

The Godhead



Georgia School of Preaching
& Biblical Studies

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Class Syllabus

Course Objectives:

1. Students will learn the nature and identity of God the Father, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit as presented in Scripture.
2. Students will learn how important knowing the Godhead is to their faith and in refuting the false views of the world.
3. Students will understand the roles of the Father, of the Son, and of the Spirit as the three persons in the Godhead.

Course Requirements:

Students are required to attend class. Students who miss classes are responsible for reading the distributed material. Students must also complete the quiz at the end of the class period. Grades are determined by class attendance and the exam. Class will last for twelve hours of lecture. The exam will have questions over the written material. It will be an open book exam. Students may discuss answers among themselves.

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Highly Recommended Reading for the Study of God and the Godhead

- Dewayne Bryant, *Who Is Like the Lord? Exploring the Attributes of God* (Start2Finish Bible Studies, 2016).
- Frank Chesser, *Portrait of God* (Huntsville, Ala.: Publishing Designs, 2004).
- Roy H. Lanier, Sr., *The Timeless Trinity for the Ceaseless Centuries* (Denver, Colo.: Lanier Books, 1974).
- Robert R. Taylor, *The Bible Doctrine of Jehovah God* (Quality Publications, 2002).
- J. J. Turner & Edward P. Myers, *Doctrine of the Godhead* (West Monroe, La.: Let the Bible Speak, Inc., 1973).
- Rex Turner, Sr., *Biblical Theology*, ed. Don Shackelford (Montgomery, Ala.: Amridge University Press, 2010).
- Robert Wagoner, *The God of the Bible* (Montgomery, Ala.: Amridge University Press, 2010).

Other Books on God:

- J. I. Packer, *Knowing God* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1973).
- Lester Sumrall, *The Names of God* (New Kensington, Penn.: Whitaker House, 1982).
- Christopher J. H. Wright, *Knowing God the Father Through the Old Testament*, 2007.

Books on Christ

- Richard A. Norris, Jr. *The Christological Controversy* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980).
- Baxter, Batsell Barret. *I Believe Because*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 1971.
- Bruce, F.F. *The New Testament Documents: Are They Reliable?* Eerdmans, 1960.
- Campbell, Alexander. *The Christian Preacher's Companion*. Shreveport, La.: Lambert, n.d.
- Gardner, Lynn. *Christianity Stands True*. Joplin, Mo.: College Press, 1994.
- Greenleaf, Simon. *The Testimony of the Evangelists*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Kregel, 1995.
- Habermas, Gary R. *The Historical Jesus*. Joplin, Mo.: College Press, 1996.
- Kennedy, D. James. *What If Jesus Had Never Been Born?* Nashville: Nelson, 1994.
- Little, Paul E. *Know Why You Believe*. Chicago: Inter-Varsity Press, 1968.
- McDowell, Josh. *Evidence That Demands A Verdict*. Campus Crusade for Christ, 1972.
- A Ready Defense*. Nashville: Nelson, 1993.
- Orr, James. *The Resurrection*. Joplin, Mo.: College Press.
- Pryor, Neale. *You Can Trust Your Bible*. Abilene, Tex.: Quality, 1980.
- Sayers, Stanley E. *For This Cause*. Austin, Texas: R.B. Sweet, 1957.
- Stott, John R.W. *The Authentic Jesus*. Downer's Grove, Ill.: Inter-Varsity Press, 1985.
- Strobel, Lee. *The Case for Christ*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1998.
- Christopher J. H. Wright, *Knowing Jesus Through the Old Testament* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1992).

Books on the Holy Spirit

- James D. Bales, *The Holy Spirit and the Christian*, Shreveport, La.: Lambert, n.d.
- Jimmy Jividen, *Alive in the Spirit!*, Nashville, Tenn.: Gospel Advocate, 1990.
- Gus Nichols, *Lectures on the Holy Spirit*, Montgomery, Ala.: Faulkner Univ., 1994.

Owen Olbricht, *The Holy Spirit: Person and Work*, Gospel Light, 1999. (See Truth for Today, January 1999, Vol. 19, No. 8. for additional information.)
 James Meadows, *A Study of the Holy Spirit as Revealed in the Bible*.
 Goebel Music, *A Resource and Reference Volume on the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit*, 2000.
 Roy H. Lanier Sr., *The Timeless Trinity*.
 J. J. Turner & Edward P. Myers, *Doctrine of the Godhead*.
 F. Furman Kearley, *God's Indwelling Spirit*, Gospel Advocate.
 Franklin Camp, *The Work of the Holy Spirit in Redemption*, Guardian of Truth, 1972.
 Harvey Floyd, *Is the Holy Spirit for Me?* 21st Century Christian.
 Wendell Winkler, *What Do You Know about the Holy Spirit?* Winkler Publications.
 Robert R. Taylor Jr., *The Bible Doctrine of the Holy Spirit*, Quality Publications.
 Christopher J. H. Wright, *Knowing the Holy Spirit Through the Old Testament* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2006).

Debates and Discussions:

Ramsey-Hicks Debate. 1973. Godhead, Holy Spirit Baptism, Healing and Miracles, Tongues.
Woods-Franklin Debate. 1974. Holy Ghost baptism and miraculous gifts.
Cotham-John Debate, 1989. Miracles Today.
Are Miraculous Gifts for Today? Four Views. Grudem, Zondervan, 1996.
Hardeman Bogard Debate. On the direct operation of the Holy Spirit

Miracles:

James D. Bales, *Miracles or Mirages?*, Firm Foundation, 1956.
 Jimmy Jividen, *Miracles From God or Man?*, ACU Press, 1987.
 Jimmy Jividen, *Glossolalia From God or Man?*, Star Publishing, 1971.
 Waymon D. Miller, *Faith Healing, Fact or Fiction?* Tulsa: Plaza Press, 1990.
 Gerald N. Wright, *Now That's A Miracle!*
 Frank Pack, *Tongues and the Holy Spirit*, Abilene: Biblical Research Press, 1972.
 Anthony A. Hoekema, *What about Tongue Speaking?* Eerdmans, 1966.
 Robert G. Gromacki, *The Modern Tongues Movement*, 1967.
 Jack Deere. *Surprised by the Power of the Spirit*. Zondervan, 1993. (Believes miracles happen today)

Direct Operation of the Holy Spirit:

Curtis A. Cates, *Does the Holy Spirit Operate Upon the Heart of a Saint?*

Books Dealing with the Trinity

William G. Rusch, *The Trinitarian Controversy* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980).

THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

The Scripture opens with the statement, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen. 1:1). It doesn’t attempt to prove God exists but assumes it as an undeniable truth. Both Moses and Jesus lived at a time when the world believed in many gods (polytheism), but the Scripture has clearly stated there is but one God and cannot be another.

How can we be sure that the God of the Bible exists? We cannot prove God exists from empirical observation, since God is a spirit (John 4:24). In spite of this, these arguments for God’s existence cannot be easily dismissed. Some are stronger than others, but each offers a reason to believe:

The Anthropological Argument

Archaeological research has established that all nations, in every place, during every age, have practiced some kind of religion and worshipped something or someone as supreme above themselves. They had a belief in a Supreme Being. It is obvious this belief came from somewhere. Alexander Campbell argued:

Man could not invent, or originate the idea of a God, a Spirit, a future state, or any positive institutions of religion; he never have invented, or originated the ideas inseparably connected with the words priest, altar, sacrifice, etc.; ergo (therefore), that these ideas and the words used to express them, are derivable only from an immediate and direct revelation; men have no power according to any philosophic analysis of his intellectual powers, to originate any such ideas” (Campbell-Owen Debate).

The Cosmological Argument

This is a philosophical argument from first cause. It says every effect in the universe has behind it an adequate cause. The cause is necessary and is capable of producing the effect. If the world exists and is contingent then (a necessary being) God exists. The world does exist and is contingent. Therefore, (a necessary being) exists. Scripture reveals the universe must have had a supernatural power in order to produce it. There had to be a prime mover, a first cause. There cannot be infinite regression

Psalm 19:1 “The heavens are telling of the glory of God; And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands.”

