:19, 23).

- Jesus has *life* and *gives life*: “*For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself*” (Joh. 5:26; *See also Col. 3:3-4; Joh. 10:17-18; Heb. 7:16; 1 Joh. 4:9; 1 Joh. 5:12*).
- Jesus Performs Divine Actions.
  - Jesus created and sustains the universe: “*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made*” (Joh. 1:1-3; *See also Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:3*).
  - Jesus is above natural laws.
    - He turned water into wine (Joh. 1:1-11).
    - He fed five thousand (Mat. 14:14-20; Mar. 6:34-44; Luk. 9:11-18).
    - He walked on water (Mar. 6:47-55).
  - Jesus forgave sins: “*For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins*” (Mat. 26:28; *See also Mar. 2:1-12; Mar. 10:45; Luk. 7:48-49*).
  - Jesus raised the dead: “*Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live"*” (Joh. 11:25; *See also Mar. 5:41-42; Luk. 23:42-43; Joh. 5:21-29*).
- Jesus is Assigned Old Testament Names and Titles for God. (See Mat. 1:23; Isa. 7:14); (Mat. 3:3; Isa. 40:3); (Joh. 12:38-41; Isa. 53:1, 6:10); (Rom. 10:9-13; Isa. 28:16, Joel 2:32); (Eph. 4:7-8; Psalms 68:18); (Tit. 2:13; Hos. 1:7).
- Jesus Claimed Divine Status.
  - Jesus claimed the authority of God: “*And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth"*” (Mat. 28:18; *See also Joh. 3:31; 5:19-25; 17:2; Mat. 5:43*).
  - Jesus accepted prayer, praise and worship: “*When he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and worshiped Him. And he cried out with a loud voice and said, "What have I to do with You, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I*

*implore You by God that You do not torment me"*  
(Mar. 5:6-7; See also Joh. 5:23; 14:14).

## B. The Humanity of Jesus <sup>8</sup>

The Apostle John testified to the humanity of Jesus in his first letter (*1 John*). In the opening verses, he says that they had touched, heard, seen, and fellowshiped with the man Jesus. Based on his experience, John declares that he is fully man. He claims that the one who brought all life into existence has come to them in human form. Further, he declares,

*Every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world (4:3).*

One great Bible teacher has said that the incarnation is the *supreme mystery associated with the Gospel.* <sup>9</sup>

### The Virgin Birth:

- The Bible teaches that Jesus was conceived in the womb of Mary by the miraculous work of the Holy Spirit, without a human father. The virgin birth does not necessarily prove the humanity of Jesus, but the virgin birth made it possible for humanity and deity to unite in the person of Jesus. <sup>10</sup>
- Belief in the virgin birth of Jesus has been challenged. Some people have tried to explain that the Bible does not actually teach the Virgin Birth. This position is hard for them to demonstrate.
- When the Angel Gabriel appeared to Mary to tell her that she will have a baby, Mary replied, *How can this be, for I am a virgin? (Luk. 1:34)*. It is clear from her response that Mary was contemplating the biological impossibility of a virgin woman bearing a child.
- The virgin birth was prophesied by Isaiah in the Old Testament, when he wrote, *The Lord Himself will give*

*you a sign. Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel (9:6).* The term Immanuel means God with us. As miraculous as the incarnation (God becoming man) is, it started with a physical miracle that a virgin would give birth to a son.

- One of the most important implications of the virgin birth for the humanity of Jesus is found in Galatians 4:4. *But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law.*
  - In this passage, we are simply told that Jesus was born to a woman, rather than to a man, which is unusual. The consistent biblical pattern is to highlight that someone is born to his or her father, and not to his or her mother. Though this may not teach directly a virgin birth, it is important for us to take note that this statement does not conflict with previous explicit teaching on Jesus' virgin birth. What is clear in this text is that Jesus is born to a woman, and by implication, we conclude that Jesus was human, for human babies are born to women.
- Paul then explains the theological implication of Jesus being born a man. Because he is born of a woman and born a human, He is held to the moral responsibility to obey the law of God that all humans must keep.
- So, God did what sinful humanity could not do. He sent His Son in human flesh to accomplish His law.

*For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit (Rom. 8:3-4).*

## He Possessed a Human Nature.<sup>11</sup>

- In addition to the theological implications of the virgin birth that attest to the humanity of Jesus, the Scriptures are filled with evidence that demonstrate the human nature of Jesus Christ. The Bible teaches that Jesus expressed the physical, emotional, intellectual, and moral characteristics of humanity.
  - His Physical Nature – Jesus in His humanity needed to eat and needed rest (*See Mar. 6:31; Mat. 4:2-3; Luk. 2:7, 52; 9:58; 23:26; Joh. 4:6; 19:28*).
  - His Emotional Nature – Jesus in His humanity experienced and expressed emotions (*See Mat. 8:10; 17:17; 26:38; Mar. 8:12; 10:21; Joh. 11:33-35; 12:27; 13:21*).
  - His Intellectual Nature – Jesus in His humanity demonstrated that He shared with humanity an intellectual nature. He was perceptive. He read. He learned (*See Mat. 19:3-6; Mar. 6:30-32; 13:32; Luk. 2:52; 4:16; Joh. 2:23-25; 6:15*).
  - His Moral Nature – Jesus demonstrated that He shared with humanity a moral nature by His spiritual mindedness, how He sought God's will, how He demonstrated moral strength, and by His commitment to the welfare of others (*See Mar. 1:32-34; Luk. 4:1-10; Joh. 18:3-8; Mat. 14:14*).
- He is called a man and treated like a man.
  - John the Baptist called Him a man (*Joh. 1:30*).
  - Jesus called Himself a man (*Joh. 8:40*).
  - His family treated Him like a man (*Mar. 3:31-35*).
  - Religious leaders treated Him like a man (*Joh. 7:27*).
  - Crowds called Him a man (*Mar. 6:2-3*).
  - Peter called Him a man (*Act. 2:22*).

### Why is Jesus being fully God and fully human necessary?<sup>12</sup>

- The simple answer to this question is: *He became like us, so that we might be like Him*. In addition to this answer, we will offer four statements that help explain why Jesus had to become like us in order for us to be like Him.
  - In His humanity, Jesus represented our obedience. He was without sin, and obeyed for us where all of humanity in Adam had failed. Adam was tempted in the Garden of Eden (*Gen. 3:1-3:7*), and sinned. Jesus was tempted in the desert, but did not sin (*Luk. 4:1-13*).
  - In His humanity, Jesus died as a substitute for sinful humanity. Jesus had to be man, or He could not have paid the penalty for the sins of sinful humanity (See *2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 2:16-17*).
  - In His deity, Jesus was able to bear the penalty for the sins of those who would believe in Him. Only someone who is infinite God could bear the full penalty for all the sins of all who would believe in Him (See *Joh. 1:3-5; Col. 1:13-20*).
  - In His humanity and deity, Jesus is the one mediator between God and Man. Because we were alienated from God due to our sin, we needed a mediator who could represent us to God and God to us. In order to be the mediator, Jesus had to be fully man and fully God (*1 Tim. 2:5*).
- Explanation of Jesus being fully God and fully human.<sup>13</sup>
  - Historical errors on the person of Jesus Christ.
    - Jesus had a human body, but no human mind or spirit. The mind and spirit of Christ were from the divine nature of the Son of God.
    - There were two separate persons in Jesus, a human person and a divine person, so Jesus is not one person but two persons in one body.
    - Jesus has one new, unique nature, which was made from a human and divine nature. Both human and divine natures were changed into a third distinct from human and divine natures.

- The Statements about Jesus Christ by the Historic Orthodox Creeds.
  - The Nicene Creed (AD 325)<sup>14</sup> and Constantinople (AD 381).<sup>15</sup>
    - Summary: Christ is the same essence and being as the Father but distinct in Person. The Council at Constantinople (AD 381) reaffirmed the statements of The Nicene Creed (AD 325).
    - A Section from the Nicene Creed (AD 325): *We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty maker of heaven and earth, of all that is seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, one in Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven by the power of the Holy Spirit he was born of the Virgin Mary, and became man.*
  - The Ephesus Council (AD 431).<sup>16</sup>
    - Summary: This council declared the full union of Christ's human and divine natures in one person.
    - The Key Statement from Council of Ephesus (AD 431): *The Word of God has become flesh and is made man.*
  - The Chalcedonian Creed (AD 451).<sup>17</sup>
    - Summary: This creed declared that Jesus is fully God and fully man inseparably united in one person. It also affirmed that the divine and human nature are not confused.
    - *[Jesus Christ] begotten before all ages of the Father according to the Godhead, and in these latter days, for us and for our salvation, born of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, according to the Manhood; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, only begotten, to be acknowledged in two natures, inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably; the distinction of natures being by no means taken away by the union, but rather the*

*property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one Person and one Subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son, and only begotten, God the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ....*

### 3. The Ministry of Jesus Christ

#### A. His Pre-Incarnate Ministry. <sup>18</sup>

- *Pre-incarnate* is a term to describe that time before Jesus took on human flesh and walked on the earth as a man. In the Old Testament times, among many other things, He was involved in the creation of the world (*Joh. 1:1-3; Col. 1:16-17*).

#### B. Incarnate Ministry. <sup>19</sup>

- Jesus fulfills the Old Testament Prophecy about the coming Christ.

Prophecy	Fulfillment
Seed of the woman defeats the Serpent: <i>Gen. 3:15</i>	<i>Galatians 4:4</i>
Christ is to be Incarnate <i>Mic. 5:2</i>	<i>Romans 9:5</i>
Christ is the descendent of Abraham: <i>Gen. 12:3</i>	<i>Acts 3:25</i>
Christ is the descendent of David: <i>2 Sam. 7:12-16</i>	<i>Acts 12:22-23</i>

- His Life.
  - His Baptism: Jesus did not need to be baptized. He was the Holy Son of God, without sin. However, He was baptized for two reasons:
    - Jesus was baptized to identify with the message of John Baptist, concerning Israel's need to repent.
    - Jesus was baptized to start His earthly ministry to accomplish God's mission. This was begun in two ways: first, when God the Father announced from heaven, *This is my Son, whom I am well pleased*, and second, when the Holy Spirit came



upon Him to empower Him for ministry.  
Matthew 3:1-17.

- He Lived a Perfect Sinless Life: Jesus defeated the temptation of sin throughout His life, but there were a few very significant times when He resisted.
  - First, Jesus was tempted for 40 days in the wilderness. During those days, He defeated the temptations of the Evil One (*Luk. 4:1-13*). In defeating the Evil One, Jesus did a number of important things:
    - He demonstrated His commitment and obedience to the mission of God, and thus remains sinless, proving that He is a qualified Savior (*2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Pet. 2:22*).
    - He demonstrated to us that temptation can be overcome (*1 Pet. 2:23; 1 Cor. 10:31*).
    - He demonstrated that He can sympathize with our weaknesses (*Heb. 2:18; 4:15*).
  - Second, the Bible also demonstrates that Jesus defeated temptation while He agonized over His death in Gethsemane and while He endured the harsh beatings of the Romans soldiers (*Mat. 26:39; Heb. 5:8; 1 Pet. 2:22-23*).
- During His life, Jesus occupied and exercised the three offices of prophet (*Mat. 13:57*), priest (*Heb. 5:1-10*), and king (predicted in *Isa. 9:6-7*; fulfilled in *Luk. 1:31-33*).

*Taken together, the three offices of Christ as Prophet, Priest and King are the key to the purpose of the incarnation. His prophetic office was concerned with the revelation of the truth of God; the priestly office was related to His work as Savior and Mediator; His kingly office had in view His right to reign over Israel and over the entire earth. In Christ the supreme dignity of these offices is reached.*<sup>20</sup>

- His Teaching.
  - Jesus' teaching ministry revolved around two themes:
    - Jesus' call for people to repent and believe the Kingdom of God was near. The Kingdom of God refers to the reign and rule of God, and in order for people to live peacefully in God's kingdom, they must repent of their sins and live in faithful dependence upon Him (See *Mat. 6:33; 19:24; Mar. 1:15; 9:47; Luk. 13:18-29*).
    - Jesus taught us how we are to live in God's kingdom. For example, see the Sermon on the Mount as recorded in *Matthew 5-7*.
- His Miracles.
  - Jesus performed many miracles. He cast out demons, healed the sick, gave sight to the blind, and raised people from the dead. These miracles demonstrated the power of God upon Jesus and authenticated His ministry. But, more specifically, His miracles confirmed that He is the long-awaited Christ, who God promised would come to save His people (See *Luk. 4:16-19; Isa. 61:1-3*).
- His Ministry.
  - Jesus' ministry was intense. It involved more activities than just resisting temptation, preaching and teaching, and performing miracles.
    - At least fourteen times, the Bible says that Jesus had compassion on people. This compassion was demonstrated when He cared for the needs of people (See *Mat. 9:36; Mar. 5:19; Luk. 7:13*).
    - Jesus also demonstrated servant leadership (See *Mar. 10:45; Joh. 13:1-17*).
    - Jesus trained future leaders for God's mission (See *Mar. 4:33-34; 6:7-12; 8:34-38*).

### C. Death.

- Jesus came to the earth for one main purpose, that is, to give His life as a ransom for many people (*Mar. 10:45*; See also *Mat. 20:17-19*; *Luk. 9:20-22*; *19:8-10*; *Joh. 10:14-18*).
- Jesus' death was a voluntary sacrifice to redeem anyone who would call upon His name for salvation (*Joh. 10:15-18*).
  - The Bible teaches that *without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness* (*Heb. 9:22*). One well-respected Bible teacher called His death *The Death of Deaths* because it was uniquely sacrificial and redemptive for the sins of the world.
- In His death, Jesus *endured*:
  - Physical pain (*Joh. 19:31-33*).
  - The pain of bearing sin (*Gal. 3:13*; *1 Pet. 2:24*).
  - Abandonment by His Father (*Mat. 26:56*; *27:46*).
  - The wrath of God towards sin (*Rom. 3:25-26*).
- In His death, Jesus *accomplished*:
  - Paying the penalty of sin for those who believe in Him (*Heb. 9:26*).
  - Satisfying the wrath of God toward sin for those who believe in Him (*1 Joh. 4:10*).
  - Reconciling God to those who believe in Him (*Rom. 5:10*).
  - Redeeming those who believe from the condemnation and power of Sin (*1 Joh. 5:19*; *Heb. 2:15*).
- In His death, Jesus overcame the problem of sin permanently for those who believe.
  - He died *once for all* (*Rom. 6:10*; *1 Pet. 3:18*).
  - There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ. (*Rom. 8:1*).

### D. Resurrection. <sup>21</sup>

- The Bible teaches that Jesus rose from the dead in a physical body. In this body, He was seen, heard, and touched (*Mat. 28:6-10*; *Joh. 20:26-28*).

- The resurrection of Jesus Christ declares to us that His mission in dying on the cross for sinners to have eternal life was indeed accomplished (*Rom. 1:3-4; 1 Pet. 1:3-5*).<sup>22</sup>
- In His resurrection, Jesus demonstrates that the power of sin and death has been defeated (*1 Cor. 15:55-58*).

#### E. Jesus' Ascension.<sup>23</sup>

- Before Jesus sent His Spirit to His disciples to empower them for their ministry, Jesus ascended to heaven (*Act. 1:9*).
- Now, the incarnate Son of God reigns over all things (*Mat. 28:18*), as the exalted Son of God (*Eph. 1:19-22; Col. 3:1; 1 Pet. 3:22*). He also continues to intercede for His people (*1 Joh. 2:1; Rom. 8:34*), gives His people gifts to edify the church (*Eph. 4:10-14*), and sends the Holy Spirit to comfort, guide, and empower them (*Joh. 16:6-11; Act. 1:8*).

#### F. The Present Ministry of Jesus Christ.<sup>24</sup>

- Jesus is praying for His people (*Heb. 7:25; 1 Joh. 2:1; Joh. 17:15*).
- He is preparing a place for us (*Joh. 14:3*).
- He is now building the Church, which is His body (*Mat. 16:18*).
- He is giving gifts to men (*Eph. 4:11*).
- He indwells every believer (*Gal. 2:20*).
- He answers our prayers (*Joh. 14:12, 14*).
- He gives special help for particular needs (*Heb. 4:16*), especially in times of temptation (*Heb. 2:18*).
- He is concerned with the fruitfulness of His followers (*Joh. 15:1-16*).
- He is on mission with us (*Mar. 16:19-20*) to help fulfill the Great Commission.

G. The Future Ministry of Jesus Christ. <sup>25</sup>

- Most of our discussion on Jesus' future ministry will be addressed in the chapter on future things. It is important to at least note that the church continues to wait for the Savior to bring to completion their salvation. His work on the cross accomplished their salvation, but when Jesus returns for His people, He will complete it forever more, so that the presence and pain of sin no longer exists (*1 Pet. 1:6-9*).
- When He does return, the church has to look forward to the culmination of Jesus' ministry:
  - He will defeat Satan and cast Him in the Lake of Fire (*Rev. 20:7-10*).
  - He will complete His judgment against sin (*Rev. 5:1-10*).
  - He will dwell with His people for all eternity (*Rev. 21-22*).

## Questions for Reflection:

1. Did Jesus have to be fully God and fully man to be the Savior of the world? Why?
2. **What evidence do we have for Jesus' deity? What evidence do we have for Jesus' humanity?**
3. What is the significance of the resurrection and ascension in **Jesus' ministry?**
4. How does knowing about the Doctrine of Christ affect your sense of mission and purpose in planting a church?

## Ideas for Preaching about the Doctrine of Jesus Christ

### *Philippians 2:5-11*

#### A. The Humility of Jesus

- Jesus did not count equality with God something to be held onto.
- He came to serve, not to be served.

#### B. The Obedience of Jesus

- Obedience indicates that there is something to follow.
- Jesus obeys God the Father.
- God the Father sent Him (*Joh. 3:16*).
- Salvation was ultimately God the Father's plan (*Eph. 1:9-10*).

#### C. The exaltation of Jesus

- Every knee shall bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord.
- God the Father will give Him a name that is above all other names.

## Chapter 4

### The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

*For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His. And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors -- not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. Romans 8:5-14*

#### 1. Introduction

This chapter explores the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. We have already discussed the Holy Spirit in several places in previous chapters. The purpose of this chapter, however, is to focus more specifically on the *nature* of the Holy Spirit and the *work* of the Holy Spirit. We will give special attention to the unique activities designated to the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity, and His work is to manifest God's presence in the world and in the Church. In this chapter, we will explain why Jesus said: *Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you (Joh. 6:7).*



## 2. The Personality of the Holy Spirit <sup>1</sup>

Often times the Holy Spirit is viewed as an impersonal force (*the power of God*) rather than a distinct person. One of the reasons for this is the names and symbols the Bible often gives the Holy Spirit appear to suggest this conclusion (For examples, see sections 4 and 5 in this chapter).

However, the Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit is indeed a person. Viewing the Holy Spirit in this way is important for two reasons: to honor the Holy Spirit for who He is, and to maintain the doctrine of the Trinity (one God in three persons).

### A. The Use of Masculine, Personal Pronouns, helps teach the Personality of the Holy Spirit.

- In *John 16:7-13*, the masculine personal pronoun (He or Him) is used twelve times. This is an important observation because if the Holy Spirit is a person, the masculine pronoun is necessary.

### B. The Personality of the Holy Spirit is Taught by the Name *Helper* that Jesus Gives to Him.

- Jesus describes the Holy Spirit as a *Helper* in a way that portrays Him as a personal influencer (*Joh. 16:7; 14:16*).
  - He convicts the world of sin, righteousness and judgment (*Joh. 16:8*).
  - He will guide us in all truth (*Joh. 16:13*).
  - He speaks what He hears (*Joh. 16:13*).
- The same word used in *John 14* and *16* to speak of the Holy Spirit as a *Helper* is used of Jesus in *1 John 2:1*, to refer to the ministry of Jesus.

*My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous (1 Joh. 2:1).*

### C. The Personality of the Holy Spirit is Seen Because the Bible Uses Personal Attributes to Describe Him.

- He has a mind: *Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God (Rom. 8:27).*
- He has a will: *But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills (1 Cor. 12:11).*
- He has emotion: *And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption (Eph. 4:30).*

D. The Personality of the Holy Spirit is Taught by Attributing Personal Actions to Him.

- He speaks: *Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go near and overtake this chariot" (Act. 8:29; See also Act. 10:19; 13:2, 20:28).*
- He leads: *But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law (Gal. 5:18; See also Rom. 8:14).*
- He teaches: *But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you (Joh. 14:26; See also Joh. 16:13-15).*
- He judges: *And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment (Joh. 16:8).*
- He loves: *Now I beg you, brethren, through the Lord Jesus Christ, and through the love of the Spirit, that you strive together with me in prayers to God for me (Rom. 15:30).*

E. The Personality of the Holy Spirit is Taught by the Attitudes and Responses People Can Have Towards Him.

- He can be disrespected: *Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? (Heb. 10:29).*

- He can be lied to: *But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself?" (Act. 5:3).*
- He can be resisted: *Do not quench the Spirit (1 The.5:19).*

### 3. The Deity of the Holy Spirit <sup>2</sup>

#### A. The Holy Spirit is Divine.

- The Holy Spirit is called God: *But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself? While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God" (Act. 5:3-4).*
- The Spirit is identified with Yahweh: *But the Holy Spirit also witnesses to us; for after He had said before, "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them," then He adds, "Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more" (Heb. 10:15-17; See also Eze. 37:1; Mic. 3:8).*
- The Holy Spirit is spoken of as Divine: *But he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is subject to eternal condemnation (Mar. 3:29).*

#### B. He is Equal with God the Father and God the Son.

- The Holy Spirit's equality with God the Father and God the Son is declared in the Scriptures.
  - Jesus declares it (*Mat 28:18-20, Joh. 14:16*).
  - The Apostle Paul declares it (*2 Cor. 13:14*).
  - The Apostle Peter declares it (*1 Pet. 1:2*).
- The Holy Spirit's relationship to God the Father and God the Son confirms His equality.
  - His relationship with God the Father
    - Declared to be God the Father's Spirit (*Eph. 3:16*).
    - Declared to be the Spirit of Yahweh.

- Claimed by God the Father to be His Spirit (*Mat. 12:18*).
- His relationship with God the Son
  - Declared to be the Spirit of Jesus Christ (*Gal. 4:6*, *Phi. 1:19*).
- The participation of the Holy Spirit in divine activity confirms His equality with God the Father and God the Son.
  - At Jesus' baptism, the Holy Spirit is sent by God the Father to declare that Jesus is His Beloved Son and to empower Him for ministry (*Mat. 3:16-17*).
  - When Jesus was tempted in the wilderness, He was led by the Holy Spirit (*Mat. 4:1-7*).
  - God sent the Holy Spirit to resurrect Jesus Christ from the dead (*Rom. 8:11*).
  - Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to empower His church for His mission (*Act. 1:8*).

#### C. He Has the Attributes of God.

- He is omnipresent: *Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend into heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there (Psa. 139:7-8).*
- He is omniscient: *But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God (1 Cor. 2:10-11).*
- He is omnipotent: *The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters (Gen. 1:2).*
- He is eternal: *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? (Heb. 9:14).*

#### 4. The Names and Titles of the Holy Spirit <sup>3</sup>

- A. *The Spirit of God (1 Cor. 2:11; 3:16)*. This demonstrates the Holy Spirit's divine relationship with God and their unity in God's purposes.
- B. *The Spirit of Christ (Rom. 8:9)*. This demonstrates the Holy Spirit's divine relationship with God the Son and their unity in God's plan of salvation through Jesus Christ.
- C. *The Eternal Spirit (Heb. 9:14)*. This attests to the guarantee of God's work through the Holy Spirit, since He is eternal.
- D. *The Spirit of Truth (Joh. 16:13, 2)*. The Holy Spirit knows the mind of God and all truth, and thus He is able to reveal the truth (see *1 Cor. 2:10*).
- E. *The Spirit of Grace (Heb. 10:29)*. The grace of salvation comes from all the persons of the Trinity, and thus, the Holy Spirit's primary disposition towards believers is grace.
- F. *The Spirit of Glory (1 Pet. 4:14)*. The Spirit is honored and glorified by those who live by His power.
- G. *The Spirit of Life (Rom. 8:2)*. The Holy Spirit is the giver of spiritual and eternal life.
- H. *The Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation (Eph. 1:17)*. The Holy Spirit reveals true, life transforming, spiritual understanding.
- I. *The Comforter (Joh. 14:26)*. The Holy Spirit guides the people of God in the truth of God.
- J. *The Spirit of Promise (Act. 1:4-5)*. The giving of the Spirit is the testimony that God has fulfilled His promises to His people.
- K. *The Spirit of Adoption (Rom. 8:15)*. Those who receive the Holy Spirit have been adopted into God's family.