Romans 1:20–21 “For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.”

Since whatever begins to exist has to have a cause, and the universe exists, the universe must have a cause (wise and powerful enough to make it as it is). While this is a philosophical argument, it depends upon our empirical powers of observation.

Dr. Edward Luther Kessel: “Science clearly shows that the universe could not have existed from all eternity. The law of entropy states that there is a continuous flow of heat from warmer to colder bodies. . . .Therefore the universe is headed for a time when the temperature will be universally uniform and there will be no more useful energy. Consequently there will be

no more chemical and physical processes, and life itself will cease to exist. But because life is still going on, and chemical and physical processes are still in progress, it is evident that our universe could not have existed from eternity, else it would have long since run out of useful energy and ground to a halt. Therefore, quite unintentionally, science proves that our universe had a beginning. And in so doing it proves the reality of God, for whatever had a beginning did not begin itself but demands a Prime Mover, a Creator, a God.”¹

The Teleological Argument

Teleos is the Greek word for end or purpose. This argument finds its basis in observing design and purpose in the universe. Design requires a designer. Plato (*Timaeus*) Thomas Aquinas (*Summa Theologica*) and William Paley (*Paley’s Theology*) make use of this argument to point to the existence of God. It couples with the cosmological argument by requiring not only the ability but also the intelligence to create or make whatever exists. Those who observe the universe and the earth realize there are many examples of order and design that hold creation together. Without a finely tuned universe and earth, life could not exist on earth.

The human body provides an incredible resource that shows it must have been designed. One who considers the human eye, the ear, the skeletal system, the digestive system, or even simply the skin of humankind must surely see intricate and wise designs through the human body. “I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Wonderful are Your works, And my soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, And skillfully wrought in the depths of the earth;” (Psalm 139:14–15).

1. The universe demonstrates order, purpose, and design; this implies that there must be One who arranged this order, purpose and design. Beauty, form, design, and purpose in nature all imply a creative mind, an intelligent architect. It suggests that the force that brought the Universe into being is an intelligent, planning, thinking being.
2. This design and purpose argues against the possibility that the universe arose by mere chance or accident.

The Human Eye

Then there is that wonder of wonders: the human eye! How could anybody look at a human eye and suppose that it just happened? Evolutionists tell us that where there is want, nature will provide what is needed. Can you imagine that we needed sight? No one had ever seen anything, but there was a need to see something. So nature created an eye. Imagine creating two eyes on a horizontal plane so that we not only can see but we also have a range finder that determines distances.

Did you ever wonder what happens to your tears that continually flow across your eye? Dr. William Paley wrote a classic work entitled *Natural Theology* in which he discusses the eye. “In order to keep the eye moist and clean—which qualities are necessary to its brightness and its use—a wash is constantly supplied by a secretion for the purpose; and the superfluous brine is conveyed to the nose through a perforation in the bone as large as a goose quill. When once the fluid has entered the nose, it spreads itself upon the inside of the nostril, and is evaporated by the current of warm air which in the course of respiration is continually passing over it. . . It is easily perceived that the eye must want moisture; but could the want of the eye generate the gland which produces the tear, or bore the hole by which it is discharged—a hole through a bone?” Let the atheist or the evolutionist tell us who bored the hole in the bone and laid a water pipe through it for the dispersion of our tears.

¹ Dr. Edward Luther Kessel, “Let’s Look at Facts, Without Bent or Bias,” *Monsma*, pp. 50,51.

Sir Charles Scott Sherrington, famous English physiologist of Oxford who wrote a classic work on the eye, said: "Behind the intricate mechanism of the human eye lie breathtaking glimpses of a Master Plan." When confronted with darkness the human eye increases its ability to see one hundred thousand times. The finest camera ever made does not even vaguely approach such a thing, but the human eye does it automatically. Furthermore, the eye will find the object it wants to see and focus upon it automatically. It will elongate or compress itself. Both eyes moving together must take different angles to fix themselves upon what is to be seen. When the eye got ready to create itself, it also had the forethought for its own protection, and built itself beneath the bony ridge of the brow, and also provided a nose on which to hang the glasses that most of us need. Then it provided a shutter to protect itself from any foreign object.

The Moral Argument

All people everywhere have an undeniable sense of right and wrong. The fact that this sense is universal argues that it cannot be easily dismissed, as some have tried. God planted man's moral spirit within. "For when Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves, in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them, on the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus" (Romans 2:14–16).

The Biblical Argument

This argument offers proofs from the Bible for the existence of God. The uniqueness of the Bible offers arguments for its existence as an authentically holy book, unlike any other book in its claim to be inspired by God. The apostles appealed repeatedly to the Old Testament as God's Word to show Jesus is the promised prophet and Messiah. J. Barton Payne listed 191 Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah. Alfred Edersheim, a Jewish Christian scholar, cited 456 Old Testament passages mentioned in 558 rabbinic writings referring to the Messiah and His time. Yes, the Jews knew a Messiah would come, and the disciples found Him in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Isaiah 46:9-10, "Remember the former things long past, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me, Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, 'My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure.' "

Isaiah 48:3 God said, "I declared the former things long ago And they went forth from My mouth, and I proclaimed them. Suddenly I acted, and they came to pass." He explains in verse 5, "Therefore I declared them to you long ago, Before they took place I proclaimed them to you, So that you would not say, 'My idol has done them, or my graven image or my molten image have commanded them.' "

John 5:46-47 The Lord Jesus said to the Jews in, "For if you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me (the Lord said). But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words?"

Acts 3:18 "But what God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ would suffer, he thus fulfilled."

J. Barton Payne calculated that 27 percent of the entire Bible contains predictive prophecy. Norman Geisler observed that, "This is true of no other book in the world. And it is a sure sign of its divine origin (that is, the Bible's divine origin)." He added that, "The Bible is the

only book in the world that has precise, specific predictions that were made hundreds of years in advance and that were literally fulfilled.”

Contrasting the Bible with other holy books and the writings of the pagan religions, R. S. Foster said, “No well accredited prophecy is found in any other book or even oral tradition now extant, or that has ever been in existence in the world. The oracles of heathenism are not to be classed as exceptions. There is not a single one of them that meets the tests required to prove supernatural agency, which every Scripture prophecy evinces.”

The Historical Argument

This argument arises from the eyewitnesses and events surrounding the historical, miraculous resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave. The New Testament mentions the resurrection more than one hundred times. More attention will be given to this in a later study.

The resurrection of Christ, the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, and the Messianic prophecies are in my opinion the strongest arguments for my belief in the existence of God. The other arguments certainly supplement my faith in God’s existence and in the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

CAN GOD BE KNOWN?

Agnostics “are entirely in line with the **skeptics** of former centuries and of Greek philosophy. As a rule agnostics do not like to be branded as atheists, since they do not deny absolutely that there is a God, but declare that they do not know whether He exists or not, and even if He exists, are not certain that they have any true knowledge of Him, and in many cases even deny that they can have any real knowledge of Him.”²

Because God is spirit (Jn. 4:24) and not material, some imagine that we cannot know anything about God. Man, however, is both flesh and spirit (James 2:26; 2 Corinthians 7:1). He can understand the nature of an inner man.

God reveals Himself by two means: **general revelation** and **special revelation**. “General revelation alerts us to the reality of God, while special revelation urgently summons us to make peace with God. The two species belong to the one over-arching unity of divine revelation.”³

“General” or Natural Revelation

Psalm 8:3 “When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, The moon and the stars, which You have ordained”

Psalm 19:1 “The heavens are telling of the glory of God; And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands.”

Acts 14:15–17 “Men, why are you doing these things? We are also men of the same nature as you, and preach the gospel to you that you should turn from these vain things to a living God,

² L. Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans publishing co., 1938), 30–31.

³ Sinclair B. Ferguson and J.I. Packer, *New Dictionary of Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 585.

WHO MADE THE HEAVEN AND THE EARTH AND THE SEA AND ALL THAT IS IN THEM. In the generations gone by He permitted all the nations to go their own ways; and yet He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good and gave you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness.”

Romans 1:19–20 “because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.”

Natural revelation is insufficient to declare to mankind all they need to know about God. “For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe” (1 Corinthians 1:21).

“No-one can honestly say that he does not know what the term ‘God’ refers to. The Bible tells us that God’s eternal power and deity can be clearly perceived in the things God made (Rom. 1:20). It also informs us that God is sovereign over human history and that often we are able to trace God’s hand in events. In particular the reality of God is detected in human nature, for example, in the moral realm. This moral impulse which characterizes all human beings points to the moral God who brought us into existence (Rom. 2:1–16). God’s existence is also attested in man’s religious nature, in that people everywhere have always believed in a reality higher than themselves. Barth was right to worry about the bad uses to which general revelation was put in liberal theology, but that cannot be an excuse for denying a dimension of the actual revelation of God.”⁴

Special Revelation

Hebrews 1:1–2 “God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power.”

What Scripture says, God says; for, in a manner comparable only to the deeper mystery of the Christ becoming flesh, the Bible is both fully human and fully divine. So all its manifold contents—histories, prophecies, poems, songs, wisdom literature, sermons, statistics, letters, and whatever else—should be received as from God. All that Bible writers teach should be revered as God’s authoritative instruction. Christians should be grateful to God for His written Word, and should be conscientious in basing their faith and life entirely and exclusively upon it.

“This revelation is personal. God reveals himself by telling us his name. He enters into covenant with us, and gives himself to be known by us. God himself, and not just universal truths about God, is what is revealed. Further, in revelation God stoops to make himself known in ways we can grasp and understand. He comes to us in categories of thought and action which make sense to us.”⁵

⁴ Sinclair B. Ferguson and J.I. Packer, *New Dictionary of Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 585.

⁵ Sinclair B. Ferguson and J.I. Packer, *New Dictionary of Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 587.

THE NATURE OF GOD

God, according to the Bible, is both transcendent and immanent.

As Transcendent God is independent of, above, and distinct from this universe; He is outside, above, and before this time-space universe. This is seen from the name *Yahweh* by which God revealed Himself to Israel in the Old Testament. Most scholars suggest the basic meaning of this name is “I Am that I Am,” which would stress God’s transcendent independence and existence (Exodus 3:14). God’s transcendence is also expressed in the following passages: Isaiah 46:8-10 Remember this, and be assured; Recall it to mind, you transgressors. 9 Remember the former things long past, For I am God, and there is no other; *I am* God, and there is no one like Me, 10 Declaring the end from the beginning And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, ‘My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure’;

Psalms 115:3 But our God is in the heavens; He does whatever He pleases.

As Immanent God pervades and sustains the universe, yet He is always distinct from it. He is everywhere, yet not in everything. He is personally and intimately involved, yet distinct. Proverbs 5:21 For the ways of a man are before the eyes of the LORD, And He watches all his paths.

Psalms 33:13-14 The LORD looks from heaven; He sees all the sons of men; 14 From His dwelling place He looks out On all the inhabitants of the earth.

Romans 11:34-36 For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who became His counselor? 35 Or who has first given to Him that it might be paid back to him again? 36 For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him *be* the glory forever. Amen.

Though He is the only true God and the transcendent sovereign, He is involved as the King and Redeemer, and as our derivation—“from Him,” our dynamic—“through Him,” and our destination—“to Him are all things.”

God Is Spirit

John 4:23-24 “But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.

John 4:21-24 God is spirit, not limited by space or time

Luke 24:39 “a spirit does not have flesh and blood”

Acts 17:24-25, 28-29 God is not made with hands or material. God created man; man did not invent God.

Heb. 12:9 God is the “father of our spirits,” that eternal part of us that is not flesh and blood.

God Is Living

2 Samuel 22:47 “The LORD lives, and blessed be my rock” (Psalm 18:46)

Jeremiah 10:10 “But the LORD is the true God; He is the living God and the everlasting King.

At His wrath the earth quakes, And the nations cannot endure His indignation.”

Ezekiel 18:3 “As I live,” declares the Lord GOD, “you are surely not going to use this proverb in Israel anymore.”

Daniel 6:26 King Darius said, "I make a decree that in all the dominion of my kingdom men are to fear and tremble before the God of Daniel; For He is the living God and enduring forever, And His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed, And His dominion will be forever."

John 6:57 "As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also will live because of Me."

2 Corinthians 3:3 "being manifested that you are a letter of Christ, cared for by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts."

2 Corinthians 6:16 "Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, "I WILL DWELL IN THEM AND WALK AMONG THEM; AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE."

1 Thessalonians 1:9 "For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God."

Revelation 10:5-6 "Then the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land lifted up his right hand to heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever and ever, WHO CREATED HEAVEN AND THE THINGS IN IT, AND THE EARTH AND THE THINGS IN IT, AND THE SEA AND THE THINGS IN IT, that there will be delay no longer."

God is Personal

God is described in Scripture as one who thinks, feels, acts, loves, wills and judges. He has the emotions of a person. He can be grieved (Gen. 6:6,7), become angry (2 Thess. 1:7-9), love (1 John 4:7-11), rejoice (Luke 15:7,10), plan (Eph. 3:10,11), reason (Isa. 1:18), and do all that a person can do. When Jesus prayed, He prayed "Our Father." Christians have a relationship with God as a child to his father.

The Significance of God's Personality

(1) Without the personality of God we are left to accept some mechanistic theory for the existence of the universe and man, and the world has no purpose or real meaning. This life is all there is; it's eat, drink, and be merry (if you can) for tomorrow you die. That's all folks! We are left with the world's attitude of, "You have to get all the gusto you can because you only go around once."

(2) Without God's personality, there would be no personal relationship or fellowship with God. Prayer would be an exercise in futility and nothing more than talking to a tree or a rock or an idol. At best, prayer would simply be an exercise in talking to oneself. Throughout Scripture, a sharp distinction is made between God and things which have no life and are impersonal as with the idols of the heathen (Jer. 10:10-16). As mere impersonal things, idols can't move on their own, speak, do good or evil, or help and comfort.

(3) Without the fact of a personal God, there could be no reverence or fear of God. And this is precisely what we see in the world today. Unless there is a personal God by whom right and wrong can be reliably assessed, and with whom man becomes responsible, moral judgments can be no more than opinion, influenced by upbringing, training, and propaganda, but without any final responsibility beyond man himself. This is the perfect scenario for tyrants who have no respect for any opinion but their own and for the law of the jungle.

(4) Because God is a person, He can care, love, and know our deepest needs, longings, and concerns. And the Bible reveals that as a person, He does love and care for us (John 3:16; 1 Pet. 5:7). Because He is a personal God, He is called “the God of all comfort” (2 Cor. 1:4f). To Isaiah the prophet, God said, “Comfort, O comfort My people, ... Speak kindly to Jerusalem;” (Isa. 40:1).

The Bible teaches us that God is a loving, sovereign, and personal God, but the important point is not only that God is a person, but that He is the kind of person He is. This is what makes the difference. Francis Schaeffer has an excellent word here:

The beginning is simply that God exists and that He is the personal-infinite God. Our generation longs for the reality of personality but it cannot find it. But Christianity says personality is valid because personality has not just appeared in the universe but rather is rooted in the personal God who has always been.

If we are unexcited Christians we should go back and see what is wrong. We are surrounded by a generation that can find “no one home” in the universe. If anything marks our generation it is this. In contrast to this, as a Christian I know who I am; and I know the personal God who is there. I speak and He hears. I am not surrounded by mere mass, nor only energy particles, but He is there. And if I have accepted Christ as my Savior, then though it will not be perfect in this life, yet moment by moment, on the basis of the finished work of Christ, this person to person relationship with the God who is there can have reality to me.⁶

The lovingkindness of God as a personal God is everywhere evident in Scripture, but here is a passage that drives this truth home to our hearts.