- L. *The Spirit of Holiness (Rom. 1:4)*. He is holy. Whatever the Holy Spirit does is righteous and just.

## 5. The Emblems of the Holy Spirit <sup>4</sup>

### A. *Dove (Joh. 1:32)*.

- The Holy Spirit is symbolized as a dove only once, at Jesus' baptism. This takes place to fulfill the Old Testament prophecy that the Spirit of God would come upon the Christ of God (*Isa. 61:1*).

### B. *Water (Joh. 7:37-39)*.

- The Holy Spirit symbolized as water captures the regenerating work and power of the Holy Spirit in the lives of those who believe in Jesus Christ (see *Titus 3:5*).

### C. *Oil (Luk. 4:18)*.

- The Holy Spirit symbolized as oil attests to the anointing work of the Spirit to empower people for the work of God.

### D. *The Seal (Eph. 1:13; 4:30; 2 Cor. 1:22)*.

- The Holy Spirit symbolized as a seal captures that God gives the Holy Spirit as a guarantee of salvation in Jesus Christ.

### E. *Wind (Joh. 3:8; Act. 2:1-2)*.

- The Holy Spirit symbolized as the wind attests to the power and sovereignty of the Holy Spirit to accomplish His mission.

### F. *Fire (Act. 2:3)*.

- The Holy Spirit symbolized as Fire attests to the transforming power of the Holy Spirit. When the Spirit came like fire and rested upon the followers of Jesus, they were transformed immediately (*Act. 2:3-4*).

## 6. The Works of the Holy Spirit

### A. Concerning Creation:

*O LORD, how manifold are Your works! In wisdom You have made them all. The earth is full of Your possessions – this great and wide sea, in which are innumerable teeming things, living things both small and great. There the ships sail about; There is that Leviathan which You have made to play there. These all wait for You, that You may give them their food in due season. What You give them they gather in; You open Your hand, they are filled with good. You hide Your face, they are troubled; You take away their breath, they die and return to their dust. You send forth Your Spirit, they are created; and You renew the face of the earth (Psa. 104:24-30; See also Gen. 1:2; Job 26:13; 33:4).*

### B. Concerning the Bible:

- Revelation – The Holy Spirit spoke to human authors the message he wanted to transmit (*1 Cor. 2:13*).
- Inspiration – The Holy Spirit guided the pens of the writers so the message could be accurately written (*2 Pet. 1:19-21; See also 2 Tim. 3:15-17*).
- Illumination – The Holy Spirit takes the Word when it is read and preached and enlightens the minds of those who receive it (*1 Cor. 2:7-12; See also Eph. 1:15-19; Joh. 14:25-26*).

### C. Concerning Jesus: <sup>5</sup>

- Jesus' virgin conception (*Mat. 1:18-20; Luk. 1:35*).
- Jesus was anointed by the Holy Spirit (*Mat. 3:16; Luk. 10:38*).
- Jesus was led and empowered by the Holy Spirit (*Mat. 4:1*).
- Jesus offered Himself at death through the Holy Spirit (*Heb. 9:14*).
- Jesus was raised from the dead by the power of the Spirit (*Rom. 1:4; 1 Pet. 3:18*).

- Jesus commanded His disciples through the Holy Spirit (*Act. 1:2*).
- Jesus will return and raise the dead in Christ through the Holy Spirit (*Rom. 8:11*).

D. Concerning unbelieving sinners:

- He convicts of sin, righteousness, and future judgment (*Joh. 16:7-11*).
- He illuminates their minds so they are able to understand the Gospel (*1 Cor. 2:7-12*).

E. Concerning the Church:

- The Holy Spirit's new ministry to the Church begins at Pentecost (*Act. 1:4-2:47*)
  - The gift of Tongues at Pentecost demonstrated that God fulfilled His promise to send His Spirit in order to offer salvation to anyone who calls upon the name of the Lord.
  - The result of God giving His Spirit on that day: 3,000 people were saved, and the Church was formed (*Act. 2:44-47*).
  - Quoting the prophet Joel, Peter explains the gift of tongues on this day. He says:

*But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: 'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams. And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; and they shall prophesy. I will show wonders in heaven above and signs in the earth beneath: Blood and fire and vapor of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD. And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved' (Act. 2:16-22).*



- The Holy Spirit formed the Universal Church (*Eph. 2:19-22*).
- Regarding the Local Church:
  - The Holy Spirit inspires its worship (*Phi. 3:3*).
  - The Holy Spirit directs and empowers its mission work (*Act. 1:8, 13:2-4, 16:6-10*).
  - The Holy Spirit helps it's singing (*Eph. 5:18-19*).
  - The Holy Spirit appoints and anoints its pastors (*Act. 20:28, 1 Cor. 2:4*).
  - The Holy Spirit cautions its members (*1 Tim. 4:1*).
  - The Holy Spirit guides its decisions (*Act. 15:28*).
  - The Holy Spirit blesses and rebukes (*Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 29*).

Question for discussion: Does this describe how the Holy Spirit works in your church or fellowship? Discuss.

- He empowers the church to accomplish their mission and to live their new life together (*Act. 1:8, Gal. 5:22-23*).
- On the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit comes to fill the people of God to empower them to accomplish their mission and to live their new life together as the community of faith. This is when the Church age began.
- The manifestation of the Tongues on this occasion was a sign that the Spirit of God had come upon God's people.

#### F. Concerning Christians: <sup>6</sup>

- The Holy Spirit regenerates the believing sinner (*Tit. 3:5; Joh. 3:3-7*). To regenerate means to cause to be born again.
- The Holy Spirit baptizes the believing sinner (*Rom. 6:3-4; 1 Cor. 12:13, Gal. 3:27*). <sup>7</sup>
  - Spirit baptism and salvation occur simultaneously in a believing sinner's life. The baptism of the Spirit is not an event that is separate from salvation; it is not a second work of grace that Christians are called to pursue, and it is not something that happens only to an elite group of Christians.

- In *1 Cor. 12:13*, Paul describes the Spirit baptism as having already happened to the Corinthians, even though some of them could be considered the *least spiritual* in the New Testament. The baptism of the Spirit is the Spirit placing us into the body of Christ (*1 Cor. 12:13*).
- Each new believer is thus identified with the universal church (Christ's body), of which Christ is the head (*Col. 1:18*). Spirit-baptism is part of God's *once-for-all* gift every believer receives at the moment of salvation.
- Spirit baptism is not the same as water baptism. Water baptism is to salvation what a wedding ring is to a marriage – it is an outward, visible symbol of a deeper reality.
- Water baptism is to occur as soon as possible *after* salvation as the new believer's first step of obedience to God (*Act. 2:41; 8:37-38*), while Spirit baptism *already occurred* in the believer's life at the moment of salvation.
- The Holy Spirit ministers in and on behalf of Christians. Here are some examples:
  - The Holy Spirit indwells the believing sinner (*Joh. 14:16, 20; Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 2:12; 3:16*).
  - The Holy Spirit seals the believing sinner (*2 Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:13; 4:30*).
  - The Holy Spirit fills the believing sinner (*Act. 2:4; 4:8; 6:3; 9:17; 11:24; Eph. 5:18*).
  - The Holy Spirit assures the Christian of salvation (*Rom. 8:16; 1 Joh. 3:24*).
  - The Holy Spirit teaches the Christian (*1 Cor. 2:10; 1 Joh. 2:27*).
  - The Holy Spirit empowers the Christian for witnessing (*Act. 1:8; Mat. 13:11*).
  - The Holy Spirit imparts the love of Christ to a Christian (*Rom. 5:5*).
  - The Holy Spirit matures a Christian into Christ-likeness (*2 Cor. 3:18*).

- The Holy Spirit strengthens the inner man of a Christian (*Eph. 3:1*).
- The Holy Spirit gives the Christian freedom (*2 Cor. 3:17*).
- The Holy Spirit guides a Christian (*Joh. 16:13*).
- The Holy Spirit assists in helping Christians pray according to God's will (*Rom. 8:26-27*).
- The Holy Spirit equips Christians with Spiritual Gifts to serve others for the glory of God and their good. (*Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Cor. 12:4-7; Eph. 4:11*)
  - Definition of a spiritual gift: Spiritual gifts are God-given abilities to serve. The Greek word for spiritual gift (*charisma*) is a form of the word *grace*. The gift of these spiritual gifts is a sign of God's grace, and the fruit of these gifts are a sign of God's grace. God graciously enables all believers to serve in spiritual ministry, in order to be a gracious blessing to others.
    - Spiritual gifts are not particular positions or offices in the church (pastor, elder, deacon, etc.). Gifts are used in these positions, but these positions are not spiritual gifts. However, it is important to identify a leader's spiritual gifts, because if someone has a particular gift, they may be gifted for a particular position.
    - Spiritual gifts are not the same as natural talent (for example, musical ability). God however may give spiritual gifts that make use of natural abilities. A musician may have the gift of encouragement, and their music may in fact inspire and encourage others. An experienced school teacher may have the gift of teaching, etc.
  - Purpose of spiritual gifts: Spiritual gifts are ultimately given in order to bring glory to God through the strengthening and building up of the believers.
  - The abuse and neglect of spiritual gifts: (*1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6*). On several occasions, the Apostle Paul warns against the misuse, abuse and neglect of spiritual gifts. Once we identify the gifts we have, we

must pay careful attention to how we develop and use those gifts.

- The Holy Spirit produces fruit in the lives of those who live in the Spirit by faith in the Gospel.<sup>8</sup>
  - Outward fruit involves evangelism and sharing your faith to others (*Joh. 4:35*).
  - Inward fruit involves the development of Christ-like character in our lives (*Gal. 5:22-23*).
    - Paul lists nine characteristics of the fruit of the Spirit. These fruits are signs of the life transforming power of the Gospel through the work of the Spirit.
    - *Love*: a Spirit-given affection for God, where we pursue His glory above all other things, and Spirit-given affection of others, where we pursue their good with the same level of devotion that we pursue our own good.
    - *Joy*: a Spirit-given gladness in the salvation of Jesus Christ, expressed powerfully in hard times.
    - *Peace*: a Spirit-given confidence in God and tranquility regardless of our circumstances.
    - *Patience*: a Spirit-given willingness and ability to endure difficult times.
    - *Kindness*: a Spirit-given charity and grace towards others.
    - *Goodness*: a Spirit-given virtue to do what is right and just towards all people.
    - *Faithfulness*: a Spirit-given commitment to the will and purpose of God for your life.
    - *Gentleness*: a Spirit-given even-temperedness in all situations.
    - *Self-Control*: a Spirit-given restraint on the desires of our flesh (anger, greed, lust, covetousness, etc.).
  - The Holy Spirit is pictured as our *helper*<sup>9</sup> in *John 14:16*: *And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper that He may abide with you forever.*
  - There are four important truths in this passage.<sup>10</sup>

- *Another* – the word Jesus uses means *another just like Me*. Though Jesus would be physically absent from them, they would have the presence of the Holy Spirit with them.
- *Helper* – this one would come to their aid and minister to them.
- *With you* – Jesus says that the Spirit is *with* them, but will soon be permanently resident *in* them as God indwells each believer through the Holy Spirit (v. 17).
- *Forever* – it is a permanent relationship!

### Questions for Reflection:

1. Is the Holy Spirit a person? How do you know?
2. Who sent the Holy Spirit? Why?
3. Why do you think Jesus said that *it is to your advantage* for Him to go and to send the Holy Spirit (John 16:7)?
4. What are spiritual gifts? What are the purposes for spiritual gifts?
5. **What was the Holy Spirit's role at Pentecost?**

## Ideas for Preaching about the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

### 1. *Romans 8:5-14*

#### A. Live according to the Spirit (v. 5).

- Flesh versus Spirit.
- The picture of living for the Flesh is living for yourself and living self-sufficient.
  - This is the picture of sin.
  - Self-sufficiency will produce the opposite of each of the fruits of the Spirit (*Galatians 5:22-23*).
- The picture of living for the Spirit is living according to what the Spirit has done in your life and what the Spirit seeks to do in the lives of others.
  - Living according to the Spirit is living in Spirit-dependence.
  - You live according to the Spirit by setting your mind on the things of the Spirit (v. 5).
  - What are the things of the Holy Spirit?
  - What are the ministries of the Holy Spirit?
  - What does Jesus say the Holy Spirit will do in *John 16*?

#### B. The Holy Spirit is the promise of life (v. 11).

- The same Spirit who resurrected Jesus from the grave gives life to everyone who believes.
- This life is spiritual life.
  - Spiritual life bears fruit.
  - Spiritual life knows God and wants to obey him.
  - Spiritual life is eternal.

#### C. The Holy Spirit proclaims to your spirit that you are sons of God (v. 14).

The spirit of adoption is different than the spirit of the flesh.

- The spirit of the flesh is fear (see *Hebrews 2:15*).
- The spirit of the Holy Spirit is confidence—You are Sons of God!

## 2. *John 16:7-15* - The Ministry of the Holy Spirit

- A. He convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment (v. 8).
- B. He guides the disciples of Jesus into truth (v. 13).
- C. The Holy Spirit to glorify Jesus Christ (v. 14).
- D. The Holy Spirit does come to glorify Himself but to glorify Jesus.



## Chapter 5

### The Doctrine of Angels

*But to which of the angels has He ever said: "Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool"? Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?  
Hebrews 1:13-14*

#### 1. Introduction

- A. When people think about angels, they usually have in mind supernatural beings that serve God's purposes in the world. This perspective is a correct view. However, among those created supernatural beings exists those who are enemies of God as well. These are the fallen angels, who are called the devil and his demons.
- B. These supernatural beings have a few characteristics in common:
  - They are created by God and exist for His purposes (*Col. 1:15-16*).
  - They do not possess the essential divine attributes such as eternality, omnipresence, omniscience, and omnipotence (*Mat. 24:36; Psa. 148:3-5*).
  - Both angels and demons exist under the sovereign authority of God (*Job 1:6-12; Luk. 1:26; Rev. 9:1-5*).
- C. In this section, we will look at these supernatural created beings under two headings, Angels and Fallen Angels.
- D. All the angels were created in untested holiness (*Jud. 6*). Some angels revolted, and they were thrown down to earth from heaven (*Rev. 12:7-13*). Other angels remain obedient to God. The Bible refers to these angels as elect angels (*Mat. 18:10; 1 Tim. 5:21*).

- E. According to Scripture one third of the angels fell, and two thirds are elect.
- F. What we believe about these beings should be based upon the Scriptures. The Bible teaches us about angels and demons in both the Old Testament and New Testament.

## 2. Angels <sup>1</sup>

### A. Names and Descriptive Titles for Angels (Angels are servants of God. The word angel means *messenger* (*Dan. 4:13, 17, 23*)).

- Angel of God (*Gen. 28:12; Act. 10:3; Gal. 4:14*).
- Angel of the Lord (*1 Chr. 21:16-18; Luk. 2:9; Act. 8:26*).
- Heavenly Host (*2 Chr. 18:18; Psa. 89:6; Luk. 2:13*).
- Holy One (*Job 5:1; Psa. 89:7; Dan. 4:17*).
- Living Creatures (*Eze. 1:2-24; Rev. 4:6-9; Rev. 6:1-8*).
- Mighty One (*Psa. 29:1-2*).
- Multitudes of Heaven (*Neh. 9:6*).
- Ministering Spirits (*1 Tim. 5:21; Heb. 1:14*).
- Servants (*Job 4:18*)

### B. Angels Are Created Beings (*Col. 1:15-16; Neh. 9:6*).

- Because angels are created by God, they are called to worship Him (*Job 38:4-7; Heb. 1:6; Jud. 6-9; Psa. 148:3-5*).
- Though they are created, angels are different than men (*Heb. 1:7, 14*).

*What is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit him? For You have made him a little lower than the angels, and You have crowned him with glory and honor (Psa. 8:4-5).*

### C. The Nature of Angels.

- Angels are personal. They have intelligence, emotions, and a will.

- Intelligence (See *Eph. 3:8-11*; *2 Sam. 14:17, 20*; *Mat. 24:36*; *1 Pet. 1:12*).
- Emotions (See *Rev. 5:11-12*; *Job 38:7*; *Luk. 2:13-14, 15:7-10*; *Heb. 12:22*).
- Will: *Now I, John, saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. Then he said to me, See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God (Rev. 22:8-9; See also 1 Pet. 1:12).*
- The characteristics of angels:
  - Angels are holy (*Job 5:1, Dan. 4:13-13, Rev. 14:10*): *For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels (Mar 8:38).*
  - Angels are not perfect, and may be flawed (*Job 15:15-16*): *If He puts no trust in His servants, If He charges His angels with error, how much more those who dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, who are crushed before a moth? (Job 4:18-19).*
  - Angels are meek (*2 Pet. 2:11*): *Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!" (Jud. 1:9).*
  - Angels are powerful (*Psa. 103:20, Mat. 24:31, Act. 5:19, Rev. 7:1*): *And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer (Rev. 12:7-8).*
  - Angels are obedient (*Mat. 6:10*): *Bless the LORD, you His angels, who excel in strength, who do His word, heeding the voice of His word (Psa. 103:20).*

- Angel are wise: *To bring about this change of affairs your servant Joab has done this thing; but my lord is wise, according to the wisdom of the angel of God, to know everything that is in the earth (2 Sam. 14:20).*

#### D. The Organization of Angels.

- The Bible says that there are a large number of angels. They cannot be counted. *Heb. 12:22* says that they are *innumerable*, and *Rev. 5:11* says there are *ten thousand times ten thousand*.
- The Scriptures also speak of the angels in an *assembly* or *council*. They are presumably organized for battle, to wage war against the demons (*Rev. 12:7*). Paul uses *rulers and principalities* to indicate that angels are organized to govern and protect the universe (*Eph. 3:10*).<sup>2</sup>
- Within the angelic host, there are different classifications and rank of angels.
- The Archangel:
  - Only a few angels are named in the Bible. The archangel is one of those. His name is Michael. The archangel is Israel's guardian angel. He helps them in their time of trouble. (*Dan. 10:21, 12:1*).
  - The archangel leads the heavenly host against Satan and his demons (*Rev. 12:7*).
  - The voice of the archangel will be heard at the second coming of Jesus Christ, when the dead in Christ rise (*1 The. 4:16*).
- Chief Princes:
  - This is an order of high-ranking angels, who apparently are given authority of political power of nations. Michael the archangel is among this group (*Dan. 10:13*).
- Cherubim:
  - This is a special order of angels who have the responsibility of guarding the Garden of Eden, the tabernacle, the Ark of the Covenant, and the throne of God. Satan was from this order before he fell (*Eze.*

*28:14-16; See also Gen. 3:22-24; Exo. 37:1-9; Eze. 1:4-14; Rev. 4:6-9).*

- Seraphim:

- This is a special order of angels that has to do with worship and the holiness of God. We know about these angels from only one place in the Bible (*Isa. 6:1-6*).

- Special Angel: Gabriel

Gabriel is the only other angel in the Bible whose name is known. He is a special messenger of God. He delivers messages to:

- Daniel – *Dan. 8:16; 9:21*.
- Zechariah – *Luk. 1:19*.
- Mary – *Luk. 1:21*.

E. The Ministry of Angels.

- Angels were created to serve God. They worship God. They are messengers of God who minister to God's people.
- Ministry to God:
  - Angels gather around the throne of God (*2 Chr. 18:18*).
  - Angels meet with God (*Job 1:6; 2:1*).
  - Angels serve God (*Psa. 103:21*).
  - Angels worship and rejoice over God (*Job 38:6-7; Psa. 29:1; Isa. 6:1-6; Eze. 10:1-19; Rev. 4:6-9*).
  - Angels carry out God's commands and communicate His message (*Psa. 103:20-22; Luk. 1:11-13*).
- Ministry to Christ:
  - Angels announced the birth of Jesus Christ (*Mat. 1:20-25*).
  - Angels directed Joseph and Mary to Egypt to protect the Jesus (*Mat. 2:13, 19*).
  - Angels attended with Jesus during His earthly ministry (*Mat. 4:11*).
  - Angels attended with Jesus during His death, resurrection, and ascension (*Mat. 26:53; 28:1-7; Mar. 16:2-7; Joh. 20:10-12; Act. 1:10-11*).

- Angels worship and praise the exalted Jesus Christ (*Heb. 1:4-6; Rev. 5:11-14*).
- Angels celebrate the Gospel of Jesus Christ (*1 Pet. 1:12; Rev. 14:6*).
- Angels will be active in the second coming of Jesus Christ.
  - They will accompany Christ in His return (*2 The. 1:7*).
  - They will execute judgment (*Rev. 8:5-13*).
  - They will gather God's people (*Mat. 24:31*).
  - They will purge evil (*Mat. 13:37-49*).
- Ministry to the people of God:
  - Angels bear witness to the faith of the people of God (*Luk. 12:8; 1 Cor. 4:8; 1 Tim. 5:21*).
  - Angels deliver, guide and protect the people of God (*Mat. 24:31; Act. 5:19; 12:5-11; Psalms. 34:7; 91:9-11; Act. 8:25*).
  - Angels serve the people of God (*Heb. 1:14*).
  - Angels give divine messages to the people of God (*Luk. 1; Act. 10:3-32; 27:23-24*).
- Ministry to the nations and unbelievers:
  - Angels work among the nations to proclaim that the God of the Bible is sovereign over all the nations of the world (*Dan. 4:17; 10:13; 10:20-11:1; 12:1*).
  - Angels carry out judgment on unbelievers (*Gen. 19:12-13; Act. 12:23; Rev. 16:1; 19:17-18*).
  - Angels subdue evil (*Psalms. 35:5; Mat. 13:37-42*).

#### F. A Word of Caution about Angels.

- Angels should not be worshipped, prayed to, or pursued (*Col. 2:18; Rev. 19:10*).
  - We should only worship, pray to and seek God.
  - Angels protect and guide the people of God, so that they will worship God and enjoy the salvation of God (*1 Tim. 2:5; Heb. 1:14*).
- Beware of false teaching from angels. God's servants will not speak false teaching to God's people, but Satan and his demons can disguise themselves as Angels of light.

They can deceive God's people (*1 Kin. 13:18; Gal. 1:8; 2 Cor. 11:14; 1 Joh. 4:3-4*).

### 3. Fallen Angels <sup>3</sup>

#### A. The Origin of Fallen Angels.

- Satan and the demons are evil, fallen angels who sinned against God and continually work evil in the world. Everything God created was good (*Gen. 1:31*). The fallen Angels were created good (*Eze. 28:12-17*), but they rebelled and turned against God. They rebelled sometime before the events recorded in *Genesis 3*. Satan was the serpent who tempted Adam and Eve in *Genesis 3* (See also *2 Pet. 2:4, Jud. 6*.)
- Satan's fall from heaven is described in *Isaiah 14:12-15*.

*How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north. Isa. 14:12-13.*

- When Satan and his host rebelled, they were thrown down to the earth (*Rev. 12:4*).
- They will ultimately be cast into the Lake of Fire (*Mat. 25:41; Rev. 20:1-10*).

#### B. Descriptive Titles and Names of Fallen Angels.

- As noted earlier, nearly one third of the angels have fallen. Satan is the leader of these fallen angels who are called demons.
- Satan: The head of the evil hosts is Satan. His is a personal, created being. The Scriptures teach that he exists (*Job 1:6; 1 Chr. 21:1; Zec. 3:1; Mat. 4:10*).
  - Jesus says that He saw Satan fall from heaven (*Luk. 10:18*).

- The Bible uses a number of descriptive titles and names for Satan.
  - The Accuser of our Brothers (*Rev. 12:10*).
  - The Angel of the Abyss (*Rev. 9:11*).
  - The Devil and evil one (*Mat. 4:1-11; Eph. 6:16*).
  - The Dragon (*Rev. 20:2*).
  - Our Enemy (*1 Pet. 5:8*).
  - A Liar and Murderer (*Joh. 8:44*).
  - The Prince of this World (*Joh. 12:31*).
  - The spirit that now works in the sons of disobedience (*Eph. 2:2*).
- Demons: The reality of an evil host of demons is also taught in Scripture (*Deu. 32:17; 1 Cor. 10:20-21; Rom. 8:38; Mar. 5:1-16; Rev. 9:20*).
  - The Bible uses a number of descriptive titles and names for the demons.
    - Deceiving Spirits (*1 Cor. 11:13*).
    - Evil Spirits (*Mar. 1:23-27*).

### C. The Nature of Satan and Demons.

- Satan and his demonic host are fallen angels. Their essential nature therefore is same as the whole angelic host.
- Both Satan and Angels are created beings (*Eze. 28:13*).
- They are personal, individual beings that have intelligence, emotions and a will (*Mar. 1:34; Jam. 2:19; and Luk. 10:17*). They are powerful (*Mat. 8:28*).
  - Above, we noted the same characteristics of the angels. What distinguishes these demonic beings from angelic ones is their moral character. Angels were created good, but are capable of being evil, for they are not perfect. The elect angels remain in their created goodness.
  - The fallen angels (Satan and his demonic host) lost their created goodness when they rebelled against God. God says, *You were the model of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty* (*Eze. 28:12*). They



are all morally depraved now (*Luk. 11:24-26; 2 Cor. 11:13; Rev. 18:2*).

- In regards to their power, though they are no longer good, Satan and his demons are still powerful (*Mar. 9:20-29; Act. 19:16*).
  - They have the power to communicate to people (*Act. 16:16*).
  - They have the power to hurt people (*Mat. 12:22*).
  - They have the power to lead people to evil (*1 Sam. 18:10-11; 1 Tim. 4:1-2; Jam. 3:14-15*).
  - They have the power to work miracles (*Rev. 16:13-14*).
- Their power is restrained by God's sovereign power.
  - Satan's power over Job was limited (*Job 1:6-11*).
  - Demons fear Jesus Christ and must submit to His authority (*Mar. 5:7*).
  - Demons obey Jesus Christ (*Mar. 1:23-27*).
  - Demons testify to the authority of Jesus Christ (*Mat. 8:29; Mar. 3:11*).

#### D. The Work of Satan and His Demons.

- Satan opposes God (*Joh. 14:30; Act. 13:10; Rev. 12:13* compared with *Gen. 3:15*).
  - Why Satan Opposes God:
    - Satan intends to ruin believers (*Luk. 22:31-32; 1 Tim. 5:15*).
    - Satan intends to hinder true faith (*Act. 5:3; Rev. 12:9*).
    - Satan intends to establish his own kingdom (*Col. 1:13*).
  - Methods used to oppose God:
    - Accuses believers (*Zec. 3:1; Rev. 12:10*).
    - Afflicts mankind (*Luk. 13:16; Rev. 2:10*).
    - Entraps and conquers believers (*2 Tim. 2:26*).
    - Deceives Christians (*Gen. 3:1-13; 1 Cor. 11:13-15*).
    - Murders people (*Joh. 8:44*).
    - Distorts what is right (*Act. 13:10; 2 The. 2:9-10*).
    - Prompts sin (*1 Chr. 21:1; Joh. 13:2. 27*).

- Schemes against God (*2 Cor. 2:11*).
- Stalks and traps believers (*1 Pet 5:8*).
- Steals the seeds of the Word of the Gospel (*Mat 13:19* and *Luk. 8:12*).
- Tempts believers (*1 The. 3:5*).
- Threatens believers (*Heb. 2:14-15*).
- Takes control of human beings through demon possession (*1 Sam. 16:14-23; Mar. 7:25-26; 9:17-29; Luk. 4:33-34*).
- Results of Demon Possession:
  - Destructive actions (*Mar. 5:5; 9:17-26; Luk. 4:35*).
  - Increased strength (*Mar. 5:2-4; Act 19:16*).
  - Mental disturbance (*1 Sam. 16:14; Luk. 8:27-29*).
  - Physical Harm (*Mat. 9:32-33; 17:15-18; Luk. 11:14*).
  - Violence (*Mar. 8:28*).

#### E. God Defeated Satan and His Demons.

- Jesus demonstrates His power over Satan and his demons by resisting their temptation (*Luk. 4:13*).
- Jesus demonstrates His power over Satan and his demons by casting them out of the demon possessed (*Mat 8:16; Luk. 4:33-35*).
- The result of Jesus casting out demons was complete healing, departure of the demon and spiritual awareness (*Mat. 9:20; Mar. 7:30; Luk. 8:38-39*).
- Jesus demonstrates His power over Satan and his demons by giving His disciples the power to cast out demons. They cast demons out in the name of Jesus. (*Mar. 3:14-15; Mat. 7:22; Act 5:15-16*).
- The death and resurrection of Jesus defeated the power and rule of Satan and his demons (*Heb. 2:14*).
- Jesus will soon crush the head of the serpent, also known as Satan (*Rom. 16:20*).

F. The Future of Satan and his demons.

- Satan and his demons are destined to be condemned, defeated, and bound for eternity into the lake of fire (*Gen. 3:14-15; Joh. 16:11; Mat. 25:41*).

*The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever (Rev. 20:10).*

G. How Should Christians think about and act towards Satan and his demons?

- We must keep God first and remember that the power of Satan and his demons is limited (*1 Cor. 10:20-21; Zec. 3:1-2*).
- We must depend on Jesus Christ and remember that Jesus Christ's work on the cross can and will protect us according to his purposes (*Rom. 8:37-39; Rev. 12:11*).
- We must be covered with spiritual protection (*Eph. 6:10-18*).
- Preparation to Resist the Devil<sup>4</sup>
  - Don't underestimate Satan (*Jud. 8-10*).
  - Submit to God (*Jam. 4:7*).
  - Flee from Satan (*Jam. 4:7*).
  - Stand firm in the Faith (*Eph. 6:13-16; 1 Pet. 5:8*).
  - Rely on the power of the Holy Spirit (*1 Joh. 4:4*).
  - Rebuke Satan in the name of Jesus (*Jud. 9*).
  - Apply God's truth to Satan's temptations (*Mat. 4:4*).
- We must remember that God sometimes uses Satan for His purposes (*Luk. 22:31-32; 2 Cor. 12:7; 1 Tim. 1:20*).
- We must remember that Satan is a judged and defeated enemy (*Mat. 5:41, Joh. 12:31, Col. 2:15*).
- Can Christian be demon possessed?
  - No, because the Holy Spirit eternally indwells every believer (*Joh. 16:7*) and has sealed every believer (*Eph. 1:13-14*) since the moment of salvation. In addition, the Holy Spirit is greater than Satan (1

*Joh.4:4*). The Holy Spirit protects the believer from demonic possession. However, if a believer does not resist the devil (see above) then demons can oppress, entrap and defeat believers.

Questions for Reflection:

1. Who are the demons?
2. What are the differences between demons and angels?
3. What are the ministries of the angels?
4. What should we be cautious about when talking about angels and demons?

## Ideas for Preaching about the Doctrine of Angels

### 1. *Hebrews 1:14*

- A. Angels serve those who are being saved.
- B. The primary function of Angels is to glorify Jesus, so they protect Christians to bring glory to Jesus.

### 2. 2 Kings 6:15-17 and Daniel 10:10-21

- A. The reality of spiritual warfare and the need for God's children to live a life of victory rather than victims.
- B. God Allowed Elisha's servant to see what Elisha saw. As a result the servant was able to understand Elisha's courage in the face of danger and death.
- C. Daniel turned from fear to faith when he understood the protection that God had given him.
- D. If God is for us, who can stand against us? (*Rom. 8:31*).

## Chapter 6

### The Doctrine of Man

*How excellent is Your name in all the earth, who have set Your glory above the heavens! Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have ordained strength, because of Your enemies, that You may silence the enemy and the avenger. When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained, what is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit him? For You have made him a little lower than the angels, and You have crowned him with glory and honor. You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet, all sheep and oxen – even the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea that pass through the paths of the seas. O LORD, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth! Psalm 8:1-9*

#### 1. Introduction

- A. So far we have examined the nature of God the Father, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, and angels and demons. In this section, we will look at the nature of humanity. We will explore humanity from three perspectives:
  - The created nature of man.
  - The fallen nature of man.
  - The redeemed nature of man.
- B. From these three perspectives, we will examine the greatness, and even the glory of humanity; the problem with humanity; and the solution for humanity. Most of our attention will be given to the created nature of humanity. The fallen and redeemed natures will be discussed in more detail in coming chapters (the fallen nature of man in chapter 7 on sin and the redeemed nature of man in chapter 8 on salvation).
- C. Every culture has views regarding humanity. Typically, these various positions view humanity in one of two different ways:

- False view #1: Humanity is good and remains basically good. The problem with the world is not with humanity. The problem could be evil spirits, the need for prosperity, corrupt social structures, or the lack of education. We are not denying that there are social structures that need changing or that education must become more accessible around the world. But none of those issues get to the heart of what humanity is like.
- False view #2: Humanity is not good or bad, but we do whatever we have to do to survive. Any standard for what is right and wrong comes from determining what will preserve the society. However, morality is never determined by majority rule. The *majority* can often be wrong. We need a standard *outside of ourselves* by which to measure ourselves. Only the true God and His revealed Word, the Bible, provide that standard.

D. If culture gives us false views of what humanity is really like, what does the Bible teach? The Bible teaches that humanity was initially created good, but because of decisions made by our first parents Adam and Eve, sin entered the hearts of all humanity. We no longer live for the purpose for which God created us, but we live selfishly for ourselves.

## 2. The Created Nature of Humanity <sup>1</sup>

Humanity was created as a special work of God in creation. God Himself breathed the breath of life in the human soul. After God created humanity, He declared, "*It is very good.*" We were created man and female in the image of God for the purpose of representing God in all of the creation.

*So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. 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." And God said, "See, I have given you every herb that*

*yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food. Also, to every beast of the earth, to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which there is life, I have given every green herb for food"; and it was so. Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day (Gen. 1:27-31).*

#### A. Mankind Was Created in the Image of God.

- Men and women are the only created beings said to be created in God's image. This designation gives a unique role within God's creation. We will examine in the preceding section what it means to be created in God's image from a number of aspects.
- We were created to live. God is an eternal, living being. He has life in Himself, but shared this life with humanity. God breathed life into the nostrils of humanity (*Gen. 2:7*).
- However, death entered the created order as a consequence of disobeying God (*Gen. 2:16-17*).
- As a result of sin, every person is born physically alive but spiritually dead.
- We were created as moral beings.
  - We are morally accountable before God. He gave commands for us to follow, and Adam and Eve demonstrated in the face of temptation that they have the ability to make moral decisions. They considered their options and made a choice to disobey God and to sin against Him (*Gen. 3:1-6*).
  - Our moral capacity continues to be demonstrated after sin entered the world. The guilt we experience attests to our moral capacity.
    - Adam and Eve experienced the consequence of their disobedience. Their innocence was gone, and they blamed others for their decision as a way to cover their guilt (*Gen. 3:7-13*).
    - Their first two children, Cain and Abel, demonstrated the disastrous results of sin as Cain



killed Abel out of jealousy and disregard (*Gen. 4:1-15*).

- Joseph's brothers experienced the consequence of their sins (*Gen. 42:21*).
- Judas experienced guilt as a consequence of betraying Jesus (*Mat. 27:1-5*).
- Our capacity to demonstrate moral restraint also points to our moral capacity.
  - Paul said the Gentiles who do not have the law keep some things the law requires by nature (*Rom. 2:14-15*).
  - Paul challenges Christians to train themselves to resist ungodliness (*1 Tim. 4:7-8*).
- All people have a religious nature. Our religious nature may be demonstrated in a number of ways. We observe our religious nature by our created relationship to God and our created capacity to have that relationship.
  - We were created by God and for God.

*For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist (Col. 1:16-17).*

- We are accountable to God and will one day give an answer to Him for our actions (*Mat. 12:36*).
- We are dependent upon God (*Psa. 104:14-30*).
- We are inferior to God (*Job 38:1-12*).
- We have our value from God (*Mat. 6:26-30*).
- We owe our worship to God (*Rev. 4:11*).
- We were created with the capacity to know God, relate to Him and live for Him.
  - We do not merely have a physical body. We are also made of immaterial spirit and soul. We therefore can act in ways that are significant in the spiritual realm. This enables us to relate to God as people. We can pray to Him, praise Him, and hear

His words spoken to us (See *Psa. 103:1-2; Isa. 26:9; Rom. 8:16; 1 Cor. 5:3-5*).

- In their physical body, humanity has capacity to express characteristics that are honoring to God.
  - We can express selflessness (*1 Cor. 10:24*).
  - We can express compassion (*Eph. 4:32*).
  - We can express forgiveness (*Col. 3:13*).
  - We can express goodness (*Mic. 6:8*).
  - We can express love (*Mat. 22:37-40*).
  - We can be indignant toward evil (*Pro. 29:27*).
- Our discussion on humanity's capacity to know God, to relate to Him, and to live for Him raises a question. What constitutes humanity? The Bible uses three main terms to talk about humanity: body, soul and spirit.<sup>2</sup>
  - The body is the physical aspect of man (*Gen. 2:7; 1 Cor. 15:40-54*).
  - The spirit and soul are non-physical aspects of man
    - *Soul*: (*Psa. 19:7; Heb. 6:19; 1 Pet 1:9*).
    - *Spirit*: (*Isa. 26:9; Act. 7:59; Jam. 2:36*).
  - Note: It is difficult to distinguish between the two aspects of soul and spirit. This is difficult because they are not physical and cannot be seen. It is also difficult because the Bible often uses spirit and soul interchangeably. Perhaps, the simplest way to make a distinction is to view the spirit as the immortal life of the person and to view the soul as the mind, will, and emotions.
  - Though the Bible uses these terms to help us understand the nature of humanity, we cannot be divided into parts. We are whole beings that are created by God. Our whole being has been affected by sin, and needs to be redeemed.
- Humanity has an intellectual nature.
  - Our intellectual capacity is attested to in the Bible in two ways:
    - The organizational skills, creativity, and leadership needed to accomplish humanity's mandate to be

fruitful and multiply and have dominion over the whole world required intellectual ability (*Gen. 1:28*).

- The skills and talents demonstrated by people in the Bible exhibited intellectual abilities.
  - Noah built the ark (*Gen. 6:14-16*).
  - Joseph managed the food resources and advanced the wealth of Egypt during a famine (*Gen. 47:13-26*).
  - Moses' father-in-law Jethro organized the people of Israel to help Moses lead them (*Exo. 18*).
  - Before sharing God's plan for the tabernacle, Moses declared that God had equipped a man with the skill and intelligence to build the tabernacle (*Exo. 35:30-35*).
- Humanity has a relational nature. At every point in the story of the Bible, the relational capacity and the relational need of humanity may be discerned.
    - Before Eve was created, Adam did not find a suitable mate for himself among the animals in the garden (*Gen. 2:20*).
    - After Adam and Eve disobeyed, they experienced their guilt in community. They sought to hide from God together. Then, Adam blamed his sin on Eve (*Gen. 3:7-12*).
    - When the Gospel was preached on the day of Pentecost, *3,000* people were saved, and they immediately formed a community: the church. The church cared for its members and gave sacrificially to those outside the church (*Act. 2:43-47*).
    - At the end of this age, when Jesus establishes His eternal kingdom, He will gather His people into a city to form an eternal community (*Rev. 21:2-3; 22-27*).
  - Humanity has a functional nature to subdue the earth.
    - When God created us, He did so for a purpose. He created us to glorify Him (*Isaiah 43:7*). One of the main ways that humanity should seek to accomplish this is by fulfilling their mandate from God. God

instructed us to be fruitful and multiply, to fill the whole world, and to subdue all of creation (*Gen. 1:28*). With this assignment, humanity represents God's rule and reign on the earth.

- There are two implications regarding the nature of humanity based on this assignment.
  - We are superior to the animals.
  - Adam named all the animals (*Gen. 2:19-20*).
  - God permitted for animals to be eaten as food (*Gen. 9:1-3*).
  - God put everything in creation under the controls of humanity (*Psa. 8:6-8*).
  - The Bible teaches that humanity is more valuable than animals (*Mat 6:26; 12:12*).
  - All of humanity is equal before God (*Pro. 22:2; Act. 17:26*).

### 3. The Fallen Nature of Humanity<sup>3</sup>

- A. Humanity was created good. God created us in proper relationship with God, trusting Him, worshipping Him, and pursuing the purpose He gave us. It is important to note that we were not created perfect. We were created in untested innocence with the ability to make moral choices (free will). God gave Adam and Eve the capacity to choose between right and wrong. This ability is indicated by God commanding Adam and Eve to not *eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil* (*Gen. 2:16-17*).
- B. Adam and Eve did not remain in proper relationship with God.

*Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, "Where are you?" So he said, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself." Gen. 3:9-10.*

- What happened? Adam and Eve fell from their created innocence.

- Adam and Eve were tempted by the Satan, disguised as a serpent (*Gen. 3:1-5*).
  - The Serpent raises doubts about God's Word and goodness.
  - The Serpent tells a lie.
- Adam and Eve gave into the temptation and ate from the tree God told them not to eat from (*Gen. 3:6*).
  - Eve was deceived.
  - Eve delighted in what God prohibited.
  - Adam did not stand up as the spiritual leader he was called to be. Instead, he followed Eve and participated in the disobedience.
- What are the consequences of their fall for humanity?
  - The fall of Adam affected the nature of humanity. The image of God in humanity was not destroyed or removed. It was corrupted.

*Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned (Rom. 5:12).*

- Death entered God's creation. <sup>4</sup>
  - The reality of death is demonstrated in the book of Genesis a number of significant ways.
    - Cain killed Abel (*Gen. 4:8*).
    - The first genealogy in the Bible records that they all died, except for Enoch (*Gen. 5*).
    - God destroyed the whole earth, except for two of every kind of animal and Noah's family (*Gen. 6*).
    - Genesis ends with the death of Joseph at the age of 110 (*Gen. 50:22*).
  - The Bible teaches that death affects all humanity (See *Job 14:1-2*; *Psa. 90:9-10*; *Rom. 8:10*; *1 Cor. 15:22*).
- Humanity loses moral clarity and control (*Jud. 17:6*).

*They do not know, nor do they understand; they walk about in darkness; all the foundations of the earth are unstable (Psa.*

82:5; Rom. 7:13-17; Job 21:14; Pro. 14:12; Eze. 12:2; Joh. 1:5).

- Humanity uses its religious nature to worship idols.
  - Humanity displays its religious nature in its disobedience. Rather than worshiping God, we make objects to worship. We noted above that our religious nature is manifested in our ability to recognize greatness or glory and to desire it.
  - Paul says about sin that it is an exchange of one glory for a lesser form of glory.

*For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man -- and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things (Rom. 1:20-23).*

- In Acts , Paul says to the assembled leaders at Mars Hill, *Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are very religious; for as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD (Act. 17:22-23).*
- In Colossians, Paul gives a list of sinful actions and calls them idols, *Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry (Col. 3:5).*
- The Fall distorts intellectual capacity.

*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 (Eph. 4:17-19; Tit. 1:15-16).*

- The Fall broke relational harmony with God and other people.
  - With God (*Psa. 5:4-6; Rom. 5:10; Gen. 3:22-24; Rom. 8:7*).
  - With other People (*Tit. 3:3*).
  - Biblical Examples:
    - Adam blamed Eve (*Gen. 3:12*).
    - Cain killed Abel (*Gen. 4:8*).
    - The brothers of Joseph sold him into slavery (*Gen. 37:12-36*).
    - King David committed adultery with Bathsheba and had her husband killed in battle (*2 Sam. 11*).
    - James and John (two of Jesus' disciples) sought special privilege in the kingdom of God, and the other disciples became angry at their request (*Mar. 10:35-45*).
- The Fall prevents humanity from ruling the earth (*Gen. 3:16-19; Rom. 8:19-24*).

#### 4. Mankind's Redeemed Nature <sup>5</sup>

- A. Redemption in the Christ restores and perfects the created nature of humanity.
- B. We have eternal life (*Joh. 10:10; 17:3; Col. 3:3-4*).
- C. We are empowered to live a new life for God (*Rom. 6:4-7; Eph. 4:20-32*).
- D. Our ability to worship God in spirit and truth is restored (*1 The. 1:10; Rom. 12:1-2; Joh. 4:23-24*).

- E. Our redemption in Jesus Christ renews our intellectual capacity to think rightly before God (*Rom. 12:1-2; Col. 2:1-8*).
- F. Our relationship with God and with other people is restored (*Rom. 5:1; 2 Cor. 5:18-19; Eph. 2:11-22*).
- G. The earth is being restored through the Great Commission and through Christians being a blessing in their world (*Mat 28:18-21; 1 Pet. 2:9-18*).

Questions for Reflection:

1. What distinguishes humanity from the rest of creation?
2. Did humanity in their created nature have to sin?
3. **After the fall, does humanity lose the “image of God?”**



## Ideas for Preaching about the Doctrine of Man

### *Psalms 8*

- A. Greatness of God's Plan in Creation Declared (v. 1-2).
- B. Glory of God Compared to Humanity (v. 3-4).
  - What is man that you regard him?
- C. The Glory of Humanity's Responsibilities in Creation (v. 5-8)
  - Note: A statement on humanities' sinful condition is not included. This is probably *not* an oversight or meant to imply that it is unimportant. Rather, sinfulness of humanity is assumed.
  - Hebrews 2:6 identifies this Psalm and applies it Jesus. It is in Jesus that glory of man is restored.
- D. Despite the honor of humanity on the earth and humanity's failures, the Lord is still the most glorious and majestic Being in all the earth (v. 9).

## Chapter 7

### The Doctrine of Sin

*For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against You, You only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Your sight – that You may be found just when You speak, and blameless when You judge. Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me. Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom.*  
*Psalms 51:3-6*

#### 1. Introduction

- A. The history of humanity according to the Scripture is a history of people committing sinful actions and rebelling against God, and God responding to this by redeeming people from their sins. One Bible teacher said, *Human history is the long, terrible story of man trying to find something other than God, which will make him happy.*<sup>1</sup> In this chapter, we are going to explore what the Bible teaches about sin.
- B. As we get started in our study on sin, here is a short definition: *Sin is any violation of the perfect holiness of God.*<sup>2</sup>
- A longer definition would be: Sin is the failure to keep God's law, obey His will, and worship Him perfectly with our actions, attitudes, and desires.<sup>3</sup>
  - There are many misunderstandings about sin. Each of the following definitions is either wrong or incomplete:<sup>4</sup>
    - Misunderstanding #1: *Sin is an illusion.* Some say it doesn't really exist.
    - Misunderstanding #2: *Sin is an eternal principle of evil outside of God and independent of Him.* This is classic dualism, which has been associated in one form or another with Zoroaster, Yang and Yin in Chinese thought, and early Gnosticism in the first century.

- Misunderstanding #3: *Sin is selfishness*. Though it is true that selfishness is sin, it is an insufficient definition to describe all sin.
  - The Bible defines sin as lawlessness (*1 John 3:4*).
  - Paul tells believers in *1 Corinthians* to do all things to the glory of God (*10:31*). Thus sin is any turn from God's law and any thought or action that does not conform to the glory of God.
  - *Romans 3:23* says that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.
- C. The reason for starting with this definition is to note upfront that, biblically, sin has to do with how we relate to God. We are going to see that sin is the biggest problem in the world, and it affects everything.
- D. It is hard to find someone who does not acknowledge that there is something wrong in the world. What most people do not understand is that the problem with all of humanity is that we have not worshipped, loved and obeyed God. We have rebelled against our creator, and it has caused devastating affects upon our lives and our world. King David was right when he declared, *Against You, You only, have I sinned*" (*Psa. 51:4*).
- E. The problem is not the lack of education, political corruption, economic depression, or health issues. These are all the consequence of something greater. The problem is that we have sinned against God, our Creator.

## 2. The Nature of Sin <sup>5</sup>

- A. Sin Contradicts God's Character and Actions.
- The Bible teaches that God is holy, right and just in all His ways. He has been good to His creation, supplying all that is needed for life. He has kept His Word to His people (*Dan. 4:37; Deu. 32:4*).