Psalm 103:13-14 Just as a father has compassion on *his* children, So the LORD has compassion on those who fear Him. For He Himself knows our frame; He is mindful that we are *but* dust.

God is Self-Existent

Exodus 3:14 “God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” Since nothing comes from nothing, there has to be a beginning. “The builder of all things is God” (Heb. 3:4). Since the world in its present state demands that the builder be both incredibly wise and powerful, only God could have been the source of this universe and life. Sometimes children ask the question, “Who created God?” There cannot be infinite regression; there must be a start somewhere. There must be a wise and powerful intelligence that is not dependent upon anyone or anything else. That Someone is “I AM WHO I AM.”

Acts 17:28 "for in Him we live and move and have our very being"

John 1:1-4 in Him is life (John 14:6)

Colossians 1:15-17 He is the creator and sustainer of all things

Psalm 38:33:8,9 He spoke and it was done; He commanded and it stood fast

⁶ Francis Schaeffer, *The God Who is There*, InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, IL, 1968, p. 156-157.

GETTING TO KNOW GOD AS A PERSON

Genesis 14:19 “He blessed him and said, “Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth;”

Exodus 15:11 “Who is like You among the gods, O LORD? Who is like You, majestic in holiness, Awesome in praises, working wonders?”

Deuteronomy 4:24 “For the LORD your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God.”

Deuteronomy 6:14-15 “You shall not follow other gods, any of the gods of the peoples who surround you, for the LORD your God in the midst of you is a jealous God; otherwise the anger of the LORD your God will be kindled against you, and He will wipe you off the face of the earth.”

Deuteronomy 10:17 “For the LORD your God is the God of gods and the Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God who does not show partiality nor take a bribe.”

Deuteronomy 32:4 “The Rock! His work is perfect, For all His ways are just; A God of faithfulness and without injustice, Righteous and upright is He.”

Nehemiah 9:17-21 “But You are a God of forgiveness, Gracious and compassionate, Slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness; And You did not forsake them. Even when they made for themselves A calf of molten metal And said, ‘This is your God Who brought you up from Egypt,’ And committed great blasphemies, You, in Your great compassion, Did not forsake them in the wilderness; The pillar of cloud did not leave them by day, To guide them on their way, Nor the pillar of fire by night, to light for them the way in which they were to go. You gave Your good Spirit to instruct them, Your manna You did not withhold from their mouth, And You gave them water for their thirst. Indeed, forty years You provided for them in the wilderness *and* they were not in want; Their clothes did not wear out, nor did their feet swell.”

Psalms 11:7 “For the LORD is righteous, He loves righteousness; The upright will behold His face.”

Psalms 86:15 “But You, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, Slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness and truth.”

Psalms 102:24–27 I say, “O my God, do not take me away in the midst of my days, Your years are throughout all generations. “Of old You founded the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands. “Even they will perish, but You endure; And all of them will wear out like a garment; Like clothing You will change them and they will be changed. “But You are the same, And Your years will not come to an end.”

Psalms 103:8–10 “The LORD is compassionate and gracious, Slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness. He will not always strive with us, Nor will He keep His anger forever. He has not dealt with us according to our sins, Nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.”

Psalms 117:2 “For His lovingkindness is great toward us, And the truth of the LORD is everlasting. Praise the LORD!”

Psalms 119:137 “Righteous are You, O LORD, And upright are Your judgments.”

Psalms 145:8–9 “The LORD is gracious and merciful; Slow to anger and great in lovingkindness. The LORD is good to all, And His mercies are over all His works.”

Psalms 145:17 “The LORD is righteous in all His ways And kind in all His deeds.”

Isaiah 12:2 “Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid; For the LORD GOD is my strength and song, And He has become my salvation.”

Isaiah 30:18 “Therefore the LORD longs to be gracious to you, And therefore He waits on high to have compassion on you. For the LORD is a God of justice; How blessed are all those who long for Him.” (Micah 7:18-20; Joel 2:12-13)

Isaiah 40:28 “Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth Does not become weary or tired. His understanding is inscrutable.”

Isaiah 48:12-13 “Listen to Me, O Jacob, even Israel whom I called; I am He, I am the first, I am also the last. Surely My hand founded the earth, And My right hand spread out the heavens; When I call to them, they stand together.”

Jeremiah 32:17–20 “Ah Lord GOD! Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and by Your outstretched arm! Nothing is too difficult for You, who shows lovingkindness to thousands, but repays the iniquity of fathers into the bosom of their children after them, O great and mighty God. The LORD of hosts is His name; great in counsel and mighty in deed, whose eyes are open to all the ways of the sons of men, giving to everyone according to his ways and according to the fruit of his deeds; who has set signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, and even to this day both in Israel and among mankind; and You have made a name for Yourself, as at this day.”

2 Corinthians 1:3 “God of all comfort”

1 John 1:5 “God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.”

1 John 4:8 “The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love” (cf. 4:16).

WHAT THE LORD GOD IS NOT

Numbers 23:19 “God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent; Has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?”

1 Samuel 15:29 “Also the Glory of Israel will not lie or change His mind; for He is not a man that He should change His mind.”

Matthew 22:31–32 “But regarding the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God: ‘I AM THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, AND THE GOD OF ISAAC, AND THE GOD OF JACOB’? He is not the God of the dead but of the living.” (Mk 12:26-27; Lk 20:37-38)

Acts 17:29 “Being then the children of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and thought of man.”

1 Corinthians 14:33 “for God is not a God of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.”

THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

1. God Is All-Powerful

“God is said to be almighty (Gen. 17:1; Rev. 15:3; 19:6); He can do all things (Job 42:20); nothing is too hard for him to do (Jer. 32:17); and with God all things are possible (Matt. 19:26).”⁷ Saying God is all-powerful means that God has unlimited power to do any and all things consistent with his nature and purpose. God’s power is seen in the creation of the universe out of nothing (Heb. 11:3), in the creation of life (Acts 17:25-26), in miraculous events, and in the resurrection of Jesus (Acts 17:30-31).

Genesis 18:14 “Is anything too difficult for the LORD? At the appointed time I will return to you, at this time next year, and Sarah will have a son.”

2. God Is Everywhere Present

Numbers 35:34 “You shall not defile the land in which you live, in the midst of which I dwell; for I the LORD am dwelling in the midst of the sons of Israel.”

Joshua 2:11 “When we heard it, our hearts melted and no courage remained in any man any longer because of you; for the LORD your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath.”

Psalms 139:4–8 “Even before there is a word on my tongue, Behold, O LORD, You know it all. You have enclosed me behind and before, And laid Your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; It is too high, I cannot attain to it. Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend to heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there.”

Proverbs 15:3 “The eyes of the LORD are in every place, Watching the evil and the good.”

Ecclesiastes 5:2 “Do not be hasty in word or impulsive in thought to bring up a matter in the presence of God. For God is in heaven and you are on the earth; therefore let your words be few.”

Isaiah 37:16 “O LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, who is enthroned above the cherubim, You are the God, You alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth.”

Jeremiah 23:24 “Can a man hide himself in hiding places So I do not see him?” declares the LORD. “Do I not fill the heavens and the earth?” declares the LORD.”

3. God is All-Knowing

God's knows and understands all things about people, nature, animals and the universe.

Psalms 147:5 “Great is our Lord and abundant in strength; His understanding is infinite.”

Isaiah 46:10 “Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, ‘My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure.’”

Psalms 139:1–6 “O LORD, You have searched me and known me. You know when I sit down and when I rise up; You understand my thought from afar. You scrutinize my path and my lying down, And are intimately acquainted with all my ways. Even before there is a word on my tongue, Behold, O LORD, You know it all. You have enclosed me behind and before,

⁷ Roy H. Lanier Sr., *The Timeless Trinity* (Denver, Col.: Lanier Books, 1973), 137.

And laid Your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; It is too high, I cannot attain to it.”