- Sinful Acts of humanity challenge whether this is true. Challenging God's character and actions is at the heart of every sin. It begins with the first temptation where Satan says to Eve:

*You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil" (Gen. 3:4-5).*

- This temptation challenges the goodness of God's Word and the justice of God to righteously and faithfully guide humanity in what is right and wrong.
- The Apostle Paul speaks of sin in a similar way:

*Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man – and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen (Rom. 1:22-25).*

- Paul speaks with a sense of amazement in this passage. He says:
  - You claim to be wise.
  - But you have exchanged the glory of incorruptible God and Creator, who is blessed forever, to believe a lie and to worship creatures.
  - Therefore, you have become a fool and are permitted to live in unrighteousness, lustful desires, and in dishonor.
- For Paul, sin is irrational. He says the case should be clear. It is obviously best for us to trust and live for God, but we ignore the reasonable life and live for our own desires. Jeremiah made a similar argument (See *Jer. 2:5-8*).

B. Sin is an Active Violation of God's Law.

- Violating God's law is expressed in a number ways.
  - Missing the mark of God's standard (*Mar. 1:21*).
  - Breaking God's law (*Rom. 2:23*).
  - Falling short of the glory of God (*Rom. 3:23*).
  - Disobeying God (*1 Sam. 28:18*).
  - Lawlessness (*1 Joh. 3:4*).
  - Godlessness (*Rom. 1:18*).
  - Going astray (*Isa. 53:6*).
- We can violate the law intentionally or unintentionally.
  - By being ignorant of the law (*Eze. 45:20; Lev. 4:13; Act. 3:17; 1 Tim. 1:13; 1 Pet. 1:14*).
  - By rejecting the law (*Psa. 51:2-3; Jer. 2:29; Eze. 2:3; Mat. 18:17*).

C. Sin is a Moral Attraction towards Evil.

- Sin is more than mere occasions of disobedience. It is also a way of life, the leaning of the heart.

*Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually (Gen. 6:5; See also Psa. 94:11; Isa. 1:5-6; Jer. 17:9; Eph. 2:1-3).*

3. The Universality of Sin <sup>6</sup>

A. There is Universal Depravity.

- Everyone is Corrupt in Nature: *The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it? (Jer. 17:9; See also Rom. 7:24).*
- Everyone is Evil in desire: *Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually (Gen. 6:5. See also Joh. 3:19-20).*
- Everyone is Sinful in deed: *For there is not a just man on earth who does good And does not sin (Ecc. 7:20).*
- What is Total Depravity? <sup>7</sup>

- Human depravity is an undeniable reality. Yet despite the fact we are sinners, the Bible repeatedly states that after the fall we do retain the image of God (*Gen. 5:1-3; 9:6; 1 Cor. 11:7; Jam. 3:9*).
- While people are not *utterly depraved* and as evil as they could be, all people are *totally depraved* in that their every motive, word, deed, and thought is affected, stained and flawed by sin. Every part of us is affected by this plague of sin:
  - Our mind (*Eph. 4:18*).
  - Our will (*Rom. 6:16-17*).
  - Our emotions (*Tit. 3:3*).
  - Our heart (*Jer. 17:9*).
  - Our conscience (*Tit. 1:15*).
  - Our physical body (*Rom. 8:10*).
- The totality of a person is negatively affected by sin, and there is no aspect of their being not negatively impacted by sin.

B. There is Universal Guilt.

- Everyone is guilty before the Lord for their sin (*Lev. 5:17*).

C. There is Universal Punishment for Sin.

*He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God (Joh. 3:18).*

*He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him (Joh. 3:36).*

D. There is Universal Need for Repentance.

*Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent (Act. 17:30; Joh. 3:3-5).*

## 4. The Origin of Sin <sup>8</sup>

### A. Sin Originated in Heaven with Satan and His Demons.

*You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, till iniquity was found in you. By the abundance of your trading You became filled with violence within, and you sinned; therefore I cast you as a profane thing out of the mountain of God; and I destroyed you, O covering cherub, from the midst of the fiery stones. Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor; I cast you to the ground, I laid you before kings, that they might gaze at you (Eze. 28:15-17).*

### B. Sin Originated on Earth with Adam and Eve.

- Adam and Eve disobeyed God (*Gen. 3:6*).
- Adam and Eve's disobedience was an historical event. It has affected the rest of human history.
- The authors of the New Testament look back on Adam and Eve's sin and affirm that sin entered the world through one man (*Rom. 5:12; 5:16; 2 Cor. 11:3*).
- A question remains. How is the sin of Adam and Eve inherited or passed on to the rest of humanity?
  - We observe in Scripture that the consequences of sin (condemnation, guilt and corruption of human nature) entered the world with Adam's sin.
    - Adam's condemnation/guilt was inherited by all of humanity (*Rom. 5:12-21*).
    - Through one man's sin condemnation and death enters the world for all of humanity.
    - We all experience this condemnation through the reality of death, which is the power of sin (*Heb. 2:14-15*).
    - Thus, Adam represents everyone in the human race, and when he sinned and was condemned, humanity was condemned.
    - Adam's corruption (sinful nature) was inherited by all humanity.

*Among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others (Eph. 2:3).*

- This inherited sinful nature means that we have a corrupt nature toward sin. This outlook is a consequence from being separated from God. We no longer live our lives dependent upon God. We live in the flesh, living dependent upon ourselves.

*We are born separated from God and living dependent upon ourselves. Life separated from God leads to sin. 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 (Eph. 4:18; See also Rom. 8:6-8).*

- Thus, all humanity is represented in Adam, and when he sinned and his nature was corrupted (no longer good before God or able to do good before God) all of humanity's nature was corrupted with him.
  - Finally, we observe in Scripture that everyone ultimately commits sin (*1 Joh. 1:8. See also 1 Kin. 8:46; Psalms. 143:2; Rom. 3:9-10, 23.*)

## 5. The Consequences of Sin

### A. What are the consequences of Sin?

- Separated from the Life of God (*Rom. 8:6; Eph. 4:18; 5:5*).
- Hatred for Righteousness (*Joh. 3:21-22; Rom. 2:4-5*).
- Moral Guilt (*Rom. 6:23*).
- Enslavement to Sin (*Joh. 8:34-36; Rom. 7:14-20*).
- Wrath of God and Eternal Separation from God in Hell (*2 The. 1:8*).
- Moral and Spiritual Blindness (*Tit. 1:15*).
- Natural Disasters (*Rom. 8:19-22*).



- Personal Distress and Anxiety (*Job 4:8; Psa. 38:3; 141:10; Rom. 2:8-9*).

## 6. Who Do We Sin Against?

### A. Sin is Against God.

- Sins of disrespect:
  - Worshiping idols (*Isa. 45:20; Hab. 2:18-20; Rom. 1:25*).
  - Taking the Lord's name in vain (*Exo. 20:7*)
    - Misusing the name of the Lord (*Lev. 21:6*).
    - Swearing falsely by God's name (*Lev. 19:12*).
    - Swearing by other beings (*Jer. 5:7*).
    - Blaspheming or slandering God's name (*1 Tim. 1:6*).
  - Blasphemy of the Holy Spirit (*Mar. 3:28-29*). There is a great consequence for blaspheming the Holy Spirit, so it is important to be clear as to what it means to blaspheme the Holy Spirit. There are many interpretations of this passage, and we cannot discuss them in detail here. Here are a few simple observations regarding *Mark 3:28-29*:
    - Jesus is speaking to religious leaders who believe that His works are works of evil spirits.
    - Jesus says that evil spirits do not work against evil spirits.
    - Jesus then implies that no one can be of God and misunderstand the works of the Spirit of God.
    - Jesus concludes by saying that ignoring the work of the Spirit of God is unforgiveable.
  - Thus, the most basic answer to what Jesus is referring to is the failure to respond to the work of the Holy Spirit to convict us of our sins, because without conviction of sin and confession of sin, there is no forgiveness for sins.
- Sins of Disregard:
  - Being ungrateful to God (*Rom. 1:21*).

- Boasting in personal pride (*Jam. 4:13-17*).
- Refusing to honor and glorify God (*Num. 20:12*).
- Sins of Rejection:
  - Falling away from God (*Heb. 10:28-29*, *2 Pet. 3:17*, *Jer. 2:19*).
  - Rebelling against God (*Isa. 30:9*).
- Sins of Unbelief:
  - Denying God and His power (*Jer. 9:3*).
  - Forgetting God (*Hos. 13:6*).
  - Failure to Fear God (*Psa. 36:1*).
  - Failure to have faith in God (*Heb. 11:6*).

## B. Sin against our Neighbor

- Sins of hatred towards others:
  - Anger (*Psa. 37:8*).
  - Gossip (*1 Tim. 5:13*).
  - Malice and Slander (*Eph. 4:31-32*).
  - Unconcern (*Eze. 16:49*).
  - Scorn (*2 Pet. 3:3*).
  - Quarrelling (*Gal. 5:15*).
  - Revenge (*1 The. 5:15*).
- Sins of Physical Harm:
  - Murder (*Gen. 9:5-6*).
  - Violence (*Psa. 7:9*).
- Sins of Deceiving Others:
  - Flattery (*Jud. 16*).
  - Lying (*Eph. 4:25*).
  - Hypocrisy (*1 Tim. 4:2*).
- Sins of Desire:
  - Envy (*Gal. 5:26*).
  - Jealousy (*1 Cor. 3:3*).
  - Covetousness (*Phi. 2:4*).
  - Greed (*1 Tim. 6:9*).
- Sins of the Flesh:
  - Adultery and Sexual Immorality (*1 The. 4:3-6*).
  - Lust (*Mat. 5:28*).

## Questions for Reflection:

1. What is at the heart of every sin?
2. What is meant by sin is irrational?
3. What ways is sin universal?
4. **How does Adam's sin affect all humanity?**

## Ideas for Preaching about the Doctrine of Sin

### 1. The Devastation of Sin

- A. All Humanity is Condemn (Romans 5:12).
- B. All Humanity walks in sin by nature (Ephesians 2:1-3).
- C. All Humanity lives in hatred by nature because of sin (Titus 3:3).

### 2. The Worship of Sin (Romans 1:20-25)

- A. Knowledge of God is inescapable (v. 20).
- B. Humanity by nature does not Worship God (v. 21).
- C. Humanity by nature worships God's creation (v. 23).
- D. Sin is exchanging the truth for a lie (v. 25).

## Chapter 8

### The Doctrine of Salvation

*For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. Titus 3:3-7*

#### 1. Introduction

A. Each Chapter in this Book has Discussed the Need for Salvation in Some Way.

- In Chapter 1 on The Doctrine of God we discussed that the reasoning for Jesus' death was God's perfect holiness and His nature to be righteous and just in everything that He does.
- We discussed in Chapter 2 on The Doctrine of Scripture that one of the primary purposes of Scripture is *to make us wise for salvation (2 Tim. 3:15)*.
- In Chapter 3 on The Person of Jesus Christ we discussed that it was necessary for Jesus to be fully God and fully man to accomplish salvation for sinful man.
- We discussed in Chapter 4 on The Holy Spirit that the Spirit contributes in many ways to the work of God in salvation. Two of those ways that the Spirit works in people's lives are:
  - He convicts sinners of the truth.
  - He empowers the church to accomplish its mission to proclaim the Gospel.
- We discussed in Chapter 5 on Angels that God's elect angels serve as ministering Spirits to assist in the work of God in salvation, while the fallen angels introduced chaos

and rebellion into God's good creation, creating the need for salvation.

- We discussed in Chapter 6 on The Doctrine of Man and Chapter 7 on The Doctrine of Sin that God created humanity good with God honoring purposes, but sin and rebellion infected their hearts, producing a sinful race. Sin is the enemy of God, and humanity is the object of God's salvation.

B. The need for salvation has been demonstrated, and we have hinted at how salvation is accomplished through the life and death of Jesus Christ. In this chapter, we are going to look closer into the doctrine of salvation to explore its truths in more detail. We will see:

- Salvation is from God.
- Salvation is accomplished in the death of Jesus.
- Salvation is applied to our lives by faith.
- Salvation is eternal.
- Salvation is demonstrated in the life of those who believe.

## 2. God's Provision of Salvation: Salvation is from God <sup>1</sup>

A. Provisional Salvation of the Old Testament

- In every age, God has provided salvation. Prior to the cross it was unknown to man that Jesus Christ would die for their sins, which He ultimately does for the sins of all humanity (*Rom. 3:26; 1 Joh. 2:2*).
- The requirement for salvation was always to trust in God's offering for sin – even when that provision was unknown and only pictured as in the sacrificial system.
- God's offering of salvation by faith was pictured in the Old Testament in many places. <sup>2</sup>
  - God provided Adam and Eve with a covering of animal skins (*Gen. 3*).
  - God was pleased with Abel's sacrifice of an animal (*Gen. 4*).
  - God's grace to Enoch demonstrated in that he did not die (*Gen. 5:22*).

- God's offering of salvation from judgment to Noah and his family (*Gen. 6*).
- Abraham sacrificed a lamb (*Gen. 22*).
- At the Exodus from Egypt, a sacrifice was required (*Exo. 12*).
- The Levitical system revealed to Moses focused on animal sacrifice for sin (*Lev. 17:11*).
- God's provisional offering of salvation by faith was promised in the Old Testament in many places.
  - God promises that the seed of the woman would crush the head of the serpent (*Gen. 3:15*).
  - God promise that the Savior of His people would die for the sins of His people (*Isa. 53:5-12*).
- People in Old Testament times were saved by grace through faith in the Messiah who was promised to come who would take away their sin forever. Since the coming of Jesus, people are saved by grace through faith in the Messiah who has come and who has taken away their sin forever.

#### B. Fulfillment of the Promise of Salvation in Jesus Christ

- The salvation that was pictured and promised in the Old Testament was fulfilled in the person and work of Jesus Christ (*Heb.9:2-14*).

#### C. Reasons that God Offers Salvation<sup>3</sup>

- Because He loves the world (*Joh. 3:16; Eph. 2:4-5*).
- To demonstrate His grace and mercy (*Eph. 1:7; 2:8-9; 1 Tim. 1:15-16; Tit. 3:5*).
- For His glory (*Rom. 3:26; 9:22-23; 2 Cor. 4:6; 1 Pet. 2:9*).
- For the good of humanity (*Joh. 1:12; Col. 1:27; Eph. 2:13-19*).

#### D. Salvation is a Trinitarian Act <sup>4</sup>

- Read *Eph. 1:3-12* for a glorious picture of the Trinitarian nature of salvation. Each member works in concert to accomplish God's great plan of redemption.

- In verses *3-6*, we see the work of God the Father selecting us for salvation. In verses *7-12*, we see God the Son sacrificing Himself for our salvation. In verses *13-14*, we see the Spirit sealing us for our salvation.
- This passage does not capture all the activities of each member of the Trinity, but it is a great picture of how each person in the Trinity work together in the great work of salvation. For other passages, see *Heb. 2:3-4; Tit. 3:4-7; 1 Pet 1:2; 3:18*.
- God the Father:
  - God ordained His plan of redemption before creation (*Eph. 1:4*).
  - God takes the initiative in salvation by choosing those who will believe in Christ (*Eph. 1:4-5*).
  - God showers grace upon those who are being redeemed (*Eph. 3:8*).
  - God adopts those who are in Jesus Christ into His family (*Eph. 1:5*).
- God the Son:
  - Redemption and forgiveness of sin is given through His blood (*Eph. 1:7*).<sup>5</sup>
  - Jesus unites all things together under His reign and rule (*Eph. 1:9-10*).
  - In Jesus, those who believe have obtained spiritual blessings and an inheritance (*Eph. 1:3, 11*).
- God the Holy Spirit:
  - The Holy Spirit seals those who believe as the guarantee of our inheritance (*Eph. 1:14*).
  - In biblical times, a *seal* was a sign of ownership, identity and protection. When the Holy Spirit seals us, it is a sign of God's ownership over our lives, that we are identified with Him, and that He promises to protect us and keep all of His promises to us.

#### E. The Two Aspects of Salvation: Accomplished and Applied<sup>6</sup>

- The next several sections of this chapter will focus on explaining these two aspects of our salvation.



- The accomplishment of our salvation.
  - Salvation accomplished deals with the atoning work of Jesus Christ on the cross. We seek to answer one basic question: *what did Jesus accomplish on the cross?*
- The application of our salvation.
  - Salvation applied seeks to answer another basic question: how is the work of Jesus Christ on the cross applied to believers for salvation? In other words, how are we saved?

### 3. Definition of Terms Related to Salvation

The following sections use terms related to the doctrine of salvation. In this section, to help with the material to come, we offer a list of these terms with definitions.

- A. *Effective calling*<sup>7</sup> is an act of God where He calls people through the proclaimed Word of God, so that they respond with saving faith.
- B. *Regeneration*<sup>8</sup> (sometimes called being *born again*) is an act of God in which His spiritual life is birthed in the heart of fallen humanity.
- C. *Conversion* is the change of heart in response to the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit, whereby faith and repentance of sins is expressed.
- D. *Justification*<sup>9</sup> is a legal act of God where He declares us righteous based on the imputed righteousness of God and where He forgives us of our sins.
- E. *Adoption*<sup>10</sup> is an act of God where He makes redeemed humanity a part of His family forever.
- F. *Reconciliation* is the relational result of saving faith in Jesus Christ where those who were once alienated from and

enemies of God are now restored in an intimate relationship with God.

G. *Sanctification* is the progressive work of God and redeemed people whereby we become more and more like Jesus Christ.

H. *Glorification* is the final step in the act of redemption where we are conformed into the image of Jesus Christ and receive perfect resurrection bodies.

\*\*\*Before moving on to the next section, take some time to discuss with the class all of these terms regarding salvation. Make sure each word is explained in a way that everyone completely understands and comprehends all of the terms\*\*\*

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#### 4. Salvation: Accomplished <sup>11</sup>

*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 (1 Pet. 3:18).*

*For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. 2 Cor. 5:21.*

He freely gave up His life to deliver and redeem us from the power of sin and death. His death was the means by which the sins of humanity can be forgiven. We can be reconciled to God, our Creator. All of these benefits of salvation are accomplished in the death of Jesus Christ on the cross. But how does the death of Jesus accomplish this?

A. Biblical statements about the death of Jesus Christ on the Cross

- The blood of Jesus was shed on our behalf <sup>12</sup> (*Act. 20:28; Rom. 3:24; 5:9; Col. 1:20*). Hebrews 9:22 tells us that *without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.*

- Jesus died *for our sins* (*Joh. 1:29; 1 Cor. 15:3; Rom. 6:9-10*).
- Jesus' death was an *offering* (*Eph. 5:2; Heb. 8:1; 13:11*). Jesus died as an act of honor towards God.
- Jesus' death a *Passover sacrifice*<sup>13</sup> (*1 Cor. 5:7*). The Passover is described in *Exodus 13* when God instructed Israel to place blood over the doorpost as a sign of faith in His promise to redeem them. The Israelites were told that when the death angel came that night and saw the blood on the doorposts of their houses, he would *pass over* their houses and spare their first-born children. The Passover blood was from a lamb that was killed, so that the first born of Israelites would not be killed. The Passover lamb served as a substitute.<sup>14</sup>
- Jesus' death was a *payment* or *purchase*<sup>15</sup> (*Act. 20:28; 1 Cor. 7:23; Rev. 5:9*). Jesus' death paid the price for sins.
- Jesus' death was a *propitiation*<sup>16</sup> (*Rom. 3:25; Rom. 5:1; Heb. 2:17*). The word *propitiation* means satisfaction. The death of Jesus settled the wrath of God the Father toward sin.
- Jesus' death was a *ransom* (*Mar. 10:45; Heb. 9:15*). Jesus' death set the captives free from sin.<sup>17</sup>
- Jesus' death was a *sacrifice* (*1 Joh. 4:10; Heb. 10:5-14*). He gave up His life out of obedience to the Father.
- Jesus' death was a *substitution*<sup>18</sup> (*2 Cor. 5:14-15; 1 The. 5:9*). He took the place of sinners in His death, dying in our place, as our substitute. It was a one-for-one exchange.
- *2 Corinthians 5:21* tells us that *God made Him (Jesus) who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*
  - Think about that! He took our sin on Himself as our substitute: the righteous one dying for the unrighteous ones. And then He gives us His righteousness in place of our unrighteousness. That's substitution!

#### Summary: The Nature of Jesus' death.

- *Sacrificial*: His life was given up.
- *Substitutionary*: He died in the place of sinners.

- *Propitiation*: The wrath of God against sin was satisfied.
- *Sufficient*: The payment for sin was made, and God's judgment against sinners was taken.
- *Permanent*: The ransom from sin and death was accomplished.

## B. Theories of the Nature of Jesus' Death <sup>19</sup>

- Inadequate theories to explain Jesus' death:
  - Inadequate Theory #1: Ransom to Satan Theory – Christ died to cancel Satan's claim on man.
    - Problem – Christ's death was not a payment to Satan. God does not owe anything to Satan. God didn't provide salvation to settle anything with him.
  - Inadequate Theory #2: Moral Influence Theory – Christ died to influence people to come to God in repentance.
    - Problem – The motivation to live a better life is not what we need. We are under the condemnation of sin and death and are corrupted by sin. We need payment *for our sin* in order to repent, not encouragement to *do better*.
  - Inadequate Theory #3: Example Theory – Christ died to inspire us to love, faith and obedience.
    - Problem – The problem with this view is similar to the moral influence theory. These theories suggest that we can save ourselves with the right motivation. We cannot. Only God can save us by His grace.
  - Inadequate Theory #4: Governmental Theory – God set aside His justice to accept Christ's death as a token sacrifice.
    - Problem – God's justice must be totally satisfied. It cannot merely be laid aside. God is righteous and just in everything He does. Because of His holiness, He cannot merely set aside our disobedience to His law.

- The one adequate theory to explain Jesus' death: Substitution.
- Definition: Christ's death was in our place satisfying God's righteous wrath toward sin.
  - The key biblical word – Propitiation (*to satisfy, appease*).<sup>20</sup>
    - God's wrath on sin is inevitable and just (*Rom. 1:18, 28-32; 2:2*).
    - Only death can satisfy God's wrath on sin.
    - God has provided the way for His wrath to be satisfied by the death of a substitute. His wrath, that once would have been directed toward us as sinners, was now poured out on Jesus, so that God could now freely approach us with His love and forgiveness.
    - Sacrifices in the Old Testament were God's appointed temporary substitutes. Christ is the complete and final substitute.
  - Biblical evidence that Jesus satisfied the wrath of God:

*In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins (1 Joh. 4:10).*

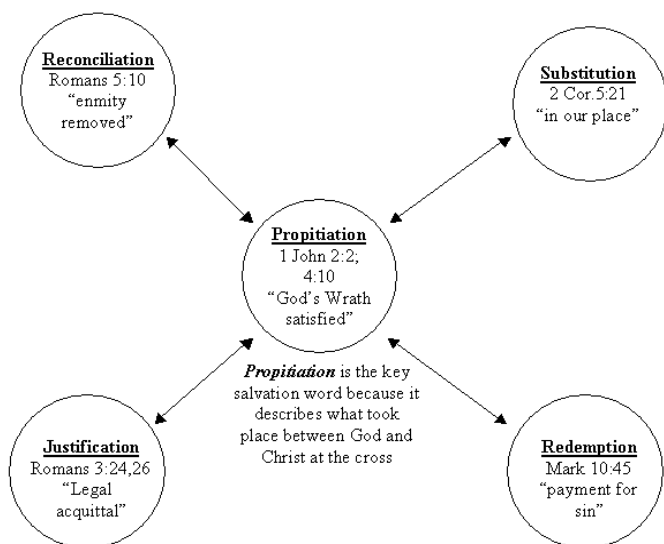
*And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world (1 Joh. 2:2).*

*[Jesus Christ] whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed... (Rom. 3:25).*

- Other key words and concepts:
  - *Substitution* – The sin which Christ bore in His death was not His own but ours (*Rom. 5:6-8; Mar. 10:45*).

- *Redemption* – Sinners are released from the penalty and power of sin by Christ’s payment for sin (*Mar. 10:45; Rom. 3:24; Eph. 1:7; 1 Pet 1:18-19*).
  - In biblical times, slaves were often bought and sold in the marketplace. There was actually a *slave market* where they could be purchased. The biblical word *redemption* speaks of being bought from the slave market of sin by the payment of Jesus’ blood so that we are forever set free, never to return to the slave market of sin again.
- *Reconciliation* – One of the results of Christ’s death is the enmity between God and man was removed (*1 Cor. 5:18-19; Rom. 5:10*).
- *Justification* – Believers are legally acquitted of their sin because Christ’s death fully bore their penalty (*Rom. 3:24, 26*).
  - But there is more to justification than simply being acquitted of sin. It is the positive impartation of His righteousness so that we are now *just as righteous as Jesus Christ*. God sees us with the same righteousness as Jesus has. Justification tells us that we are freely accepted by Him.