Proverbs 15:3 “The eyes of the LORD are in every place, Watching the evil and the good.”

Romans 11:33–36 “Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, OR WHO BECAME HIS COUNSELOR? Or WHO HAS FIRST GIVEN TO HIM THAT IT MIGHT BE PAID BACK TO HIM AGAIN? For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.”

4. God is Eternal

God does not have the limitations of men. He is not limited by space or time.

Psalm 90:2 “Before the mountains were born Or You gave birth to the earth and the world, Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.”

2 Peter 3:8 “But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day.”

Revelation 1:8 “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”

5. God is Supremely Holy

“Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Hosts” (Isa. 6:3). It is impossible for God to lie (Heb. 6:18; Tit. 1:2). God cannot be tempted nor does He tempt any man with sin (James 1:13). God commands His children, “Be ye holy, for I am holy” (1 Pet. 1:16).

God's eyes are too pure to approve sin (Habakkuk 1:13; cf. Isa. 59:1-2). It is God's holiness that demands justice for sin. God is incapable of sin (Tit. 1:2; Heb. 4:15).

Psalm 5:4 “For You are not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness; No evil dwells with You.”

Leviticus 11:44–45 “For I am the LORD your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy. And you shall not make yourselves unclean with any of the swarming things that swarm on the earth. For I am the LORD who brought you up from the land of Egypt to be your God; thus you shall be holy, for I am holy.”

6. God is Impartial

God does not show favoritism but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right (Acts 10:34,35). See also Deut. 10:17; 2 Chron. 19:7; Rom. 2:11; Gal. 2:6; Eph. 6:9; Col. 3:25; 1 Peter. 1:17; Rev. 20:11-15.

7. God is the Sovereign Lord

God rules the nations, plants and uproots (Acts 17:26; Jer. 18:7-10). God now commands that all men everywhere repent (Acts 17:30). God is able to destroy our souls in hell (Matt. 10:28). At the end of the world God will judge each of us according to our works and according to His Word (John 12:48; Rev. 20:11-15).

8. God is Unique

There is but one God and there can be no other (Deut. 6:4-6). Man's whole duty in life is to fear God and keep His commandments (Eccl. 12:13). Man-made gods are forbidden because they never reflect the true grandeur and glory of the eternal God who does not live in temples

made with hands (Acts 17:22-31). Man's sin problems begin when they do not acknowledge Him as God or give thanks (Rom. 1:18-32).

9. God is Unchangeable (Immutable)

About Himself, God declares, "I am the Lord, I do not change" (Mal. 3:6). God is not a man that He should lie or repent. "Has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good? (Num. 23:19; cf. 1 Sam. 15:29) In God there is no variation; He does not change (James 1:17).

10. God is Merciful

Christians are to be merciful, "just as your Father is merciful" (Luke 6:36; Matt. 5:45). Even though men were foolish and disobedient, God's kindness and love appeared in Christ Jesus. He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy (Tit. 3:3-7). God's mercy can save the worst of sinners (1 Tim. 1:12-16). See also Deut. 4:31; Ex. 34:6; Psalms 116:5; 145:8,9; Luke 15:11-24.

11. God is Love

God is love, and one must know God to know love (1 John 4:7-11). We love because He first loved us (1 John 4:19). God demonstrated His love by giving His Son Jesus to die for our sins (John 3:16; Rom. 5:6-9). See Eph. 2:4-7; Heb. 12:6-7; 1 John 3:1.

12. God is Patient

Romans 15:5 "Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus,"

Nahum 1:3 "The LORD is slow to anger and great in power, And the LORD will by no means leave the guilty unpunished. In whirlwind and storm is His way, And clouds are the dust beneath His feet."

Nehemiah 9:17 "They refused to listen, And did not remember Your wondrous deeds which You had performed among them; So they became stubborn and appointed a leader to return to their slavery in Egypt. But You are a God of forgiveness, Gracious and compassionate, Slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness; And You did not forsake them."

2 Peter 3:9 "The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance."

13. God is Faithful

God is eternally dependable and loyal. He does not change.

Deuteronomy 7:9 "Know therefore that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God, who keeps His covenant and His lovingkindness to a thousandth generation with those who love Him and keep His commandments;"

Psalms 36:5 "Your lovingkindness, O LORD, extends to the heavens, Your faithfulness reaches to the skies."

Psalms 89:8 "O LORD God of hosts, who is like You, O mighty LORD? Your faithfulness also surrounds You."

Lamentations 3:22–23 “The LORD’S lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, For His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness.”
See 1 Corinthians 10:13; 1 Thessalonians 5:24; 2 Tim. 2:11-13; Hebrews 10:23; 1 Pet. 4:19; 1 John 1:9; Rev. 19:11.

14. God is Just and Righteous

Jehovah God has a perfect sense of right and wrong. He is fair in his punishment of the wicked and fair in his justification of the righteous (Rom. 3:24-26).

Genesis 18:25 “Far be it from You to do such a thing, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous and the wicked are treated alike. Far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth deal justly?”

Deuteronomy 10:17 “For the LORD your God is the God of gods and the Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God who does not show partiality nor take a bribe.”

Psalms 89:14 “Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne; Lovingkindness and truth go before You.”

Isaiah 45:21 “Declare and set forth your case; Indeed, let them consult together. Who has announced this from of old? Who has long since declared it? Is it not I, the LORD? And there is no other God besides Me, A righteous God and a Savior; There is none except Me.”

Nahum 1:2–3 “A jealous and avenging God is the LORD; The LORD is avenging and wrathful. The LORD takes vengeance on His adversaries, And He reserves wrath for His enemies. The LORD is slow to anger and great in power, And the LORD will by no means leave the guilty unpunished. In whirlwind and storm is His way, And clouds are the dust beneath His feet.”

15. God is Truthful

God is the source of all truth and cannot lie (Tit. 1:2). Life depends on the truth and cannot hold together without truth. Man must have confidence in his fellow man to survive.

Hebrews 6:17–18 “In the same way God, desiring even more to show to the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose, interposed with an oath, so that by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have taken refuge would have strong encouragement to take hold of the hope set before us.”

John 1:14 “And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

John 14:6 “Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.”

John 8:31–32 So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, “If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.”

What Is Of The LORD GOD

Psalms 37:39 “But the salvation of the righteous is from the LORD; He is their strength in time of trouble.”

Proverbs 16:33 “The lot is cast into the lap, But its every decision is from the LORD.”

Proverbs 20:24 “Man’s steps are ordained by the LORD, How then can man understand his way?”

Proverbs 21:31 “The horse is prepared for the day of battle, But victory belongs to the LORD.”

The Names of God

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The great purpose of man, especially the believer in Christ, is to glorify God. “Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Corinthians 10:31). Essential to our ability to glorify God is the knowledge of God and knowing Him personally in view of that knowledge.

The word “glory” in the Greek New Testament is *doxa* which means an opinion, an estimation, or reputation in which one is held. It refers to that which should accrue to God as praise, thanksgiving, obedience, reverence, and service because of who God is and what God does (past, present, and future). In other words, giving glory to God is tied in with the knowledge of God (revelation of God), and knowing God personally (response to God).

The Lord Jesus said in John 17:3, “And this is eternal life, that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.” The many names in Scripture constitute additional revelation of God’s character, His works, and His relationship to us based on His character and works. The names which God chose for Himself and which are ascribed to Him in the Word of God are additional revelations of the who and what of God that we may know and relate to God.