D. A Diagram of the Relationship between Propitiation and Other Related Terms:<sup>21</sup>



This diagram demonstrates that reconciliation, substitutionary sacrifice, redemption, and justification are all interrelated to the fact that Jesus' death indeed satisfies the wrath of God toward sin. The point of this diagram is to demonstrate that without propitiation there is no justification, redemption, reconciliation, or substitution.

It is important to note that justification, redemption, substitution, and reconciliation are dependent upon one another. Propitiation is the key salvation term because it explains what take place between God and Jesus Christ at the cross and the consequence of that action for sinful people who believe in Jesus.

## 5. Salvation: Applied

The question that this section seeks to address is: *how is the substitution of Christ applied to us?*

The death of Jesus is *sufficient* for the sins of the world (1 Joh. 2:2) and offers salvation to anyone (Rom. 10:13). But not everyone will be saved (Mat. 7:13). So, *how is the death of Jesus efficient for the sins of those who are saved?*

Answering that question is the point of this section. We will answer it in two ways: God's initiative and our response.

### A. God's Initiative: the Doctrine of Election (God Chose Us)<sup>22</sup>

- Definition: In eternity past God chose those who would trust in Him for salvation.
- Other biblical terms that captures the same idea
  - *Calling*: This refers to the work of God by the Holy Spirit to call people to faith. God does not overpower our will by this act of calling, but He draws us to Himself with power that effectively changes our will and wins our affection (Joh. 6:44).
  - *Predestination*: This idea refers to the fact that God has decided before hand our destiny (Rom. 8:28-30).
  - *Foreknowledge*: This idea refers to God's covenantal love toward those who will believe in Jesus Christ, even before they believe. Some have interpreted this as *foresight*. This rules out God's sovereign plan and purposes, and misses the fact that the Bible uses this term to say God foreknew people, not facts about them, such as their future free decisions (1 Pet. 1:1-2, Joh. 10:14-16).
- Scripture testifies to the doctrine that God definitely chose those who would believe.<sup>23</sup>
- This doctrine can cause some confusion. We will attempt to explain it in the next point, but before we explain, it is



important to see and acknowledge that it is taught in Scripture.

*Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He has made us accepted in the Beloved (Eph. 1:2-6).*

*[From Peter] ... to ... the elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied (1 Pet. 1:1-2).*

*For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified (Rom. 8:29-30).*

*But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth (2 The. 2:13).*

*[God] has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began (2 Tim. 1:9).*

#### B. Explanation of the Doctrine of Election.

- To explain the doctrine of election, it is important to understand two important biblical truths:
  - God (who is sovereign) elects people unto salvation.

- People must respond in faith by calling upon the name of Jesus for salvation (*Rom. 10:13*).
- The biblical doctrine of election holds these two truths together. Even if we do not understand fully how these truths work together, we affirm them and do not believe they contradict each other.
- The relationship between God's election and our response is made clear with these five statements.
  - Election is the right of the sovereign God.
  - Men and women in their fallen nature are dead to spiritual desires for God and saving knowledge of God (*Rom. 1:20-21; Eph. 1-3*). Therefore, faith in God is impossible for sinful humanity. God must first work in our hearts in order for us to believe.
  - Salvation is received by grace through faith. Thus, no one can have faith without being changed spiritually, or regenerated or born again (*Joh. 3:6*).
  - The Spirit of God works in the heart of fallen humanity to make them alive to God and the truth of the Gospel of Jesus (*Joh. 3:8; Eph. 2:4-5; Tit. 3:3-6*).
  - Through the powerful, life-giving working of the Holy Spirit, people respond freely to the offering of salvation by faith (*Eph. 2:8-9*).

#### C. Faith – We chose to trust in Christ. <sup>24</sup>

- We have already discussed that people must respond to the Gospel with personal faith in Jesus Christ in order to be saved. In this section, we want look closer into what biblical faith that saves actually looks like.
- A definition of biblical faith: Faith is:
  - Surrendering your attempt to live independent from God and to seek a way to save yourself.
  - Believing in God by trusting that the death of Jesus Christ is *sufficient* and *necessary* to pay the penalty for your sins.
  - Receiving the promise of eternal through Jesus Christ.
- An explanation of biblical faith:

- Saving faith is not emotional commitment or intellectual acknowledgment (*Jam. 2:19; Mat. 13:20-21*).
- The object of saving faith is God and not in zeal for God or for salvation.
- The content of saving faith is the objective work of Jesus Christ on the cross to save sinners from their sins (*John 3:16*).

*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. I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain (Gal. 2:20-21).*

- *Confession* and *repentance* are necessary parts of saving faith.
  - Confession is agreeing with God regarding your sins (*1 Joh. 1:8-10*).
  - Repentance is changing one's mind and actions towards sin and turning to God (*Act. 3:19-21*).
- A word of caution about faith and works:
  - The problem is that there is a temptation to add works to what is required for salvation. The Gospel message is *trust in Christ alone to pay for your sins*. It is a lie to the Gospel to add anything to that requirement (*Gal. 1:6-9*).
- Here are some examples of this danger:
  - False Teaching #1: Trust in Christ and do good works in order to be saved. This is salvation by works (see *Eph. 2:8-9*). If we think good works will secure our salvation, we are not trusting in Christ alone.
  - False Teaching #2: Trust in Christ and be baptized. Water baptism is an outward sign of the spiritual reality of being united to Jesus Christ in His death and resurrection, which is done after we are saved (*Act. 2:41; Rom. 6:1-6*).

## 6. The Benefits of Salvation <sup>25</sup>

The Bible teaches that the benefits of salvation start on the very day that one believes in Jesus Christ, and continue for all eternity. The way that it captures this idea is that it teaches three dimensions of salvation: past, present, and future. These dimensions are not suggesting that there is something inferior with an earlier stage that is somehow improved in the future. These dimensions teach that there is a progressive ongoing work of God in the lives of those believing in Jesus Christ where the reality and fruit of their salvation is experienced and becomes more of reality in their actual lives.

When the Bible speaks of past salvation, it is referring to what has taken place for and in the lives of those believing in Jesus Christ. This is a final, complete, and secure act of God in the life of the believer (*Rom. 10:9; Eph. 2:8-9*).

When the Bible speaks of present salvation, it is referring to ongoing transformation that God is working in the life of the believer where the fruit and reality of our salvation is being experienced (*2 Tim. 3:15; Phi. 2:12-13*).

When the Bible speaks of future salvation, it is referring to the day when those who believe experience their salvation in fullness. The final act of God to save His people is complete, and the pain, hardship and threat of living in a fallen world is no more (*1 The. 5:8; 2 Tim. 2:10; Romans 5:9-10*).

### A. Past.

- *Justification*: God makes a legal declaration that the believer is not guilty of their sins and counted righteous based on the righteousness of Jesus Christ. On the basis of the doctrine of justification, and the believers' sins are forgiven (*Rom. 3:20, 24, 28; 5:1*).

*But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness, just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to*

*whom God imputes righteousness apart from works: Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered (Rom. 4:5-7).*

- *Reconciliation*: Instead of being enemy of God and hostile toward Him, the believer is now friend of God and relationship is fully restored (*Eph. 2:16; Col. 1:20*).

*For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life (Rom. 5:10).*

- *Adoption*: Every believer has been received as a part of God's family (*Gal. 4:4-6; Eph. 1:5*).

*For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, Abba, Father (Rom. 8:14-15).*

- *Received Eternal Life*: The believer possesses the eternal life of the Jesus Christ (*Joh. 17:3*).

*But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you (Rom. 8:11).*

#### B. Present.

- *Sanctification*: Ongoing growth in our relationship with God where believers are transformed more in the likeness of Christ (*Phi. 2:12-13*).

*But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord (2 Cor. 3:18).*

- *Freedom from the bondage of sin:* Sin is a master of the unbelieving heart, and believers are freed from this master (*Rom. 6:18-22*).

*For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit (Rom. 8:3-4).*

- *Eternal Security:* The believer can have assurance that their salvation is secure based on the character of the One who promises it (for He cannot lie), and based on the sufficiency of our Savior, Jesus Christ. (*Tit. 1:2, 2:13, 1 Pet. 1:5*)

*Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ (Phi. 1:6).*

#### C. Future.

- *Glorification:* Work of God in the life of a believer when Christ returns for the church where they will be perfect in glorified bodies (*1 Joh. 3:2, 1 Pet. 1:5, Joh. 17:24*).

*For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself (Phi. 3:20-21).*

#### D. Summary:

- God has saved us in the past from the penalty of our sins.
- God is saving us in the present from the power of sin.
- God will save us in the future from the presence of sin.

Questions for Reflection:

1. What four reasons are given for why God offers salvation?
2. What is meant by redemption “accomplished” and “applied?”
3. Why is “propitiation” at the center of God’s work of salvation?
4. What are the three dimensions of salvation?

## Ideas for Preaching about the Doctrine of Salvation

### *1. Ephesians 1:3-12*

- A. Salvation is God's plan before the foundation of the world (v. 4).
- B. God's plan is for us to be holy and blameless (v. 4).
- C. God accomplishes His plan by:
  - Predestining in love people to be adopted as children of God (v. 5).
  - Redeeming through forgiveness of sins by His grace (v. 7).
  - Uniting all things in Christ (v. 9-10).
- D. In Christ, believers have:
  - Every spiritual blessing (v. 3).
  - Inheritance (v. 11), which is sealed by the Holy Spirit (v. 13).
- E. The Purpose for this salvation is the praise of His grace (v. 3, 6, 12).

### *2. Ephesians 2:1-10*

- A. Dead in your trespasses in Sin (v. 1-3).
- B. But God makes us alive in Christ (v. 4).
- C. By Grace we are saved (v. 6, 8).
- D. We received grace through faith (v. 6, 8).
- E. No one can boast about their salvation (v. 9).
- F. We are recreated to be workman of God (v. 10).



## Chapter 9

### The Doctrine of the Christian Life

*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. 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: 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, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness. Therefore, putting away lying, let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor, for we are members of one another. Be angry, and do not sin: do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil. Let him who stole no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need. Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you. Ephesians 4:17-32*

#### 1. Introduction

- A. It is interesting to note that *The Doctrine of the Christian Life* is not included in most theology books. However, we have chosen to include it here because we believe that the way we live must be approached from a doctrinal perspective. Our Christian life is defined by what Jesus *has done* for us, what He *is doing* in our lives, and by what He has promised to *do in the future* when we meet Him in heaven.

- B. In the previous chapter on Salvation, we discussed that there are three aspects of salvation (past, present, and future). In this chapter, we are going to focus on the *present* aspect of salvation. This aspect is often called *sanctification*.<sup>1</sup>
- C. Sanctification is the work of God with the active participation of believers to grow them in their salvation where they become more devoted to:
- Obeying God's instruction more joyfully.
  - Following God's will more energetically.
  - Worshiping God more genuinely.
  - Loving God more fully.
  - Serving God and others more faithfully.
- C. This type of life does not just happen automatically. Paul tells Timothy to *exercise yourself towards godliness* (1 Tim. 4:7). When Paul commanded Timothy to *exercise (himself) towards godliness*, he knew it would involve discipline, perseverance, commitment, dedication and time.

## 2. Sanctification <sup>2</sup>

- A. It is God's will that we are sanctified, or progressively transformed, to be made more like Jesus each day (1 The. 4:3).
- B. The goal of our sanctification is being conformed to the image of Jesus Christ.

*For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren (Rom. 8:29).*

*Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which*

*are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you.... For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself (Phi. 3:12 -21).*

C. Sanctification is Both the Work of God and the Work of Believers.<sup>3</sup>

- Justification (salvation) is completely a work of God. Man's only response is to believe. However, when it comes to sanctification, there is a role that both God and the believer play. God and believers work together (or cooperate) in sanctification. Some people may object to this on the basis that salvation is the work of God alone and sanctification is part of the work of salvation. This objection is understandable. However, when both roles are explained, it becomes clear by what it means to say humanity works along with God in sanctification.
- The Bible actually teaches that God cooperates with believers in the book of Philippians: *Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure (Phil. 2:12-13).*
  - In this passage, Paul tells the Christians in Philippi *to work out your salvation*, and then he gives them the reason for this instruction. He says, *for it is God who works in you*. The relationship between God and believer in the work of sanctification is all based on God's power working first.
- A similar idea is found *Eph. 2:8-10*, where God first works in our lives. Salvation comes by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone (v. 8, 9). But true,

saving faith is never alone; it is always accompanied by good works (v. 10).

This chart describes the relationship of the past, present and future aspects of our salvation:

Our Salvation: <i>The Past</i>	Our Salvation: The Present	Our Salvation: <i>The Future</i>
Justification	Sanctification	Glorification
We have Christ's righteousness imparted to us	We have Christ's righteousness developed in us	We have Christ's righteousness completed in us

- The work of God in Salvation.
  - God's work of *justification* is already completed in us.
  - Justification for the believer is an accomplished fact. When the believer places faith in Jesus Christ for salvation, God considers them just as righteous as Jesus Himself.
    - Paul calls the believers at the church in Corinth *saints* (1 Cor. 1:2). Though there were divisions in the church and sinful actions in their lives, Paul knew that they had come to know Jesus Christ as their Savior, and therefore had a new identity in Him.
    - Paul reasons with the Church in Corinth to stop sinning because they have been declared righteous (1 Cor. 6:9-11).
    - Christ loved the Church and gave Himself up for her to sanctify her (Eph. 5:25-26).
    - The book of Hebrews speaks of believers as those who are made *holy* and are *sanctified* by the blood of Jesus (2:10; 10:29; 13:12).
  - There is also an aspect of our salvation that began at our conversion and will not end until our glorification with Jesus in heaven. This is called *sanctification*. God works progressively to sanctify believers.

Sanctification is a process that takes place continually throughout a believer's life.

- *1 John 1:5-10* tells us that we will never get to the point in this life where we can say we are without sin.
- God equips people for good works (*Eph. 2:10; Tit. 2:11-13*).
- God protects His people to make them holy (*Joh. 17:11-19*).
- God keeps believers strong to the end so they will be blameless when they stand before Jesus (*1 Cor. 1:8*).
- God renews us with the Gospel of Jesus Christ (*Phil. 20*).
- We are freed from the power of sin through Jesus Christ (*Rom. 6:5-6; 8:1-3*).
- *Glorification* is the final aspect of our salvation. It won't take place until Jesus comes back or until we get to heaven. At that point we will be changed and permanently made into the likeness of Jesus.
- *1 John 3:2* tells us that though we are children of God, it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.
- Sanctification is a work of all three members of the Trinity.
  - God the Father gives grace for sanctification (*1 Pet. 4:10; 2 Cor. 8:1; Act. 4:33*).
  - God the Son gives us victory over sin and death (*1 Cor. 15:56-57*), and gives us a new identity (*Col. 3:9*).
  - God the Spirit gives life (*Rom. 8:10*), produces fruit (*Gal. 5:22-23*), and holiness (*1 The. 4:7-8*).
- There is a role that believers play in their sanctification as well. The work of the believer in sanctification can be summed up in the phrase *trust and obey*.<sup>4</sup>
  - The Bible instructs believers to be sanctified.

- Paul speaks of believers as being transformed (*2 Cor. 3:18*).
- Paul speaks of the need for believers to be built up to maturity (*Eph. 4:12-15*).
- Paul speaks of the Gospel bearing fruit and growing the lives of believers (*Col. 1:6*).
- Paul prays that the church would be sanctified through and through (*1 The. 5:23*).
- Hebrews tells Christians to make every effort to be holy (*Heb. 12:14*).
- The Believer's pursuit of sanctification involves their heart, mind and behavior.
  - The heart: (See *2 Cor. 3:18*; *1 Pet. 3:14-15*; *Psa. 63:1-4*; *Eph. 3:17-19*).
  - The mind: (*See 1 Pet. 2:2*). Peter here instructs believers to long for the verbal Word of God, so that they may grow with respect to their salvation.
  - Our behavior: (See *Col. 3:5-10*). In the letter to the Colossians (and also in *Eph. 4:17-32*), Paul uses the imagery of *putting off* and *putting on* to speak of the effort believers should make to demonstrate by their behavior the reality of the Gospel in their life.
- What is the relationship between God's work and the believer's work in sanctification? How are they related?<sup>5</sup>
  - The answer is: sanctification is a work of grace. Everything a believer does in their life that leads to being more sanctified is as a response to the Gospel of grace. This point is illustrated in a number of ways in the Scriptures, but one of the clearest ways to see this is in how Paul structures a couple of his letters to the church. For example:
    - *Eph. 1-3* is about what God has done for believers in Jesus Christ, and *Eph. 4-6* is about how believers should respond to what God has done. The connection between these sections is one word, "*therefore*" (*4:1*). Paul is literally saying,

*because of the salvation we have in Jesus, we should live our lives in a way that honors him.*

- This same pattern is found between *Col. 1-2* and *3-4*, as well as *Rom. 1-11* and *12-16*.
- Paul says in *Rom. 12:1*: *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.*
  - Paul exhorts the Roman Christians to live for God. He encourages them based upon the mercy God has already demonstrated to them.
- Summary points:
  - Sanctification is not a work to gain more favor from God. We already have complete acceptance and perfect standing with Him.
  - Sanctification is a work we pursue because of what we have already received from God through the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

### 3. The Christian's Responsibilities to God

Sanctification is the ongoing growth of a Christian towards a life that gives greater honor to God and lives out His purpose day by day. What are the believer's responsibilities before God?

#### A. A Believer is Called to Have Faith in God.

- Growing faith is a sign of spiritual growth (*2 The. 1:3*).
- Spiritual benefits come by faith (*Rom. 14:13; Act. 15:9; Eph. 1:13-14*).

#### B. A Believer is Called to Know God.

- Knowing God better and better is a sign of spiritual growth (*2 Pet. 1:5-8*).
- It can be said that when someone first believes in Jesus as Savior, they *know God*. And yet, as in any relationship, you can know Him and then you can know Him more. True spiritual growth results in knowing God better and better.

- Spiritual benefits come by knowledge of God.
    - We can have confidence in His purposes (*Rom. 8:28*).
- C. A Believer is Called to Remember God.
- We are called to remember God and *forget none of His benefits* (*Psa. 103:2*). Remembering God is a sign of spiritual growth (*Zec. 10:9*).
  - Spiritual benefits come by remembering God (*Psa. 63:6-8*).
- D. A Believer is Called to Worship God.
- Worshipping God is a sign of spiritual growth (*Psa. 33:1-4*).
  - There are spiritual benefits to worshipping God (*Col. 3:16*).
- E. A Believer is Called to Love God.
- Loving God is a sign of spiritual growth (*Phi. 1:9-11*).
  - There are spiritual benefits to loving God (*1 Joh. 4:17-18*).
- F. A Believer is Called to Obey God.
- Obeying God is a sign of spiritual growth (*Joh. 15:10*).
  - There are spiritual benefits to obeying God (*1 Joh. 2:5*).
- G. A Believer is Called to Pursue God.
- Pursuing God is a sign of spiritual growth (*Psa. 63:1-2*).
  - There are spiritual benefits to pursuing God (*Heb. 11:6*).
- H. A Believer is Called to Enjoy God.
- Enjoying God is a sign of Spiritual growth (*1 Joh. 3:19-20; Psa. 85:6-7*).
  - There are spiritual benefits to enjoying God (*Psa. 4:3-7*).



#### 4. What Is a Believer's Responsibility to Others?

- A. Be at Peace with Others (*Rom. 12:18*).
- B. Be Compassionate toward Others (*Eph. 4:32*)
- C. Be Generous toward Others (*2 Cor. 8:6-24*).
- D. Be an Example for Others (*1 The. 4:11-12*).
- E. Be Kind to Others (*1 The. 5:15*).
- F. Be Patient with Others (*Col. 3:13*).
- G. Forgive others (*Luk. 6:37*).
- H. Love others (*1Pet. 1:22*).

#### 5. What Are Some of the Obstacles to Sanctification?

- A. A Lustful Heart Blocks Sanctification (*1 Pet. 2:11*).
- B. A Selfish Attitude Hinders Sanctification (*Eph. 4:19, 5:18*).
- C. Sin Hinders Sanctification (*Rom. 6:12*).
- D. Unbelief Hinders Sanctification (*Heb. 3:12-13*).

#### 6. What are the Means of Grace? <sup>6</sup>

*The means of grace* is a term that theologians use to describe actions and activities we should be involved in to better experience God's grace in our lives.

- A. Bible Reading.

*Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the*

*word that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious (1 Pet. 2:1-3; See also 2 Tim. 3:16-17).*

B. Prayer.

*Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus (Phi. 4:6-7).*

C. Serving and Loving Others.

*And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him. Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the Day of Judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world (1 Joh. 4:16-17).*

D. Gospel Witness.

*But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed (1 Pet. 3:15-16).*

E. Worship.

*But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord (2 Cor. 3:18).*

## F. Faith.

*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. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world (1 Pet. 5:6-9; See also 1 The. 5:8).*

## G. Being Filled with the Holy Spirit.

*And do not get drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18).*

- To be *filled with the Spirit* means to be empowered and directed by Him. By faith we must allow God the Holy Spirit to direct our lives and to empower us for His service.

## H. Observing the Ordinances of the Church.

- Believer's Baptism: *Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (Mat. 28:19).*
- The Lord's Supper: *For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you; that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes (1 Cor. 11:23-26).*

Questions for Reflection:

1. What is involved in your sanctification?
2. Is there a sense that sanctification is already completed?
3. What are some hindrances to sanctification?

## Ideas for Preaching about the Doctrine of the Christian Life

### 1. *2 Corinthians 3:18; 2 Corinthians 4:6*

- A. Behold the Glory of God in the Face of Christ (*2 Cor. 4:6*).
  - What is the glory of God display in the Gospel?
  - What does it take to behold this glory?
    - Confession of Sin
    - Faith in the Sufficiency of Jesus
    - Repentance
- B. We Are Being Transformed
  - Changed first in heart.
  - Changed in the mind.
  - Changed in behavior.

### 2. *Colossians 3:3-10*

- A. You are in Christ (*Col. 3:3-4*).
  - You have died with Christ.
  - Your life is hidden in Christ.
  - When Christ returns you will be with Him.
- B. Put to Death and Take Off the Old Self.
  - Put to death that which is earthly (The Flesh: the sinful principle that controlled our sin nature and led us to live self-indulgence and self-sufficient lives).
  - Put to death: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desires, etc.
  - Put away anger, malice, slander, etc.
  - These things are idolatry.
  - The wrath of God is coming against them.
- C. You Have Put on a New Self.
  - The new self is being renewed in knowledge of the truth.
  - The new self is being renewed after the image of its creator.
- D. Live according to your new self.

## Chapter 10

### The Doctrine of the Church

*But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy. 1 Peter 2:9-10*

#### 1. Introduction

- A. One of the earliest references to the Church was in the middle of Jesus' conversation with Peter (*Mat. 16:17-18*). In this passage Jesus asked, *Who do you say that I am?* Peter answered; *You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God.* And then Jesus declared, *Flesh and blood did not reveal that to you, but my Father who is in heaven. You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church.*
- B. Jesus does continue to build His Church. But there is much confusion about what the church is, what is to be its mission, and how it is to be governed. The focus of this chapter is to explore what God's plan is for the church in these important areas.

#### 2. When Did the Church Begin? <sup>1</sup>

- A. The Church was founded on the day of Pentecost, where Peter proclaimed the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and 3000 people repented and believed. We are told that they immediately joined together as a community of believers in Jesus Christ, to do life together (*Act. 2:44-47*).
- B. The Church began to grow quickly from this point, and as it grew, God through the Apostles taught His people about the nature of the Church, the purposes of the Church, how to organize the Church, and who should lead the Church.

### 3. What Is the Nature of the Church? <sup>2</sup>

#### A. Let's Begin with a Definition.

- What is the Church? The Greek word which we translate *church* is made up of two words which mean *to call out*. Thus it comes to mean an assembly or gathering. But like so many important words, it needs qualifying – an assembly of whom?
  - Sometimes it means (even in the New Testament) an assembly of towns-people, called out in a political gathering (*Act. 19:32, 39, 41*).
  - At least one time it refers to the gathering of the Jewish people in their assembling in the wilderness (*Act. 7:38*).
  - Most frequently the word indicates a local group of Christians living in a certain place (*1 Cor 1:2; 1 The. 1:1; Rev. 1:11*).
  - The New Testament gives to this word a technical meaning when it refers to the universal church to which all believers (and only believers) belong; this is the same as the body of Christ (*Mat. 16:18; Eph. 1:22-23; 3:10, 21; 5:23, 25, 27, 29, 32; Col. 1:18; Heb. 12:23*).
- So we see that there are two uses of the word *church* in the New Testament:
  - A *local* church.
    - A group of believers meeting regularly and organized biblically to do God's will (*Rom. 16:1, 3-5, 14-16*).
    - The Bible refers to at least 26 local churches. For example, there is the Church of:
      - Antioch (*Act. 13:1*).
      - Asia (*1 Cor. 16:19*).
      - Colossae (*Col. 1:2*).
      - Ephesus (*Act. 20:17*).
      - Corinth (*2 Cor. 1:1*).
  - The universal Church. <sup>3</sup>

- The universal Church is the body of true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, through the centuries and throughout the world, regardless of their local church affiliation.
- All believers from the day of Pentecost (*Act. 2*) to the Rapture (*1 The. 4:13-18*) are a part of the universal church.
- When Jesus promised to form the Church, He was referring to His body of believers throughout the world (*Mat. 16:18*).
- The Holy Spirit *baptizes*, or places people into the body of Christ, which is the universal Church (*1 Cor. 12:12-14,27*). This function of the Holy Spirit began on the day of Pentecost (*Act. 1:5, 2:1-4, 11:15-18*).
- The Bible acknowledges that all believers in Jesus Christ are in the Church (*1 Cor. 15:9*).
- The Universal Church is the body of Christ characterized by the following:
  - Redeemed people from all nations.
  - Those called out of darkness to live for God and His purposes.
  - Visible as an assembled body to worship God and to hear His Word
  - Those sent out to proclaim His glorious grace to the world.

#### B. The Church is a Work of God. <sup>4</sup>

- We see all three members of the Trinity active in the creation, establishment and building of the Church.
- God the Father's Work:
  - The church belongs to God (*1 Cor. 3:9, 15:9*).
  - God purchased the church with His own blood (*Act. 20:28*).
  - The church is called by God's name, lives in the presence of God, and worships Him as their Lord (*1 Cor. 6:16*).
  - The church grows by the hand of God (*Act. 2:47*).



- God equips the church with gifted servants (*1 Cor. 12:28*).
- God reveals His manifold wisdom through the church (*Eph. 3:9*).
- The Church was established through the Person and Work of Jesus Christ.

*Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord (Eph. 2:19-21; See also Mat. 16:18; 1 Cor. 3:10; Eph. 5:23; Col. 1:18).*

- The Church is indwelt and empowered by the Holy Spirit (*1 Cor. 3:16; 12:13; Act. 1:8*).

*In whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit (Eph. 2:22).*

#### 4. Biblical Images and Metaphors for the Church <sup>5</sup>

- A. The Body of Christ (*Rom. 12:4-5; 1 Cor. 6:15; Eph. 1:22-23*).
- B. The Bride of Christ (*Rev. 19:7-8; 21:2, 9; 22:17*).
- C. A Chosen People (*Col. 3:12; 1 Pet. 2:9*).
- D. God's Elect (*Tit. 1:1*).
- E. The Church of the Living God (*1 Tim. 3:15*).
- F. The Congregations of the Saints (*1 Cor. 14:33*).
- G. The Dwelling Place of God (*Eph. 2:22*) and The Temple of God (*1 Cor. 3:16-17*).
- H. The People of God (*1 Pet. 2:10*).
- I. The Family of God (*1 Pet. 4:17*), God's Household (*Eph. 2:19*), and The Sons of God (*Gal. 3:26-29*).
- J. The Flock of God (*1 Pet. 5:2-3*).
- K. Living Stones (*1 Pet. 2:5*).
- L. A Holy City (*Rev. 22:19*), Holy Nation (*1 Pet. 2:9*), Holy Ones (*1 The. 3:13*), and Holy People (*Eph. 5:3*).

## 5. The Purpose and Ministries of the Church

What is the church supposed to do? The purposes of the local church are given in the New Testament. For these purposes, we will look three passages from the New Testament. The first comes from the Gospel of Matthew where Jesus directed the disciples about the purposes of the church, as well as two passages in Ephesians where Paul declared what the goal of the church is, and one passage in Acts where a picture of the church living life together is given.

### A. Jesus Directs the Purposes of the Church.

#### The Great Commandment (Mat. 22:36-39)

*Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" Jesus said to him, 'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself' (Mat. 22:36-39).*

- The church is to worship God with full devotion.
- The church is to serve others with the same level of commitment that they care for themselves.

#### The Great Commission (Mat. 28:19-20)

*When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Mat. 28:17-20).*

- *Mat. 28:19-20* is the commission that Jesus, the Head of the Church, gave to His disciples, who were the first

leaders of the Church and the *foundation stones* for growth of the Church (*Eph. 2:20*).

- When we examine *Mat. 28:19-20*, we discover what Jesus sent His Church out to do. This is the most comprehensive statement in the Scriptures that directs the mission of the Church.
  - Jesus commanded the Church to *go and make disciples*. *Go and make disciples* directs the church to take active steps to share the Gospel to unbelievers, in order to help people understand the message of the Gospel for salvation. Also to help them be faithful followers of Jesus Christ. Jesus says: *Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you (Joh. 20:21)*.
  - Jesus instructed the Church in how disciples are made. It is by *baptizing* and *teaching*. These two words explain the way Christians make disciples.
  - *Baptizing*: This is a public identification with Jesus Christ. The baptism that Jesus refers to here is water baptism, and not baptism in the Spirit. One way we know this is that He instructs the disciples to perform the baptism. Water baptism in the New Testament follows salvation and publicly shows our identification with Christ. Baptism will be discussed more when we discuss the Ordinances of the Church.
  - *Teaching*: Here Jesus intends for us to teach the Scripture in order for people to apply it to their lives. Jesus instructs His disciples to teach others to *observe* (or, obey) everything that He taught them. This is the same goal that the Apostle James had for the believers when he wrote to them, *But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves (1:22)*.

B. Paul Describes the Church's Goal is the Plan of God.

- To complete the ministry of Jesus.

*And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all (Eph. 1:22-23).*

- The church as the body of Christ is called to complete the ministry of Jesus in the world. The ministry of Jesus that Paul has in his mind is found in *Eph. 1:9-10*, where Paul writes, *In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace...having made known to us the mystery of His will...that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth – in Him.*
- Jesus' ministry is to unite all things under His authority and reign. He accomplishes this through His death and resurrection, winning victory over sin and death and redeeming a people for the glory of God. The Church is called to proclaim that message to those who do not know it. In doing this work, Paul calls the church the *fullness of Him*.
- To proclaim the glory of God (*Eph. 3:8-10*).
  - The church is to proclaim the greatness of God to the world.
  - In summary, a church may not have a building; it may meet under the trees. It may have only the weakest of the weak and the poorest of the poor; it may know nothing of Western styles of worship. But if it is a community-identified testimony of Jesus Christ, it is worth everything.

*But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light (1 Pet. 2:9).*

### C. Luke's Picture of the Early Church.

- The Apostle Luke gives us a great portrait of the church engaged in accomplishing its purposes (See *Act. 2:41-47*).

### D. The Purposes and Ministries of the Church <sup>6</sup>

- To Glorify God (*1 Cor. 10:31; Eph. 3:10; 1 Pet. 2:9*).
- To Gather for Worship (*Eph. 5:19-20; 1 Pet. 2:5; Heb. 10:25; 12:28*).
- What actions should be included in public worship?
  - The public reading of Scripture (*1 Tim. 4:13*).
  - Singing (*Eph. 5:19-20*).
  - Preaching and Teaching the Bible (*1 Tim. 2:4*).
  - Prayer (*Act. 1:14; 4:31; 1 Tim. 2:8*).
- To make disciples (*Mat. 28:19-20; Act. 14:21-22*).
- To send missionaries into the world with the Gospel (*Act. 13:2*).
- To experience fellowship and community together (*Gal. 6:2; Rom. 12:15; Heb. 13:1*).
- To serve others (*1 Pet. 4:10-11*).

Before moving forward, review as a group the purposes and offices of the church. How is your new church/fellowship practicing these points? Share your results with the class. Discuss.

## 6. The Ordinances of the Church <sup>7</sup>

### A. The Lords Supper and Baptism.

- Jesus gave the Church physical acts or rituals to illustrate the spiritual reality of salvation in the Gospel. The church has called them *ordinances*.
- Some churches believe that there are more than two, as many as seven. Most Protestants believe that there are only two (The Lord's Supper and Baptism). These are the only ordinances specifically given by Christ and clearly practiced by the early Church. They are also the only two that signify the saving work of Christ on the cross.

- Practicing these ordinances are in no way needed for salvation and do not help save you. These ordinances are meaningful only to the person who already personally trusted Christ for salvation.

### Water Baptism:

- Definition: The act of being immersed into water in order to symbolize publicly and outwardly what has occurred spiritually and inwardly when we trusted Christ as Savior.
- It symbolizes the Holy Spirit's work of giving new life (making us spiritually new).
  - The Holy Spirit accomplishes *Spirit baptism inwardly* when we trust Christ as savior (*1 Cor. 12:13*).
  - In Spirit baptism, Christians are:
    - Washed by the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit.
    - Empowered for ministry.
    - Sealed as saved by the blood of Jesus and adopted by God into His family,
  - Water baptism is given by Church leaders and disciples *outwardly* after salvation occurs and a affirmation of faith is made (*Act. 8:3*). It is an outward symbol of the inner reality of our salvation. It symbolizes our new life and union with Christ (*Rom. 6:3-11*).
  - The method of water baptism: The individual is dunked into water, which portrays death to sin by identifying with Jesus' death and burial, and the individual is raised out of the water, which portrays resurrection from the dead.
  - Complete immersion under water fits the significance of baptism (*Rom. 6:4*) and follows the earliest examples of baptism (*Act. 8:38-39*).
  - New Testament examples of baptism give the Church today a pattern. Baptism is done immediately after a person is saved (*Act. 2:41; 16:14-15; 18:8*). So whenever a person is saved and realizes the need for

and significance of baptism, it would seem to be the right time.

### The Lord's Supper:

- Definition: The regular use of the bread and cup to celebrate and remember with other believers the saving work of Christ on the cross.
- The model for this ordinance is the supper that Christ started at the last supper with His disciples.
  - Christ established new significance for the final two elements of the Passover meal. He instructed that His disciples practice these after His death (*Luk. 22:7-20*).
  - Paul records that Jesus commanded them to practice the Lord's supper, saying, *Do this (1 Cor. 11:24-25)*. This ordinance should be celebrated regularly. Jesus says, *for as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes (1 Cor. 11:26)*.
- The Meaning: The Lord's Supper is a memorial for Christians to remember Christ's saving work on the cross and to remember His promise to return for them.
  - The bread represents that Christ's death was a substitutionary death in our place (*for you—Luk. 22:19; 1 Cor. 11:24*). Peter says our sins were placed on Jesus' body (*1 Pet. 2:24*).
  - The cup represents Christ's fulfilling of the old covenant sacrifice system that fulfills the covenantal relationship between God and His people (*the New Covenant in my blood—Luk. 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25*).
  - Because the Lord's Supper is to be practiced until Christ returns, this ordinance and celebration reminds Christians that they are looking forward to and waiting for Christ's return.
- The Method: Although there is evidence that the early church practiced this weekly (*1 Cor. 11:20-25; Act. 20:7-11*), there is no direct command about the frequency by which we celebrate the Lord's Supper. The expectation is

for it to be practiced regularly by churches using similar symbols with the identical significance Christ gave them.

## 7. The Structure of the Church <sup>8</sup>

### A. Major Views of Church Structure.

- The church is a living spiritual unit, the body of Christ. On the local level, the church has to be organized to do God's will. In this section, we will first survey briefly the various views of church structure. Next, we will make a case for congregational rule in the Church.

#### The Hierarchical View:

- This position teaches that the authority of local churches lies in the *bishops*, who are responsible for overseeing several local churches. The bishops then have authority over local ministers who they ordain and appoint, and the ministers exercise authority over the congregation. This view is common among Romans Catholics and Anglicans.

#### The Federal View:

- This view is also called *elder rule* because that's where the authority in the church lies. Elders receive their authority by being elected from the congregation or being appointed by fellow elders. This approach is practiced by Presbyterians. The scriptural support for the concept is found in what is perceived as an overall sense of authority invested in elders (*1 Tim. 3:1-7; 5:17; Tit. 1:5-9; 1 Pet. 5:1-5*).

#### The Congregational View:

- This view holds that the congregation has final authority in all decisions and matters. The congregation elects its pastors and other leaders to teach and lead the church, but the congregation has authority over them. Many Protestant churches are governed by the congregational



model. Baptists are well-known for their commitment to this method.

- Those who hold to this view point to three biblical evidences of support:
  - Christ is above the congregation as “Head” of the church (*Eph. 5:23*).
  - The priesthood of believers (*Heb. 10:19-22; 1 Pet. 2:5-9*).
  - Biblical references to matters handled by the congregation (deacons selected- *Act. 6:5*; church discipline - *1 Cor. 5:1-5*).

#### B. A Case for Congregationalism.

- Who has authority in local church matters?
- How a church is organized is mostly determined by who is viewed as having authority and how the implications of that view are applied in regards to leadership.
- Ultimately, Jesus has authority over the church, because He is its head (*Eph. 1:22*). His authority is delegated to people. What you find in the New Testament is an apparent transfer of authority from the apostles to the church.
  - The apostles had authority in the earliest days of the church.
    - They appointed elders (*Act. 19:23*).
    - They settled doctrinal disputes (*Act. 15*).
    - They established churches (Paul).
    - They discerned God’s will regarding many church related matters (financial support of elders: *1 Tim. 5:17*, church order: *1 Cor. 14:40*, and collections: *1 Cor. 16:1-2*).
  - Elders have a high level of authority in and after the apostolic age.
    - Paul appoints elders in charge of churches (*Act. 14:23*).
    - Paul instructs Titus to appoint elders (*Tit. 1:5*).
    - The church is instructed to obey its spiritual leaders (*Heb. 13:17*).

- *Elder* and *overseer* are equal terms (*Act. 20:17, 28; Tit. 1:5, 7; 1 Pet. 5:1, 2*), which suggests their role in authority.
- *Ruling* was one role of elders (*2 Tim. 5:17*).
- The local church demonstrates authority very early in the church age.
  - They selected deacons (*Act. 6:3-5*).
  - The church sent Paul and Barnabas to help settle a doctrinal dispute (*Act. 15:2-3*), and they confirmed, with elders of other churches, how the issue should be settled (*Act. 15:22*).
  - The church practiced and administered church discipline (*1 Cor. 5:5; 2 Cor. 2:6-7*), suggesting its authority to deal with its members.
  - The church sent out missionaries (*Act. 11:22, 2 Cor. 8:19*). This is an important aspect that many smaller churches often fail to accept and teach.
    - The traditional focus on mission organizations and missionaries has often times hidden the fact that Christianity is spread primarily by local believers.
    - The church is God's mission to the world. How will your church follow this lead?
- Conclusions: A biblical view of how a church should be organized would seem to involve both elements of elder rule/leadership and congregational rule. The apostles indeed had authority over local churches, but it is important to note that they never established a system of hierarchical rule. They in fact appointed leaders to train and equip churches to appoint their own leaders. God has designed His spiritual "organism"—the church—to be led by spiritually qualified leaders (see qualifications).
- Despite the apostles rule in forming the early church, the congregation as a whole also was gathered to decide on some very significant issues in the church, so it seems that a local congregation today would also be involved in important matters. The goal of church decision-making is

not to determine the will of a handful of leaders or the majority of the church but to determine the will of God.

- Each church is accountable before God for how their decisions follow God's will, so each church has to decide how to make decisions that helps the church follow God's will. One decision that must be made is how much decision-making is done at the leadership level and what is done at the congregational level.

C. Thoughts to Consider:

- Some issues are of such a nature that it would be unwise to involve the whole congregation.
- Some issues are of such a nature that it would be unwise not to involve the whole congregation.
- Godly qualified leadership is essential. Spiritual leaders have to possess the courage to lead the church and pastoral sensitivity and love for the needs, weaknesses, and maturity of Church. Under this leadership, God is free to produce harmony and effective spiritual ministry.

D. Thoughts on churches networking with other churches.

- Should churches function as denominations/associations or as independent churches?
- Biblical considerations and examples:
  - Paul coordinated group efforts to meet the financial needs of the poverty-stricken Jerusalem church (*See 1 Cor. 16:1-4; 2 Cor. 8:1-9:15*).
  - Several churches supported Paul. It is important to note that each church made their own decision about giving (*Phi. 4:15; 1 Cor. 9:12; 2 Cor. 11:9; 12:13*).
- When the church at Antioch experienced a doctrinal conflict about what was required of Gentiles to be saved, the church asked for help from the spiritual leaders at Jerusalem. Their decision solved the problem (*Act. 15*).
- Conclusions: The early church examples of financial cooperation and joint conflict resolution are good examples churches working together to help each other.

- It is important to note that these examples do not establish a structure of authority. God equips and powers local churches to be able to function on their own (*1 Cor. 1:7*).
- Denominations and associations are tools to support the ministry of the church and can function in a biblical way in accomplishing God's purposes for the church.

## 8. The Leaders of the Church <sup>9</sup>

In the previous section, we noted the importance of leaders in the biblical model of church organization. The Scriptures set aside certain biblical offices and give qualifications for the following offices.

### A. Elders

- The term *elder* emphasizes the need for church leaders to have spiritual maturity. This same office also is sometimes called *overseers*. This term emphasizes their *function* of leading with pastoral oversight. These terms are used interchangeably about the same men (*Act. 20:17, 28*).
- The qualifications of an elder: *1 Tim. 3:1-7* and *Tit. 1:6-9* describe these qualifications. It is important to note about these qualifications that spiritual character is emphasized over specific functions.
  - Blameless, no cause for just criticism.
  - Husband of one wife, faithful, not divorced.
  - Temperate, self-control.
  - Sober-minded, wise decision-maker.
  - Of good behavior, orderly, organized.
  - Hospitable, willing to share his home.
  - Able to teach, can communicate spiritual truth.
  - Not given to wine, not addicted.
  - Not violent and not quick tempered, patient.
  - Not quarrelsome, not insistent on rights, peaceable.
  - Not greedy for money.
  - One who rules his own house well, discipline, peace and order at home.

- Not a novice, to avoid pride.
- Good testimony among those outside the church, and has the respect of unbelievers.
- Not self-willed, genuine concern for others interests, not just his own.
- Lover of what is good, can discern what is spiritually valuable.
- Just, holy, law keeping, and fair with others.
- Devout, avoids sin and is committed to God.
- Faithful to the Word of God, knows doctrinal truth.
- Duties of an Elder:
  - Shepherd and care for the flock (*1 Pet. 5:2; 1 Tim. 3:5; Jam. 5:14-15*). This means he takes responsibility for their spiritual care.
  - Example to the flock (*1 Pet. 5:3*). Consciously models a Christian lifestyle and disciples others in the Christian life.
  - Teaching God's Word (*Act. 20:20; 1 Tim. 3:2; 5:17*).
  - Guard against false doctrine (*Act. 20:28; Tit. 1:9*).
  - Rule (*1 Tim. 5:17*). This means to direct the church's affairs.
- How many elders should there be in a church?
  - No number is given in the Scriptures. There are, however, clear examples that multiple elders share the leadership in a local church.
  - It is always *elders* (plural) in Antioch (*Act. 14:23*), in Jerusalem (*Act. 15:2; 20:18*), in Ephesus (*Act. 20:17,28*), in Philippi (*Phi. 1:1*), in Crete (*Tit. 1:5*), and in all the churches who received the epistles of James (*Jam. 5:14*). The biblical model is leadership shared by elders. Each elder will have different gifts and roles and some will be more visible, but the responsibility must be shared. *There is tremendous advantage to shared wisdom and responsibility.*

## B. Deacons

- The word *deacon* means *servant*. It may be used of any servant in the church (*Eph. 6:21; 1 Cor. 3:5*). However, in

*Act. 6:1-6*, the office of deacon was established when a group of men were designated by the church to serve a specific physical need in the church.

- Paul then utilized the title “deacon” to describe a church office, and he also described their qualifications (*1 Tim. 3:8-13*).
- Qualifications of deacons:
  - *1 Tim. 3:8-13* and *Act. 6:1-3* describe a deacon’s qualifications.
  - Good testimony among outsiders – same as elder.
  - Spiritual – men who consistently walk in the Spirit’s control.
  - Wise – same as elder.
  - Reverent – same as elder.
  - Not double-tongued – honest, not telling conflicting stories.
  - Not given to much wine – same as elder.
  - Not greedy for money – parallel to elder.
  - Holding fast the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience – parallel to elder.
  - Found blameless – same as elder.
  - Husband of one wife – same as elder
  - Ruling their children and their household well – parallel to elder
- In addition to qualification for deacons, deacon’s wives have some qualifications.
  - They must be reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things (*1 Tim. 3:11*).
  - Note: These are probably *deacon’s wives* and not *deaconesses* since their qualifications are found in the middle of the deacon’s qualifications.
- What are the duties of deacons?
  - Generally, the duties may be found in the pattern of *Acts 6* where deacons serve to meet physical needs in order to free the elders of these responsibilities, so they can focus on prayer and ministry of the Word. This description should not however limit the duties of deacons.

- *Acts 6* serves as a pattern for the type of responsibilities they may assume in order to free the elders to focus on caring for the physical needs of the church.

Before moving on to the next chapter, as a group discuss practical ways you can apply this chapter to your new church. Make sure you are able to clearly identify practical applications. List 5 ways below:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Questions for Reflection:

1. **What is the church's goal?**
2. What do the ordinances mean?
3. Who rules the church?
4. What are the differences in elder and deacon office?



## Ideas for Preaching about the Doctrine of the Church

1. Ministries of the Church
  - A. Picture of the Church life together (*Act. 2:44-47*).
  - B. Complete the Ministry of Jesus as the Body of Jesus (*Ephesians 1:20-23*).
  - C. Proclaim the Glory of God (*Ephesians 3:10, 1 Peter 2:9*).
2. Qualification of Elders and/or Deacons
  - A. See Section 7 about Leaders of the Church.
3. Identity of the Church (*1 Peter 2:9-10*)
  - A. Identity of the Church.
    - Chosen Generation.
    - Royal Priesthood.
    - Holy Nation.
    - Special People.
    - Once not a People.
    - Now have received mercy.
  - B. The Purpose of the Church.
    - To proclaim the greatness of God.

## Chapter 11

### Future Things

*But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words. 1 The. 4:13-18*

### 1. Introduction

#### A. There Are Many Prophecies throughout the Bible.

- Some relate to specific individuals, many relate to the nation of Israel.
- Over 300 of the prophecies in the Old Testament describe the first coming of Jesus Christ. Each of these was literally fulfilled in Jesus' first coming.
- Throughout the Bible, in both the Old and New Testaments, there are prophecies that describe the Second Coming of Jesus. One day these will be literally fulfilled in the same way that the prophecies about His first coming were fulfilled.
- God's redemptive plan for history will culminate in the return of Jesus and His kingdom. His return will be glory for those who believe and judgment for those who do not. In both cases, Jesus' perfect grace and justice will be on display, to the praise of His glory.
- There are many different interpretations to understanding Bible prophecy. How do we know which one is right?