Note David’s declarations about God’s name and word in Psalm 138:1-2. God’s name declares much about His person, but it is God’s Word that reveals God and His name. We know what God is like, not only by His perfections and works, but also by His names. They tell us many things about God’s care and concern for his own. This is one of the fascinating studies of Scripture. The various circumstances which bring forth each of the names of God are important.⁸

The Significance of the Names of God in Scripture

In our twentieth century Western culture, personal names are little more than labels to distinguish one person from another. Sometimes nicknames are chosen which tell something about a person, but even this is a poor reflection of the significance of names in the Bible. Unfortunately, to many the names *God* or *Lord* convey little more than designations of a supreme being. It says little to them about God’s character, His ways, and what God means to each of us as human beings. But in Scripture, the names of God are like miniature portraits and promises. In Scripture, a person’s name identified them and stood for something specific. This is especially true of God. Naming carried special significance. It was a sign of authority and power. This is evident in the fact that God revealed His names to His people rather than allowing them to choose their names for Him. This is also seen in the fact that God often changed the names of His people: Abram to Abraham, Sarai to Sarah, Jacob to Israel. Note also how this concept of authority and power is seen when Nebuchadnezzar changed the names of Daniel and his three friends.

The Name of God in General

⁸ Robert Lightner, *The God of the Bible, An Introduction to the Doctrine of God* (Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1973) page 107.

There are a number of instances where no name of God is employed, but where simply the term “name” in reference to God is used as the point of focus:

- (1) Abraham called on the *name* of the Lord (Gen. 12:8; 13:4).
- (2) The Lord proclaimed His own *name* before Moses (Ex. 33:19; 34:5).
- (3) Israel was warned against profaning the *name* of the Lord (Lev. 13:21; 22:2, 32).
- (4) The *name* of the Lord was not to be taken in vain (Ex. 20:7; Deut. 5:11).
- (5) The priests of Israel were to minister in the *name* of the Lord (Deut. 18:5; 21:5).
- (6) The *name* of God is called “wonderful” in Judges 13:18.
- (7) To call on the *name* of the Lord was to worship Him as God (Gen. 21:33; 26:25).

Consequently, from this we can conclude that such phrases as “the name of the LORD” or “the name of God” refer to God’s whole character. It was a summary statement embodying the entire person of God.⁹

When we turn to the New Testament we find the same. The name *Jesus* is used in a similar way to the name of God in the Old Testament:

- (1) Salvation is through His *name* (John 1:12).
- (2) Believers are to gather in His *name* (Matt. 18:20).
- (3) Prayer is to be made in His *name* (John 14:13-14).
- (4) The servant of the Lord who bears the *name* of Christ will be hated (Matt. 10:22).
- (5) The book of Acts makes frequent mention of worship, service, and suffering in the *name* of Jesus Christ (Acts 4:18; 5:28, 41; 10:43; 19:17).
- (6) It is at the *name* of Jesus that every knee will one day bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord (Phil. 2:10-11).

So, just as the name of God in the Old Testament spoke of the holy character of God the Father, so the name of Jesus in the New Testament speaks of the holy character of God the Son.¹⁰

Overview of the Names of God in Scripture

(1) **Elohim:** The plural form of *EL*, meaning “strong one.” It is used of false gods, but when used of the true God, it is a plural of majesty and intimates the trinity. It is especially used of God’s sovereignty, creative work, mighty work for Israel and in relation to His sovereignty (Isa. 54:5; Jer. 32:27; Gen. 1:1; Isa. 45:18; Deut. 5:23; 8:15; Ps. 68:7).

Compounds of *El*:

- **El Shaddai:** “God Almighty.” The derivation is uncertain. Some think it stresses God’s loving supply and comfort; others His power as the Almighty one standing on a mountain and who corrects and chastens (Gen. 17:1; 28:3; 35:11; Ex. 6:31; Ps. 91:1, 2).
- **El Elyon:** “The Most High God.” Stresses God’s strength, sovereignty, and supremacy (Gen. 14:19; Ps. 9:2; Dan. 7:18, 22, 25).
- **El Olam:** “The Everlasting God.” Emphasizes God’s unchangeableness and is connected with His inexhaustibleness (Gen. 16:13).

⁹ Ibid., p. 108.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 109.

(2) **Yahweh (YHWH):** Comes from a verb which means “to exist, be.” This, plus its usage, shows that this name stresses God as the independent and self-existent God of revelation and redemption (Gen. 4:3; Ex. 6:3 (cf. 3:14); 3:12).

Compounds of *Yahweh*: Strictly speaking, these compounds are designations or titles which reveal additional facts about God’s character.

- **Yahweh Jireh (Yireh):** “The Lord will provide.” Stresses God’s provision for His people (Gen. 22:14).
- **Yahweh Nissi:** “The Lord is my Banner.” Stresses that God is our rallying point and our means of victory; the one who fights for His people (Ex. 17:15).
- **Yahweh Shalom:** “The Lord is Peace.” Points to the Lord as the means of our peace and rest (Jud. 6:24).
- **Yahweh Sabaoth:** “The Lord of Hosts.” A military figure portraying the Lord as the commander of the armies of heaven (1 Sam. 1:3; 17:45).
- **Yahweh Maccaddeshcem:** “The Lord your Sanctifier.” Portrays the Lord as our means of sanctification or as the one who sets believers apart for His purposes (Ex. 31:13).
- **Yahweh Ro’i:** “The Lord my Shepherd.” Portrays the Lord as the Shepherd who cares for His people as a shepherd cares for the sheep of his pasture (Ps. 23:1).
- **Yahweh Tsidkenu:** “The Lord our Righteousness.” Portrays the Lord as the means of our righteousness (Jer. 23:6).
- **Yahweh Shammah:** “The Lord is there.” Portrays the Lord’s personal presence in the millennial kingdom (Ezek. 48:35).
- **Yahweh Elohim Israel:** “The Lord, the God of Israel.” Identifies Yahweh as the God of Israel in contrast to the false gods of the nations (Jud. 5:3.; Isa. 17:6).

(3) **Adonai:** Like *Elohim*, this too is a plural of majesty. The singular form means “master, owner.” Stresses man’s relationship to God as his master, authority, and provider (Gen. 18:2; 40:1; 1 Sam. 1:15; Ex. 21:1-6; Josh. 5:14).

(4) **Theos:** Greek word translated “God.” Primary name for God used in the New Testament. Its use teaches: (1) *He is the only true God* (Matt. 23:9; Rom. 3:30); (2) *He is unique* (1 Tim. 1:17; John 17:3; Rev. 15:4; 16:27); (3) *He is transcendent* (Acts 17:24; Heb. 3:4; Rev. 10:6); (4) *He is the Savior* (John 3:16; 1 Tim. 1:1; 2:3; 4:10). This name is used of Christ as God in John 1:1, 18; 20:28; 1 John 5:20; Tit. 2:13; Rom. 9:5; Heb. 1:8; 2 Pet. 1:1.

(5) **Kurios:** Greek word translated “Lord.” Stresses authority and supremacy. While it can mean sir (John 4:11), owner (Luke 19:33), master (Col. 3:22), or even refer to idols (1 Cor. 8:5) or husbands (1 Pet. 3:6), it is used mostly as the equivalent of *Yahweh* of the Old Testament. It too is used of Jesus Christ meaning (1) Rabbi or Sir (Matt. 8:6); (2) God or Deity (John 20:28; Acts 2:36; Rom. 10:9; Phil. 2:11).

(6) **Despotes:** Greek word translated “Master.” Carries the idea of ownership while *kurios* stressed supreme authority (Luke 2:29; Acts 4:24; Rev. 6:10; 2 Pet. 2:1; Jude 4).

(7) ***Father:*** A distinctive New Testament revelation is that through faith in Christ, God becomes our personal Father. Father is used of God in the Old Testament only 15 times while it is used of God 245 times in the New Testament. As a name of God, it stresses God's loving care, provision, discipline, and the way we are to address God in prayer (Matt. 7:11; Jam. 1:17; Heb. 12:5-11; John 15:16; 16:23; Eph. 2:18; 3:15; 1 Thess. 3:11).

THE NATURE OF JESUS CHRIST

Jesus was indeed unique as the Son of God. He was both God and man, the God-man. He was flesh, but was at the same time “God with us.” His two natures are everywhere presupposed in Scripture.