## B. How Do We Approach Prophecy?

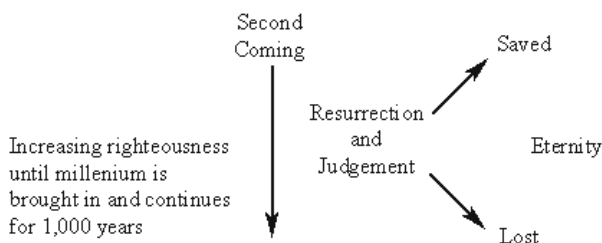
- Basic Rules for Interpreting Prophecy:
  - As we saw in the first book of this curriculum: “Hermeneutics,” the Bible should be interpreted plainly and normally. This is sometimes referred to as *literal-grammatical interpretation*.<sup>1</sup>
  - Prophecies and prophetic passages of the Bible must be interpreted the same way we interpret the rest of the Bible: normally, plainly and literally.
  - We should also rely heavily on the New Testament writers’ interpretations and applications of Old Testament prophecy.
  - One of the best approaches that follow the finest rules for interpreting Bible prophecy is known as Progressive Dispensationalism.
- A Definition of Progressive Dispensationalism:
  - Progressive dispensationalists hold to a distinction between Israel and the Church,<sup>2</sup> a future pre-trubulation rapture, a seven-year tribulation, and a millennial kingdom in which the rule of Jesus Christ will be centered in Jerusalem.<sup>3</sup>
  - Progressive dispensationalists see a close relationship between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. Progressive dispensationalists see one new covenant with an ongoing partial fulfillment and a future complete fulfillment for Israel.<sup>4</sup> The new covenant was started by Christ at the Last Supper.
  - Progressive dispensationalists hold that while there are aspects of the new covenant currently being fulfilled, there is yet to be a final and complete fulfillment of the new covenant in the future. This concept is sometimes referred to as an “already-but-not-yet” fulfillment.<sup>5</sup>

## 2. Basic Viewpoints of the Millennium

The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ will reign as King on the earth for 1,000 years. This is known as the Millennium. There are three basic viewpoints regarding the millennium:

### A. Post-Millennialism:

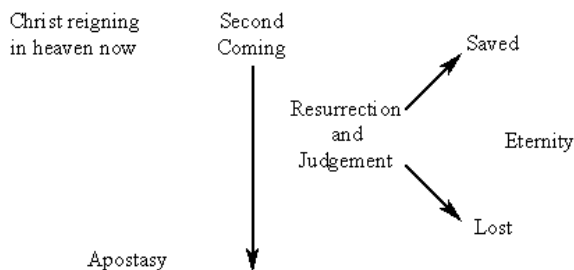
- This viewpoint teaches that the second coming of Christ will occur *after* (post) the millennium.
- Postmillennialists look for an ideal state of perfection on earth to be brought about through the efforts of the church. During this golden age the church, not Israel, will experience the fulfillment of the kingdom promises to Abraham and David. The kingdom will be on earth, but it will be a “church kingdom” not a Jewish kingdom.
- The King, Jesus, will be absent from the earth, not present on it. He will rule in the hearts of people and return to the earth only after the millennium is complete.
- Then will follow a general judgment of all people, and eternity will begin.
- Postmillennialism sees the unfulfilled Abrahamic promises as being fulfilled by the church, but not in any literal sense. Its method of interpretation is generally to spiritualize prophecy.
- The postmillennial scheme looks like this: <sup>6</sup>



### B. Amillennialism:

- This viewpoint teaches that there will be no millennium at all in the future.

- Whatever kingdom there will be, now exists in the hearts of believers. It is heaven's rule over the church.
- Conditions in this present age will become increasingly worse until the second coming of Christ at the end of this church age, and the return of the Lord will be immediately followed by a general resurrection and judgment and the beginning of the eternal state.
- Amillennial interpretation spiritualizes the promises made to Israel as a nation when they say they are fulfilled by the church.
- The Amillennial scheme looks like this: <sup>7</sup>

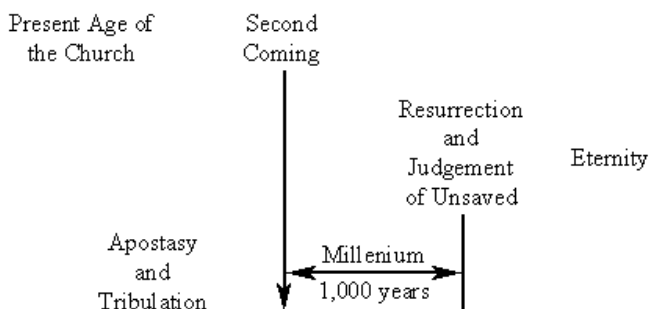


### C. Pre-Millennialism (preferred view):

- Premillennialists hold that the second coming of Christ will occur before (pre) the millennium and that Christ, not the church (as in postmillennialism) will be the one to establish the kingdom.
- Christ will actually reign over the earth as King, and during the millennium the Jewish people will experience the fulfillment of the promises made to Abraham and David.
- According to premillennialism, the present church age will see increasing apostasy which will climax in the time of the tribulation before the second coming of Christ.
- The premillennial scheme is a result of interpreting the promises and prophecies of the Bible in a plain, normal or literal way. This is the strength of premillennialism – its

method of interpretation is consistently the same whether applied to history, doctrine or prophecy.

- The premillennial scheme looks like this: <sup>8</sup>



### 3. The Rapture of the Church

#### A. Description of the Rapture.

- The title *rapture* comes from the Latin word used in *1 Thes. 4:17*, which is translated in English “*caught up.*”
- The rapture of the church is the catching up of the church. It is the catching up to the dwelling place promised in *Joh. 14:1-3*.
- The key passage about the rapture is in *1 Thessalonians*.

*But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words (1 The. 4:13-18).*

- Four truths are featured in this passage:
  - Christ Himself will return with glory, power and majesty (v. 16).
  - There will be a resurrection of the dead (v. 16).
  - There will be a catching up of the church into heaven (v. 17).
  - There will be reunions (v. 17), both with the loved ones who have previously died in the Lord and with the Lord Himself. All these reunions will last forever.
- In *1 Corinthians 15:51-57*, Paul describes this as a mystery.

## B. The Timing of the Rapture.

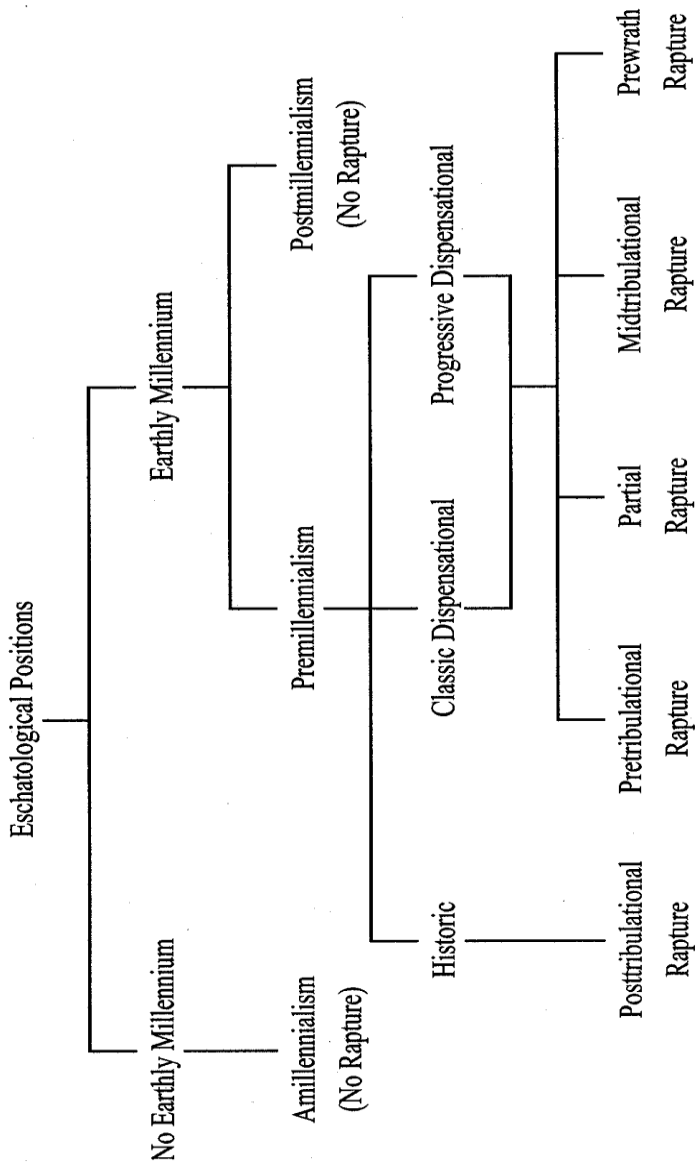
- Post-Tribulation Rapture:
  - Definition: Post-tribulationists believe that the rapture will occur after (post) the seven year tribulation period predicted by Daniel in *Dan. 9:24-27*.
  - The post-tribulationists teach that the rapture and the Second Coming are identical (See *1 The. 4:15*; and *Mat. 24:27*).
  - According to this viewpoint the church will be present on earth during the tribulation period, and the comings for and with His saints occur in quick sequence at the close of that period.
  - The church can and will be preserved from the wrath of the tribulation period by supernatural protection while living through that time, and not by deliverance from the tribulation itself.
  - This view, on the timing of the rapture, along with the pre-tribulation view are currently the two leading positions among scholars on the end times. Scholars such as Douglas J. Moo, Millard Erickson, and Robert Gundry hold to this view.
- Mid-Tribulation Rapture:
  - Definition: The mid-tribulationists believe that Christ's coming for His people will occur at the middle point of the tribulation period – that is 3 ½

years after the seven year Tribulation begins and  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years before the end, at which time the Lord will return with His saints to set up His millennial kingdom.

- According to this view, the tribulation is actually only the last half of Daniel's seventieth week, and the church is promised deliverance only from that (*Rev. 11:2, 12:6*). See *Dan. 9:24-27* to learn more about the seventieth week of Daniel's prophecy.
- Pre-Tribulation Rapture (preferred view)
  - Definition: the Pre-tribulation view holds that the rapture of the church will take place before (pre) the seven year tribulation period predicted by Daniel in *Dan. 9:24-27*.
  - Seven years later, after the conclusion of the tribulation, the Lord will return to earth with His people to set up His millennial kingdom.
  - Jesus promised the believers at the church in Philadelphia to keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth (*Rev. 3:10*).
  - Noted Scholars who hold to this view include: J. Dwight Pentecost, John F. Walford, Charles Feinberg, and Charles Ryrie to name a few.
- It is important to note when discussing the end times that the most important truth is that the Bible is very clear Jesus is coming again!
  - Regardless of the viewpoint that you hold to, Jesus himself said that no one knows the day or the hour...not the angels or even Jesus himself (*Mat. 24:36, Mar. 13:32*).
  - As *Mark 13:33* says it best: *Be on Guard! Be alert and pray!*

For a better picture of the end times see the chart on the next page:





(Chart courtesy of [www.bibleanswersministry.org/eschatology](http://www.bibleanswersministry.org/eschatology))

## 4. The Tribulation Period

The Bible says a great deal in both Old and New Testaments about the tribulation period – more than about many other doctrines.<sup>9</sup>

### A. The Length of the Tribulation Period:

- The length of the Tribulation is described in Daniel chapter 9 as a period of seven years.
- Half of the time is said to be 42 months or 1,260 days (*Rev 11:2-3*).
- This seven-year period is divided into two equal parts by the breaking of the treaty, which will be made at the beginning (*Dan. 9:27*). Both parts will be characterized by intense persecution of the church from the world and judgment from God.

### B. The Uniqueness of the Tribulation:

- Jesus spoke of the tribulation days as unique in the entire history of the world (*Mat. 24:21*). Certainly there has been intense persecution and trials throughout the history of the church, but this will be more intense than any previous period.
- This tribulation will be worldwide, not limited to a particular country or region (*Rev. 3:10*).
- People will not only realize that the end of the world is near, but they will also act like it (*Rev. 6:16*).

### C. The Description of the Tribulation:

- The Tribulation begins when the Anti-Christ, also known as the man of sin, signs a treaty with the Jewish people (*Dan. 9:27*).
- *2 The. 2:1-12* describes the setting in which the Tribulation begins. It says the Church is taken away and that the restraints from sin are lifted in the world, allowing Satan and his demons to have unhindered access to carry out their evil plans on the earth.

- The book of Revelation details the series of wraths and judgments that come from God during this time (see chapters 4-18). This awful seven-year period comes to a close by the returning of Jesus in splendor, majesty and power (*Rev. 19:11-19*).
- At the end of this period, the Anti-Christ and his false prophet are judged and thrown into the lake of fire (*Rev. 19:20-21*). Satan is bound and thrown into judgment for 1,000 years (*Rev. 20:1-6*).

## 5. The Millennial Kingdom

### A. The Character of the Millennial Kingdom:

- Let's begin by first talking about the Kingdom of God. It was one of Jesus' favorite subjects on which to preach.
- A Definition of the Kingdom of God: At its simplest, the kingdom of God is the result of God's mission to rescue and renew His sin-filled creation. The kingdom of God is about Jesus, our king establishing His rule and reign over all creation, defeating the human and angelic powers, bring order to all, enacting justice, and being worshiped as Lord.<sup>10</sup>
- A Definition of the Millennial Kingdom: The millennial kingdom is that period of 1,000 years during which our Lord Jesus Christ will rule the earth in righteousness and will fulfill to the Jews and the world those promises of the Old Testament covenants. See Revelation 20 where six times in that chapter it talks about the 1,000 year reign of Jesus Christ.
- The kingdom is designated in the Bible in various ways:
  - The kingdom that is coming (*Mat. 6:10*).
  - The kingdom of God (*Luk. 19:10*).
  - The kingdom of Christ (*Rev. 11:15*).
  - The regeneration (*Mat. 19:28*).
  - The times of refreshing (*Act. 3:19*).
  - The world to come (*Heb. 2:5*).

B. The Government of the Millennial Kingdom:

- The millennial government will be set up on this earth (*Zec. 14:9*).
- The city of Jerusalem will be the center of the government (*Isa. 2:3*).
  - The city of Jerusalem will be exalted (*Zec. 14:10*).
  - It will be a place of great glory (*Isa. 24:23*).
  - The site of the temple will be there (*Isa. 33:20*).
  - Jerusalem will be the joy of the whole earth (*Psa. 48:2*).
  - Jerusalem will never again need to fear for safety (*Isa. 26:1-4*).
  - From that capital city will go forth the law (*Isa. 2:3*).
- The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord just as the waters cover the seas (*Isa. 11:9*).
- Jesus will be the King of the millennial government (*Dan. 7:14; Isa. 11:4; 65:20*).

C. The Spiritual Life of the Millennial Kingdom:

- Righteousness will flourish (*Isa. 11:3-5*).
- Peace will be universal (*Isa. 2:4*).
- The Holy Spirit will be manifest in unusual ways (*Isa. 61:3; Joel 2:28-29*).
- Satan will be bound (*Rev. 20:2-3*).

D. The Social Justice of the Millennial Kingdom:

- Jesus Christ will judge accurately on the basis of His complete knowledge of everything (*Isa. 11:3-5*).
- The productivity of the earth will be greatly increased (*Isa. 35:1-2*), because the curse to which the earth was subjected after the sin of Adam (*Gen. 3:17*) will be reversed.

E. The End of the Millennial Kingdom

- At the end of the 1,000-year reign of Christ, Satan will be released (*Rev. 20:7-9*).

- He will deceive the nations and lead a revolt of rebellious forces that will attack the very center of Jesus' government.
- Just as they are about to attack, God will send fire from heaven to destroy them completely. The people who join this revolt will be destroyed by fire.
- Satan will be cast into the lake of fire (*Rev. 20:10*) for his final judgment.
- This final, last revolt will prove once again that it is the heart of man that needs conversion and a work of supernatural grace.<sup>11</sup>

## 6. The Judgments that will Occur in the Future<sup>12</sup>

### A. The Judgment of Believer's Works:

- After the church is taken to heaven through the rapture and resurrection, individual believers will be judged for their works done as Christians (*1 Cor. 3:11-15*). Though we are saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone, works are important as Christians (*Eph. 2:10*).
  - Paul makes it very clear in *1 Cor 3:15* that some Christians works are done in the flesh and will be burned.
  - Others will receive great reward for what they did for God while here on earth.<sup>13</sup>
  - But remember, Christians will not be judged in the same way that non-Christians will be (see *Joh. 5:24; Rom. 8:1*).
- Rewards will be given for many things:
  - A crown of rejoicing will be given for bringing people to Christ (*1 The. 2:19*).
  - A crown of righteousness will be given for loving Christ's appearance (*2 Tim. 4:8*).
  - A crown of life will be given for enduring testing with love for the Lord (*Jam. 1:12*).
  - A crown of glory will be given to elders who are faithful to their responsibilities in the church (*1 Pet. 5:4*).

- These are likely just examples of many other rewards to be given.

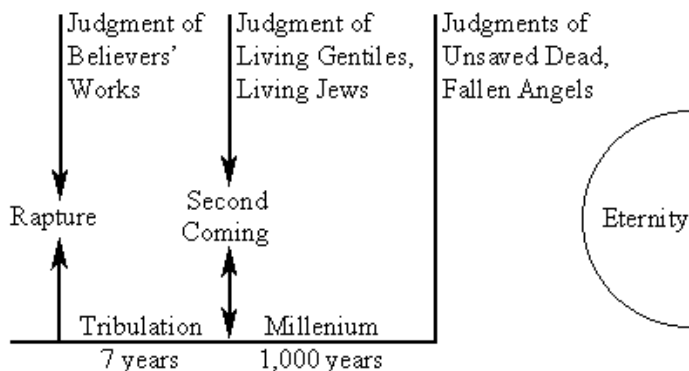
#### B. The Judgment of Fallen Angels

- As we discussed earlier, Satan will be judged at the second coming of Christ by being bound in the abyss during the millennium, and then after his brief rebellion in the end will be cast eternally into the lake of fire (*Rev. 20:2-3, 7, 10*).
- Those angels who followed Satan's initial revolt against God will also be judged.
  - The time of this judgment is called *the great day* (*Jude 6*), most likely at the conclusion of the millennium when Satan is finally judged.
  - Believers will apparently have a part in executing this judgment (*1 Cor. 6:3*).

#### C. The Judgment of the Unsaved Dead:

- At the end of the millennial reign of Christ, a great white throne will be established.
- Jesus Christ, the Great Judge, will sit on this throne (*Joh. 5:22; Rev. 20:12*).
- Those who will be judged will be the unsaved dead from all throughout history.
  - They will be judged on the basis of their works (*Rev. 20:12-13*).
  - Though they are at the judgment because they did not believe in Jesus as their Savior, they will ultimately be judged by their works.
  - When the book of life is opened, none of their names will appear in it. Rejection of the Savior has kept their names out of the book of life.
  - Their works done during their lifetime confirms that these people deserve hell and eternal punishment.
  - It seems likely that this basis for judgment will also have different degrees of punishment in hell (see *Luk. 12:47-48*).

- For all who stand in this judgment, the result will be the same. They will be cast into the lake of fire.
  - This is called *the second death* and means eternal separation from God.
  - Even death, which claims the body, and hades, which claims the soul, will be cast into the lake of fire, for their works will be finished (*Rev. 20:14-15*).
- These future judgments will look like this (taken from a pre-tribulation perspective): <sup>14</sup>



#### D. The Resurrection of the Just:

- The resurrection of all believers is also called the first resurrection. The dead in Christ will be raised first at the rapture of the church (*1 The. 4:16*). The redeemed of the tribulation period who die during that time will be raised before the millennium (*Rev. 20:4*).
- The redeemed believers from the Old Testament times will also be a part of the resurrection of the just, likely being raised at the rapture of the church (*1 The. 4:16*).

#### E. The Resurrection of the Unjust:

- All unsaved people of all time will be raised after the millennium to be judged and then cast into the lake of fire forever (*Rev. 20:11-15*). At their resurrection they will

apparently be given some sort of bodies that will be able to live forever and feel the effects of the torments of the lake of fire.

## 7. Heaven and Hell

### A. What Happens When We Die?

- God created humans as thinking, feeling, and moral persons made up of spirit and body tightly joined together (*Gen. 2:7*). Death is not normal or natural, but an enemy. Death is the consequence of sin (*Gen. 2:17; Rom. 5:12*). Death is the tearing apart of these two intertwined parts, the end of relationship with loved ones, and the end of life on this earth.
- The body goes to the grave and the spirit goes to an afterlife (*Psa. 104:29; 146:4; Ecc. 3:20-21; 12:7; Jam. 2:26*) to face judgment (*Heb. 9:27*).
- Christianity differs from all other religions in that we believe our eternal status depends on our relationship with Jesus. We believe that *God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life* (*Joh. 3:16*).
- Upon death, a believer's spirit immediately goes to heaven to be with Jesus (*2 Cor 5:1-10; Phi. 1:23*).
- At the final judgment, all people will stand before Jesus. Jesus' followers whose names are written in the Book of Life will be with Him forever. The Bible could not be clearer: *If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire* (*Rev. 20:15*).

### B. What Does the Bible Teach about Heaven?

- Contrary to the popular misconception, heaven is *not* where believers spend eternity.
- When Christians die, their spirit goes to heaven to be with Jesus (*Luk. 23:43; Act. 7:59; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phi. 1:23; Rev. 6:9-11*). Thankfully, we will always be with Him (*Joh.14:3; 17:24; 1 The. 4:14, 17*).



- God creates the heavens in *Genesis 1:1* and the new heavens in *Revelation 21:1* (See also *Isa. 65:17-25; 66:22; Rom. 8:19-22; 2 Pet. 3:10-13*).
- According to the Bible, our eternal home will be on the new earth, an actual, literal place, where we will live forever. The heavenly city of Jerusalem will come down out of heaven and God will dwell there with His people (*Rev. 21:1ff*).
- In this new, eternal home, people will have new spiritual bodies, they will be recognizable, there will be work, travel and industry, and people will worship God permanently and perfectly.<sup>15</sup>

### C. What Does the Bible Teach about Hell?

- Jesus talked about hell more than anyone else in the Bible. He said more about hell than any other topic. Amazingly, 13 percent of His sayings are about hell and judgment. More than half of His parables relate to the eternal judgment of sinners.<sup>16</sup>
- Despite God's love and patience with sinners (*1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:9*), it is wrong to dismiss the Bible's clear teachings on hell.
- The Bible does not give a detailed explanation of hell, but there are many descriptions of the fate of its occupants in that place of eternal punishment:
  - Fire (*Mat. 13:42, 50; 18:8, 9; Rev. 19:20; 20:14-15*).
  - Darkness (*Mat. 25:30; Jude 13*).
  - Punishment (*Rev. 14:10-11*).
  - Exclusion from God's presence (*Mat. 7:23; 25:41; Luk. 16:19; 2 The. 1:9*).
  - Restlessness (*Rev. 14:11*).
  - Second death (*Rev. 2:11; 20:6, 14; 21:8*).
  - Weeping and gnashing of teeth (*Mat. 13:42, 50; 22:12-13; 24:51; 25:30; Luk. 13:28*).
- Hell is real and terrible. It is eternal. There is no possibility of it ending, of getting released from hell, or gaining a pardon. Hell will be ruled by Jesus, and both

humans and demons, including Satan, will be tormented there continually.

- Our attitude toward hell should be the same as God the Father's, who takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but asks them to turn from their evil ways (*Eze. 18:23; 33:11; 1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:9*).

D. What Are Some of the Major Objections to the Doctrine of Hell?

- Objection #1: A loving God would not send billions of people to a horrible hell.
  - In a very important sense, God doesn't send anyone to hell. The only people there are those who have rejected His revelation, choosing to suppress the truth He made plain to them (*Rom. 1:21, 24-25*). Sinners have no one to blame but themselves if they are damned to eternal hell.
  - A statement from the Lausanne Covenant of 1974<sup>17</sup> is one of the most influential documents in evangelical Christendom. It reads:

*All men and women are perishing because of sin, but God loves everyone, not wishing that any should perish but that all should repent. Yet those who reject Christ repudiate the joy of salvation and condemn themselves to eternal separation from God. To proclaim Jesus as "the Savior of the world" is not to affirm that all people are either automatically or ultimately saved, still less to affirm that all religions offer salvation in Christ. Rather it is to proclaim God's love for a world of sinners and to invite everyone to respond to Him as Savior and Lord in the whole-hearted personal commitment of repentance and faith. Jesus Christ has been exalted above every other name; we long for the day when every knee shall bow to Him and every tongue shall confess Him Lord.*<sup>18</sup>

- Objection #2: A loving God would be more tolerant.
  - God is not tolerant of people who reject Jesus. He is completely committed to a new earth where no one will have to be on guard against idolatry and injustice.
  - A loving God protects His children from sin and evil by separating them from it.
  - He freely offers forgiveness, grace, life and eternity to those who will repent of their sin. But it must be recognized that sin is a *cosmic treason*<sup>19</sup> against a holy God and that it must be judged.

#### E. Do People Who Have Never Heard About Jesus Go to Hell?

- Jesus said, *No one comes to the Father except through Me (Joh. 14:6)*. Peter preached, *There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved (Act. 4:12)*.
- The conclusion is simple: there is only one-way to the Father and that is through Jesus Christ. All other religious roads lead to false gods and a real hell.<sup>20</sup>
- But there are many ways to Jesus.
  - Many respond to the preached Word of God (*Rom. 10:13-15*).
  - He spoke to Abraham directly (*Gen. 12:1-3*).
  - He gave Pharaoh dreams (*Gen. 40-41*).
  - He spoke to the treacherous prophet Balaam in a vision so that he prophesied about the Messiah (*Num. 24:4, 16-19*).
  - He appeared to Cornelius in a vision, which resulted in his being saved (*Act. 10:3-6*).
- There are many stories about men and women who have never heard the Gospel but start seeking God by responding to the light that they do have, and how God miraculously gets the Gospel message to them.<sup>21</sup>
- It is our responsibility to take the message of the Gospel to the whole world (*Mat. 28:18-20*).

#### F. Do Unborn Babies and Young Children Go to Heaven?

- This is one of the questions that the Bible does not answer for us directly. Though there are certainly some hints in several passages, we must affirm Abraham's words in Genesis 18:25, *Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?*
- David's first son that he bore with Bathsheba died. In 2 Samuel 12:23, David said *I shall go to him, but he will not return to me*. It appears that David knew his young son would be in heaven and that he would see him there.
  - However, this can also refer to Sheol as a place of rest or the grave.
- The fact that John the Baptizer was known and named by God in the womb and filled with the Holy Spirit before birth tells us that God is intimately acquainted with all our ways even before we are born (see *Psa. 139:13-16*; *Luke 1:5-25, 39-45*).
- God is a loving, gracious Father and we can trust Him to do what is right in such instances. Ultimately, the Word of God is not perfectly clear on this subject; as a result a case can be presented in convincing fashion for either side of the argument.

#### 8. Conclusion

The closing verses of the Bible say *Come Lord Jesus!* (*Rev. 22:20-21*). That ought to be our prayer. And we must be ready for our death or His coming, whichever comes first. The Gospel says that Jesus is Immanuel, *God with us* (*Mat. 1:23*). He died and rose and is exalted in heaven. If you repent of sin, change your mind about who or what is Lord of your life, and believe, trusting that you can stake your life and eternity on the truth of what God says, then you will receive full forgiveness of all sin, new life in and by the Holy Spirit, membership in the church of Jesus Christ, a meaningful part in His rescue mission in the world, and citizenship in His kingdom. You will be with Jesus and His people now and forever.<sup>9</sup>

We want this for you, and we would be unloving if we finished these doctrine studies without seeking to ensure that you are a Christian. Have you confessed your sins to Jesus Christ? Have you sought His forever forgiveness and eternal salvation? If not, do it now. There is no better time than *right now!*

Questions for Reflection:

1. What is the kingdom of God?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. How will Christians be judged at the end of their life?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. What awaits non-believers at the end of their life?

## Ideas for Preaching about Future Things

### *1 Corinthians 15:50-58*

1. We Were Made for Eternity, Not the Temporary (*15:50-53*).
2. We Were Made for Life, Not Death (*15:54-57*).
3. Our Purpose Determines Our Actions Here on Earth (*15:18*).

## Conclusion

*Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we do not lose heart. But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. But even if our Gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them. For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake. For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. We are hard pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed – always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. 2 Corinthians 4:1-10*

### 1. Paul: Example of a Pastor and His Theology

#### A. Ministry is not easy.

- Paul describes it in *2 Corinthians 4:8-10* this way: *We are hard pressed on every side...we are perplexed...persecuted...struck down...carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus.*
- It is amazing that Paul also declares at every interval:
  - Not crushed.
  - Not in despair.
  - Not forsaken.
  - Not destroyed.
- Paul is a example of one who remains committed to the ministry and does not lose heart, because he has become *convinced* of something.

- Paul is convinced that his ministry is about God and His truth, and not about himself and his own talent.
  - Paul is convinced that the power of his ministry is in the power of the gospel.
  - He says if the Gospel is hidden from people's eyes, it is because of sin, and if the Gospel is made known to them, it will be because people see the glory of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
  - Studying theology shows us that *salvation belongs to the Lord*. It is His work, and He has a plan and the power to accomplish it. The Lord may use the gifts of a Pastor, but He is not dependent upon them to accomplish His purposes.
  - Paul concludes with the glorious truth about ministry. We have the privilege of having the life of Jesus made known to others through us.
2. The Pastor/Church Planter and Theology: A Few Concluding Thoughts<sup>1</sup>

#### A. The Pastor's Calling:

- The pastor's calling is theological. Pastors are teachers of God's Word and the Gospel. Paul tells Timothy *to hold fast to teaching what he received, so that he might be able to faithfully teach others (2 Tim. 1:13-14)*.

*You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also (2 Tim. 2:1-2).*

- All of the pastor's duties are theological:
  - Teaching the Bible and the Gospel is theological, because you want people know and love God.
  - Evangelism is theological, because you have an encounter between two different views of the world. Proclaiming the Gospel requires us to present God and His work of salvation clearly and accurately.



- Counseling is theological. When people are confused, hurt, and suffering, they need to know truth about God's love, goodness, faithfulness, and power to be comforted.
- Even serving as an example to your church, family, and community is theological (*Tit. 2:10*).

#### B. The Pastor's Commitment to Theological Growth.

- The essential task of the pastor/church planter is to feed God's people with the Word of God so that you can help them live out their beliefs in everyday life. To accomplish this task, the pastor must have an ongoing encounter with the power of God's truth through personal study of the Scriptures and continual pursuit to know God more and to understand His purposes better. Paul gives testimony to this in his ministry.

*For this reason I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day (2 Tim. 1:12).*

- The pastor's public ministry involves more than teaching. He is also an example. He is an example to his church, family, and community. Your example should be a testimony to the power of God and His truth. Therefore, your theology must be integrated into your life, and not just knowledge that you obtained through study.

#### C. The Pastor's Conviction.

- The health and power of the pastor's ministry is significantly shaped by the strength of their conviction. This conviction must first be settled in the pastor's heart, and then infused into the congregation.
- Conviction is established by confidence. The pastor's confidence is deeply theological. The pastor's confidence comes from faith in the truth of God's Word and the Gospel. Confidence comes from assurance in what God

has promised that He will do for His people. This confidence shapes and motivates the pastor's ministry.

- Paul says, *For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again (2 Cor. 5:14-15).*

D. How Will Knowing Theology Help Me as a Church Planter?<sup>2</sup>  
(You read these points in the Introduction to this book, but they also serve as a good summary here.)

- I will know God better. Because good *theology* describes God, His character and His person accurately, I can know Him more intimately as a result of studying theology. I will know more about the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit and therefore love them more, praise them better, and serve them more effectively.
- I will know the truth of God better. Knowing the doctrines of salvation, the Scriptures, sin, future things, and other areas will give me a more solid foundation in my study of the Bible.
- I will know the mission of God better. Because God is a missional God, I will be able to be on mission with Him better because I know His heart better.
- I will fulfill Paul's command to study to show myself approved unto God, a workman who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth (*2 Tim. 2:15*).
- I will have more confidence in my message. When you spend the time to understand Bible doctrine on a deeper level, it gives you greater confidence in what you believe.
- I will be able to preach with greater accuracy. You will notice a greater depth and power in your preaching as a result of knowing more of what the Bible teaches.
- I will be able to answer people's questions better. One of the greatest roles pastors play is helping their people understand the message of the Bible. Knowing Bible doctrine will give you answers to the questions people in your church will have.

- I will be able to defend the faith better. There are many world-views today. There are many other religions in the world. Knowing Bible doctrine gives you the ability to answer opposing viewpoints and help people who don't yet know Jesus as their Savior to understand His message better.

### 3. Theological Benediction to this Study

*Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen. Hebrews 13:20-21.*

## End Notes

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### Introduction:

<sup>1</sup> Paul P. Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology*, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

<sup>3</sup> Mark Driscoll and Gerry Breshears, *Doctrine: What Christians Should Believe*, Crossway Books, 2009, p. 9.

<sup>4</sup> Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, Eerdmans, 1994, pp. 32-37.

<sup>5</sup> Enns, *ibid.* p. iii.

<sup>6</sup> J. I. Packer, *Concise Theology : A Guide to Historic Christian Beliefs*, Tyndale House, p. 6.

<sup>7</sup> Henry Oursler, *The Benefits of Theology for the Church Planter*, Grace Global Network, [www.GraceGlobalNetwork.org](http://www.GraceGlobalNetwork.org).

<sup>8</sup> One of the best books on theology and doctrine available right now is: *Christian Theology* by Millard J. Erickson. Another good one is Mark Driscoll and Gerry Breshears, *Doctrine: What Christians Should Believe*, Crossway Books, 2009. We recommend it highly.

### Chapter One: The Doctrine of God:

<sup>1</sup> Roy B. Zuck, Eugene H. Merrill, Darrell L. Bock, *A Biblical Theology of the Old Testament*, Moody Press, pp. 3-6.

<sup>2</sup> J. I. Packer, *Concise Theology: A Guide to Historic Christian Beliefs*, Tyndale House, p. 10.

<sup>3</sup> Chad O. Brand, E. Ray Clendenen, Paul Copan, J.P. Moreland, *The Apologetics Study Bible: Real Questions, Straight Answers, Stronger Faith*, Holman Publishers.

<sup>4</sup> We emphasize that these are clear and consistent passages about the Oneness of God. There are other passages in the Old Testament where the text allows for a Trinitarian interpretation. Examples of these passages are Genesis 1:2, 1:26, 3:22, 2 Samuel 23:2, and Isaiah 48:16.

<sup>5</sup> Mark Driscoll and Gerry Breshears, *Doctrine: What Christians Should Believe*, Crossway Books, p. 22.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 22-23.

<sup>7</sup> This is a 1973 translation by the International Consultation on English Texts.

<sup>8</sup> Packer, p. 26.

<sup>9</sup> Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Great Doctrines of the Bible: Volume 1 – God the Father, God the Son*, Crossway Books, pp. 52ff.

<sup>10</sup> Packer, p. 13.

<sup>11</sup> Packer, p. 16.

<sup>12</sup> Lloyd-Jones, *ibid.*, pp. 68-72.

<sup>13</sup> Charles C. Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, Moody Press, 1999, p. 42.

<sup>14</sup> Packer, *ibid.*, p. 19.

<sup>15</sup> Ryrie, *ibid.*, pp. 51-56.

<sup>16</sup> Charles C. Ryrie, *A Survey of Bible Doctrine*, Moody Press, pp. 29-30.

<sup>17</sup> Driscoll and Breshears, *ibid.*, pp. 79ff.

<sup>18</sup> Packer, *ibid.*, p. 18.

## Chapter Two: The Doctrine of Scripture

<sup>1</sup> Charles C. Ryrie, *A Survey of Bible Doctrine*, Moody Press, pp. 36-37.

<sup>2</sup> Mark Driscoll and Gerry Breshears, *Doctrine: What Christians Should Believe*, Crossway Books, pp. 38-40.

<sup>3</sup> J. I. Packer, *Concise Theology: A Guide to Historic Christian Beliefs*, Tyndale House, p. 13.

<sup>4</sup> Mark Driscoll and Gerry Breshears, *ibid.*, p. 41.

<sup>5</sup> Ryrie, *ibid.*, pp. 38-40.

<sup>6</sup> Driscoll and Breshears, *ibid.*, p. 41.

<sup>7</sup> Paul P. Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology*, pp. 72-73

<sup>8</sup> Walter Kaiser, *Toward an Old Testament Theology*, Moody Press, pp. 12-13.

<sup>9</sup> J. I. Packer, "Hermeneutics and Biblical Authority," *Themelios* 1.1 (Autumn 1975): 11. Also see [http://s3.amazonaws.com/tgc-documents/journal-issues/1.1\\_Packer.pdf](http://s3.amazonaws.com/tgc-documents/journal-issues/1.1_Packer.pdf).

<sup>10</sup> Driscoll and Breshears, *ibid.*, pp. 58-59.

<sup>11</sup> A very helpful resource in this regard is Norman Geisler and Thomas Howe, *When Critics Ask*, Baker Book House, 1992.

<sup>12</sup> Driscoll and Breshears, *ibid.*, p. 65.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 75.

## Chapter Three: The Doctrine of Jesus Christ

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in G. C. Berkouwer, *The Person of Christ*, trans. John Vriend, Eerdmans Publishers, p. 94.

<sup>2</sup> Mark Driscoll and Gerry Breshears, *Doctrine: What Christians Should Believe*, Crossway Books, pp. 230-231.

<sup>3</sup> Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Great Doctrines of the Bible: Volume 1 – God the Father, God the Son*, Crossway Books, chapter 25.

<sup>4</sup> J. I. Packer, *Concise Theology: A Guide to Historic Christian Beliefs*, Tyndale House, p. 96.

<sup>5</sup> Charles C. Ryrie, *A Survey of Bible Doctrine*, Moody Press, p. 51.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 52-55.

<sup>7</sup> Driscoll and Breshears, p. 221-228.

<sup>8</sup> Ryrie, pp. 55-57.

<sup>9</sup> J. I. Packer, *Knowing God*, InterVarsity, p. 45.

- <sup>10</sup> Driscoll and Breshears, *ibid.*, p. 218.
- <sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 228.
- <sup>12</sup> Lloyd-Jones, *ibid.*, chapter 23.
- <sup>13</sup> For a good explanation about some of the false teachings about the incarnation, see Driscoll and Breshears, *ibid.*, pp. 234-236.
- <sup>14</sup> F. L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone, *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, p. 1152.
- <sup>15</sup> D. R. W. Wood and I. Howard Marshall, *The New Bible Dictionary*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, p. 1211.
- <sup>16</sup> Cross and Livingstone, *ibid.*, p. 162.
- <sup>17</sup> Berkouwer, *ibid.*, pp. 94-99.
- <sup>18</sup> Ryrie, *ibid.*, p. 51.
- <sup>19</sup> Lloyd-Jones, *ibid.*, chapter 25.
- <sup>20</sup> John F. Walvoord, *Jesus Christ our Lord*, Moody Press, p. 137.
- <sup>21</sup> Packer, *ibid.*, p. 115.
- <sup>22</sup> Ryrie, *ibid.*, pp. 62-64.
- <sup>23</sup> Packer, *ibid.*, p. 117.
- <sup>24</sup> Henry Oursler, *What Is Jesus Doing Now? – LeaderShape Letter #117*, Grace Global Network, [www.GraceGlobalNetwork.org](http://www.GraceGlobalNetwork.org).
- <sup>25</sup> Ryrie, *ibid.*, p. 66.

#### Chapter Four: The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

- <sup>1</sup> Charles C. Ryrie, *A Survey of Bible Doctrine*, Moody Press, pp. 67-72.
- <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 70-72.
- <sup>3</sup> J. I. Packer, *Concise Theology: A Guide to Historic Christian Beliefs*, Tyndale House, p. 152.
- <sup>4</sup> Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Great Doctrines of the Bible: Volume 2 – God the Spirit*, Crossway Books, chapter 21.
- <sup>5</sup> Ryrie, *ibid.*, pp. 74-75.
- <sup>6</sup> Ryrie, *ibid.*, pp. 75-87.
- <sup>7</sup> For a fuller discussion, see Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Great Doctrines of the Bible: Volume 2 – God the Spirit*, Crossway Books, chapter 22.
- <sup>8</sup> Packer, *ibid.*, p. 172.
- <sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 152.
- <sup>10</sup> Henry Oursler, *The Helper Sent from God – LeaderShape Letter #125*, Grace Global Network, [www.GraceGlobalNetwork.org](http://www.GraceGlobalNetwork.org).

#### Chapter Five: The Doctrine of Angels

- <sup>1</sup> Charles C. Ryrie, *A Survey of Bible Doctrine*, Moody Press, pp. 89-99.
- <sup>2</sup> Charles C. Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 146-147.
- <sup>3</sup> J. I. Packer, *Concise Theology: A Guide to Historic Christian Beliefs*, Tyndale House, p. 27.

<sup>4</sup> Dennis Mock, *Bible Doctrine Survey: Volume 5* (Atlanta, GA: Biblical Training Centre for Pastors, 1989), pp. 174-175.

## Chapter Six: The Doctrine of Man

<sup>1</sup> Charles C. Ryrie, *A Survey of Bible Doctrine*, Moody Press, pp. 100-104.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 104-107.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., pp. 107-109.

<sup>4</sup> Mark Driscoll and Gerry Breshears, *Doctrine: What Christians Should Believe*, Crossway Books, pp. 153-156.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., pp. 112-114.

## Chapter Seven: The Doctrine of Sin

<sup>1</sup> C. S. Lewis, *A Year with C. S. Lewis: Daily Readings from His Classic Works*.

<sup>2</sup> Sid Litke, "Survey of Bible Doctrine: Man and Sin," <http://bible.org/seriespage/survey-bible-doctrine-man-and-sin>.

<sup>3</sup> This definition is a combination from various sources, including *Harper's Bible Dictionary* and *The New Bible Dictionary*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition.

<sup>4</sup> Charles C. Ryrie, *A Survey of Bible Doctrine*, Moody Press, pp. 109-110.

<sup>5</sup> Litke, *ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> Ryrie, *ibid.*, pp. 107-112.

<sup>7</sup> Mark Driscoll and Gerry Breshears, *Doctrine: What Christians Should Believe*, Crossway Books, p. 157.

<sup>8</sup> Ryrie, *ibid.*, pp. 107-112.

## Chapter Eight: The Doctrine of Salvation

<sup>1</sup> Paul P. Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology*, p. 216.

<sup>2</sup> Mark Driscoll and Gerry Breshears, *Doctrine: What Christians Should Believe*, Crossway Books, p. 255-256.

<sup>3</sup> Charles C. Ryrie, *A Survey of Bible Doctrine*, Moody Press, pp. 128-131.

<sup>4</sup> J. I. Packer, *Concise Theology: A Guide to Historic Christian Beliefs*, Tyndale House, p. 145.

<sup>5</sup> Enns, *ibid.*, pp. 208.

<sup>6</sup> The terms *accomplished* and *applied* are borrowed from John Murray's book, *Redemption: Accomplished and Applied* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1955).

<sup>7</sup> Packer, *ibid.*, p. 149.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 151.

<sup>9</sup> Driscoll and Breshears, *ibid.*, pp. 260-262.

<sup>10</sup> Packer, *ibid.*, p. 161.

<sup>11</sup> Driscoll and Breshears, *ibid.*, p. 253.

<sup>12</sup> Enns, *ibid.*, pp. 207-208.

<sup>13</sup> Packer, *ibid.*, p. 139.

<sup>14</sup> Driscoll and Breshears, *ibid.*, pp. 253.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 264-266.

<sup>16</sup> Ryrie, *ibid.*, pp. 122-123.

<sup>17</sup> Driscoll and Breshears, *ibid.*, pp. 263-264.

<sup>18</sup> Ryrie, *ibid.*, pp. 118-119.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 127-128.

<sup>20</sup> Enns, *ibid.*, p. 207.

<sup>21</sup> Diagram from Sid Litke, “*Survey of Bible Doctrine: Salvation*,”  
<http://bible.org/seriespage/survey-bible-doctrine-salvation>.

<sup>22</sup> Enns, *ibid.*, pp. 212-214.

<sup>23</sup> Packer, *ibid.*, p. 139, 147.

<sup>24</sup> Sid Litke, “*Survey of Bible Doctrine: Salvation*,”  
<http://bible.org/seriespage/survey-bible-doctrine-salvation>.

<sup>25</sup> Ryrie, *ibid.*, pp. 128-133.

## Chapter Nine: The Doctrine of The Christian Life

<sup>1</sup> Charles C. Ryrie, *A Survey of Bible Doctrine*, Moody Press, pp. 130-131.

<sup>2</sup> J. I. Packer, *Concise Theology: A Guide to Historic Christian Beliefs*,  
Tyndale House, p. 188.

<sup>3</sup> Ryrie, *ibid.*, p. 154-157.

<sup>4</sup> Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Great Doctrines of the Bible: Volume 2 – God the Spirit*, Crossway Books, chapter 19.

<sup>5</sup> Packer, *ibid.*, p. 189.

<sup>6</sup> *Easton's Bible Dictionary*, Logos Research Systems, Inc.

## Chapter Ten: The Doctrine of the Church

<sup>1</sup> Charles C. Ryrie, *A Survey of Bible Doctrine*, Moody Press, 1972, pp. 157-158.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 140-142.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 131.

<sup>4</sup> Paul P. Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology*, p. 276.

<sup>5</sup> Henry Oursler, *What is the Church Really Like? – LeaderShape Letter #45*,  
Grace Global Network, [www.GraceGlobalNetwork.org](http://www.GraceGlobalNetwork.org).

<sup>6</sup> There are many helpful books here. Two of the most practical are: Gene Getz, *Sharpening the Focus of the Church*, and Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church*.

<sup>7</sup> Ryrie, *ibid.*, p. 148-154.

<sup>8</sup> The material in section 6 is largely from Sid Litke, “*Survey of Bible Doctrine: The Church*,” <http://bible.org/seriespage/survey-bible-doctrine-church>.

<sup>9</sup> Ryrie, *ibid.*, p. 142-146.



## Chapter Eleven: The Doctrine of Future Things

<sup>1</sup> Charles C. Ryrie, *A Survey of Bible Doctrine*, Moody Press, 1972, pp. 48-50.

<sup>2</sup> Craig A. Blaising, Darrell L. Bock (1993). *Progressive Dispensationalism*, Bridge Point, pp. 49-51.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 317.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. p. 54-56.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. p. 33.

<sup>6</sup> Ryrie, p. 163.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. p. 164.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. p. 165.

<sup>9</sup> John MacArthur, *The Millennium in Prophecy*, Grace to You, Valencia, CA. [gtu.org](http://gtu.org).

<sup>10</sup> Mark Driscoll and Gerry Breshears, *Doctrine: What Christians Should Believe*, Crossway Books, p. 411.

<sup>11</sup> For a more complete discussion of the Millennium, see John MacArthur, *The Coming Earthly Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ*, a four-part sermon series, Grace to You, Valencia, CA. [gtu.org](http://gtu.org).

<sup>12</sup> J. Hampton Keathley III, *The Judgments (Past, Present, and Future)*, [hamptonk3@bible.org](mailto:hamptonk3@bible.org), Biblical Studies Press, [www.bible.org](http://www.bible.org), 1997.

<sup>13</sup> For more information, see Henry Oursler, *The Rewards of the Believer*, Grace Global Network, [www.GraceGlobalNetwork.org](http://www.GraceGlobalNetwork.org) and Bruce Wilkinson, *A Life God Rewards: Why Everything You Do Today Matters Forever*, Multnomah Press.

<sup>14</sup> Daniel B. Wallace, *New Testament Eschatology in the Light of Progressive Revelation: Special Focus on the Coming Kingdom*, [wallace@bible.org](mailto:wallace@bible.org).

<sup>15</sup> A good book available on this topic is Randy Alcorn, *Heaven*, Tyndale, 2004.

<sup>16</sup> John Blanchard, *Whatever Happened to Hell?* Evangelical Press, 1993, p. 128.

<sup>17</sup> In July 1974 2,700 evangelical leaders from 150 countries gathered at the Lausanne Congress. This group was the most diverse gathering in church history and, in faithfulness to Jesus, was a direct challenge to the widely held philosophy that Christians do not have the right – let alone the duty – to disturb the honest faith of a Buddhist, a Hindu, or a Jew by evangelizing them. Thank God for their faithfulness!

<sup>18</sup> The Lausanne Movement, *the Uniqueness and Universality of Christ* (par. 3), in *The Lausanne Covenant*, <http://www.lausanne.org/covenant/>.

<sup>19</sup> I first heard the phrase *cosmic treason* in a theology course taught by Dr. R.C. Sproul in my doctoral program. We all know what *treason* against a

government or government authority is. God is the supreme Governor of the Universe and we must recognize that sin is an abhorrent affront against His holiness.

<sup>20</sup> Driscoll and Breshears, *ibid.* p. 433.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.* p. 434.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.* p. 436.

#### Conclusion:

<sup>1</sup> Headings for this section were taken from Albert Mohler, “*The Pastor as A Theologian*,” in *A Theology for the Church*, Broadman and Holman, 2007, pp. 927-934.

<sup>2</sup> Henry Oursler, *The Benefits of Theology for the Church Planter*, Grace Global Network, [www.GraceGlobalNetwork.org](http://www.GraceGlobalNetwork.org).