There underlies in the entire literature of the New Testament a single, unvarying conception of the makeup of our Lord’s person. From Matthew where He is presented as one of the persons of the Godhead (28:19)—or if we prefer the chronological order of books, from the Epistle of James where He is spoken of as the Glory of God, the *Shekīnah* (2:1)—to the book of Revelation where He is represented as declaring that He is the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End (Rev 1:8, 17; 22:13), He is consistently thought of as in His fundamental being just God.

At the same time from Matthew and Luke, in which He is a man walking among men, His human genealogy is carefully recorded, and His sense of dependence on God so emphasized that prayer becomes almost His most characteristic action. In the Epistles of John a Christian confesses that Jesus Christ has come in flesh (1 John 4:2) and His birth in the tribe of Judah and the house of David (Rev 5:5; 22:16), His exemplary life of conflict and victory (Rev 3:21), His death on the cross (Rev 11:8) are noted, He is equally consistently thought of as true man.

Nevertheless, from the beginning to the end of the whole series of books, while first one and then the other of His two natures comes into repeated prominence, there is never a question of conflict between the two, never any confusion in their relations, never any schism in His unitary personal action; but He is obviously considered and presented as one, composite indeed, but undivided personality.

There can scarcely be imagined a better proof of the truth of a doctrine than its power completely to harmonize a multitude of statements which without it would present to our view only a mass of confused inconsistencies. A key which perfectly fits a lock of very complicated words can scarcely fail to be the true key.

The Humanity of Jesus

1 Timothy 2:5–6, “For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time.”

Philippians 2:5–8 “Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

John 1:14 “And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

Hebrews 4:14–16 “Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

That Jesus was born, that He was baptized, that He hungered and thirsted, that He had to walk wherever He went, and that He could suffer and die on the cross all speak to His humanity.

The Deity of Jesus

Matthew 1:23 “BEHOLD, THE VIRGIN SHALL BE WITH CHILD AND SHALL BEAR A SON, AND THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME IMMANUEL,” which translated means, “GOD WITH US.”

John 1:1–3 “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 came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.”

John 20:28 Thomas answered and said to Him, “My Lord and my God!”

Philippians 2:6

Titus 2:11–14 “For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.”

Some Heresies Surrounding the Nature of Jesus

A. Docetism

In the late first century Marcion and the Gnostics taught that Christ only appeared to be a man (*dokeo*, to seem or to appear). The Apostle John refers to this false teaching in 1 John 4:1-3. This heresy undermines not only the reality of the Incarnation but also the validity of the Atonement and bodily resurrection.

B. Ebionism

In the second century this heresy denied the deity of Christ, considering Jesus to be the natural son of Joseph and Mary but elected to be Son of God at His baptism when He was united with the eternal Christ.

C. Arianism

A heresy that denied the eternality of Jesus as the Logos. Arius reasoned that since Jesus was begotten, He must have had a beginning. Arians held that the divine nature of Christ was similar to God, *homoousian*, but not the same, *homoousian*. The Council of Nicea condemned this teaching in A.D. 325, affirming that Jesus had the same nature as God.

D. Apollinarianism

Apollinarius, the younger (died about 390), sought to avoid undue separation of the natures of Christ. He taught that Christ had a human body and a human soul, but that He had the divine Logos instead of a human spirit (this assumes a trichotomous view of man). This Logos dominated the passive human body and soul. This was an error affecting the humanity of Christ.

E. Nestorianism

Nestorianism divided Christ into two Persons (though it is disputed whether or not Nestorius himself clearly taught this). He explained that Jesus Christ was the *prosopon* (form or appearance) of the union of two natures. The humanity had the form of Godhead bestowed on it, and the Deity took upon itself the form of a servant, the result being the appearance of Jesus of

Nazareth. Thus in this view the two natures were separated, resulting in two Persons. The teaching was condemned by the Council of Ephesus in 431.

F. Eutychianism

Eutyches (ca. 378-454) reacted against Nestorianism and taught that there was only one nature in Christ. This error is also known as monophysitism. The divine nature was not fully divine, nor was the human nature genuinely human, and the result was a mixed single nature. This was condemned at the Council of Chalcedon in 451.

A similar error developed after Chalcedon which taught that Christ had only one will though conceding verbally that He had two natures. It is called monothelitism. This was condemned at the third council of Constantinople in 680.

A study of errors should help clarify the truth and make us more careful how we express it. Semantics are very important in the statements of theology.

THE PREEXISTENCE OF JESUS CHRIST

John 1:1–4 “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 came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men.”

John 17:5 “Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.”

1 Corinthians 8:6 “yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things and we exist for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we exist through Him.”

1 Corinthians 10:4 “and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ.”

2 Corinthians 8:9 “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich.”

Colossians 1:15–20 “He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything. For it was the Father’s good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven.”

Philippians 2:6–8 “who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Hebrews 1:1–3 “God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all

things, through whom also He made the world. And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.”

Hebrews 1:8–12 “But of the Son He says, “YOUR THRONE, O GOD, IS FOREVER AND EVER, AND THE RIGHTEOUS SCEPTER IS THE SCEPTER OF HIS KINGDOM. “YOU HAVE LOVED RIGHTEOUSNESS AND HATED LAWLESSNESS; THEREFORE GOD, YOUR GOD, HAS ANOINTED YOU WITH THE OIL OF GLADNESS ABOVE YOUR COMPANIONS.” And, “YOU, LORD, IN THE BEGINNING LAID THE FOUNDATION OF THE EARTH, AND THE HEAVENS ARE THE WORKS OF YOUR HANDS; THEY WILL PERISH, BUT YOU REMAIN; AND THEY ALL WILL BECOME OLD LIKE A GARMENT, AND LIKE A MANTLE YOU WILL ROLL THEM UP; LIKE A GARMENT THEY WILL ALSO BE CHANGED. BUT YOU ARE THE SAME, AND YOUR YEARS WILL NOT COME TO AN END.””

Messianic Prophecies

1. God has made a test for us to know if the message has come from Him: "I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. And it shall come about that whoever will not listen to My words, which he shall speak in My name, I Myself will require it of him. But the prophet who shall speak a word presumptuously in My name which I have not commanded him to speak, or which he shall speak in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die. And you may say in your heart, 'How shall we know the word which the Lord has not spoken?' When a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the thing does not come about or come true, that is the thing, which the Lord has not spoken. The prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him. (Deut. 18:18-21)

2. Only God knows the future; many who pretend to know do not know at all
"Remember this, and be assured; Recall it to mind, you transgressors. Remember the former things long past, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me, Declaring the end from the beginning And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, 'My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure' (Isa. 46:8-10).

In all the writings of Buddha, Confucius or Lao-tse, there is not one single predicted prophecy. In the Koran (Islamic writings of Mohammed) there is one instance of a specific prophecy, a self-fulfilling prophecy, that Muhammad would return to Mecca. He did; but this is quite different from the prophecy of Jesus that He would return from the grave. Muhammad could easily go back to Mecca on his own ability, but it takes God for one to come back from the grave. R. S. Foster said, "No well accredited prophecy is found in any other book or even oral tradition now extant, or that has ever been in existence in the world. The oracles of heathenism are not to be classed as exceptions. There is not a single one of them that meets the tests required to prove supernatural agency, which every Scripture prophecy evinces."

The apostles appealed repeatedly to the Old Testament as God's Word to show Jesus is the promised prophet and Messiah. J. Barton Payne listed 191 Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah. Alfred Edersheim, a Jewish Christian scholar, cited 456 Old Testament passages mentioned in 558 rabbinic writings referring to the Messiah and His time. Yes, the Jews knew a Messiah would come, and the disciples found Him in Jesus Christ our Lord.

J. Barton Payne calculated that 27 percent of the entire Bible contains predictive prophecy. Norman Geisler observed that, "This is true of no other book in the world. And it is a sure sign of its divine origin (that is, the Bible's divine origin)." He added that, "The Bible is the only book in the world that has precise, specific predictions that were made hundreds of years in advance and that were literally fulfilled."

Historians know how difficult it is to predict the future, because the events of life turn on so many "ifs." Eccl. 7:14 says, "In the day of prosperity be happy, But in the day of adversity consider--God has made the one as well as the other So that man may not discover anything that will be after him." Eccl. 9:11 "I again saw under the sun that the race is not to the swift, and the battle is not to the warriors, and neither is bread to the wise, nor wealth to the discerning, nor favor to men of ability; for time and chance overtake them all."

Nor are these prophecies of the Bible vague generalities like some of the ancient prophets of Greece, the Oracle at Delphi or the Sibylline Oracles. For example, Maxentius, Emperor of Rome, is said to have come to one of the Sibylline Oracles and asked what would happen if he attacked the army of Constantine that was approaching Rome on the other side of the Tiber River. The Oracle's answer was: "In that day, the enemy of Rome will be destroyed." So, confident of victory, he attacked Constantine's army, but it was Maxentius who was destroyed. The oracle failed to define who the enemy of Rome really was; thus in the pattern of most oracular utterances, however it turned out, the prophecy was fulfilled.

Some skeptics have suggested that Jesus of Nazareth, as a rabbi, naturally knew about these predictions and simply arranged the events of His life to fulfill these specific prophecies. But the predictions of Jesus would not be that easy to prearrange. How would you arrange to be born in Bethlehem? How would you manage to be born into the tribe of Judah? How would you make sure that the price of your betrayal would be precisely thirty pieces of silver? How would you arrange to be crucified with thieves? How would a crucified man arrange to have his enemies gamble for his garments?

Grant Jeffrey observed, "The truth is that, if you could arrange all these details, you would have to be the Son of God." There is no way that Jesus as a man could have controlled these events necessary for the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy about the Messiah. Furthermore, Jesus Christ despised dishonesty and deception; it was contrary to his character to pretend as the hypocrites do. Jesus was indeed a sinless person in whose mouth was no deceit.

The Old Testament alone makes 2,000 predictive prophecies, not a few lucky guesses. Here are 20 of more than 100 prophecies about Jesus Christ:

seed of Woman (Gen. 3:15)
seed of Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3; 17:7; 22:18)
seed of Isaac (Gen. 21:12)
seed of Judah (Gen. 49:10)
seed of David (Psa. 132:11)
Time of His coming and death (Daniel 2,9)
born of a virgin (Isa. 7:14)
born in Bethlehem of Judea (Micah 5:2)
Elijah, a voice preparing the Way (Isa. 40:3; Mal. 3:1)
anointed by the Holy Spirit (Psa. 45:7; Isa. 11:2)
prophet like Moses (Deut. 18:15-18)
teach by parables (Psa. 78:2)
perform miracles (Isa. 35:5,6)
rejected by his brothers (Psa. 69:8)
rejected by Jewish rulers (Psa. 118:22)
flesh would not decay (Psa. 16:8-10)
rise from dead on third day (Psa. 16:8-10; 30:3)
ascend to the heavens (Psa. 68:18; 24:7-9)
His law, Word to go forth from Jerusalem (Isa. 2:1-3; Micah 4:12)
Gentiles would be admitted (Isa. 11:10; 42:1; Psa. 2:8)

These are but a few things, which Jesus could not have self-determined but must have relied upon others. Peter Stoner, mathematician, in *Science Speaks*, selected just 8 of these Messianic Prophecies concerning Christ and estimated the odds of these being accidentally fulfilled. Results 1 in 10 (to the 17th power); that is 1 in 10 with 17 zeros following it.

Suppose we take 10 to the 17th power in silver dollars and lay them on the face of Texas. They will cover the entire state 2 feet deep. Now mark one of these dollars and stir the whole mass thoroughly all over the state. Blindfold a man and tell him that he can travel as far as he wishes, but he must pick up one silver dollar and say that this is the right one. What chance would he have of getting the right one?

The apostles throughout the New Testament appealed to two things, which established that Jesus was indeed the Christ, the Messiah. The first was the resurrection, but the second is fulfilled Messianic prophecy. Jesus said, "These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures (Luke 24:44,45). The Old Testament contains more than 300 prophecies of the Messiah which were fulfilled in Jesus.

The truth of Jesus and the inspiration of the Scriptures may be established through fulfilled prophecy. If God is God, then His word will be true and His knowledge infinite. Indeed, His word will never be broken (John 10:35). If God has spoken, He will make it good (Num. 23:19). God is able to subject all things to His will (Isa. 46:9,10). The prophesied Messiah could be absolutely identified by His fulfillment of the prophecies made about Him (Rom. 1:2-4).

Notice these appeals to Messianic prophecy:

And beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures. (Luke 24:27)

"These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." (Luke 24:44)

"You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that bear witness of Me; and you are unwilling to come to Me, that you may have life. (John 5:39,40) "For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote of Me." But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?" (John 5:46,47)

And He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant, and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed upon Him. And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." (Luke 4:20,21)

"For I tell you, that this which is written must be fulfilled in Me, `AND HE WAS NUMBERED WITH TRANSGRESSORS'; for that which refers to Me has *its* fulfillment." (Luke 22:37)

"But *they have done this* in order that the word may be fulfilled that is written in their Law, `THEY HATED ME WITHOUT A CAUSE.' (John 15:25)

DESCRIPTIONS OF JESUS CHRIST

Messiah / Christ

These two equivalent titles both mean "anointed one," from the Hebrew verb *MASHAH* ("to anoint, smear with oil, pour oil over someone"), and the Greek verb *chrio* (same def.). Many different people were called "anointed":

OT: "Messiah" was frequently used for *currently reigning* kings, and less often for a high priest, patriarch, or prophet. The title was applied to an expected *future* "anointed" leader only in Dan 9:25 and in later writings from Qumran.

NT: A transliteration of the Hebrew *MESSIAS* is used *only* in John 1:41 and 4:25. Everywhere else the NT always uses the Greek translation *xristos* ("Christ"). In the NT, the title refers only to Jesus, fairly often in the Gospels (7 Mk; 16 Mt; 12 Lk; 19 Jn), and very frequently in Paul's letters (382 times). Paul even uses "Christ Jesus," "Jesus Christ," or "Christ" alone as if it were a proper name. In Luke 4:18, Jesus quotes the scripture: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because *he has anointed me* to preach good news to the poor..." Christians later used the Chi-Rho (first two letters of "Christ" in Greek) as a monogram for Jesus.

Lord / LORD

Originally it was a title of respect used for people superior to yourself, so it simply meant "Sir" or "Master," just like *Señor* in Spanish, *Herr* in German, or "Lords and Ladies" in British. Later it is often also used for gods or God.

OT: The Hebrew title *ADONAI* simply means "lord" or "master," and is often used for humans and/or for God. Although God's name in Hebrew (YHWH) is very *often written* in the Bible, it was *rarely pronounced* after the Babylonian exile. Instead, people substituted the title *Adonai*. To distinguish between the two uses of *Adonai*, many English Bibles print this title in small capitals (LORD) when it substitutes for God's name, and in regular letters (Lord) otherwise.

NT: The Greek word *κύριος* is very frequent (80 times in Mt; 18 Mk; 104 Lk; 52 Jn; 107 Acts; 274 Paul; 717 total), with a variety of meanings. It sometimes refers to God or to humans, but usually to Jesus. Some people (esp. foreigners) call Jesus *κύριε* simply as a sign of respect ("Sir" - Mk 7:28; Jn 4:11; etc.), while his disciples usually refer to him as their "master"; in later texts, calling Jesus "Lord" is an indication of his messianic or divine status (Acts 2:34-36). In Luke, the disciples also address Jesus as an *Epistates* ("master") seven times (5:5; 8:24 [twice], 45; 9:33, 49; 17:13). In Paul, "the Lord" is often a substitute for Jesus' name. Note also "the Lord's Day" (Rev 1:10) and "the Lord's Supper" (1 Cor 11:20).

Holy One

Originally a common circumlocution for God (a phrase used to avoid speaking God's name), it is later also applied as a title for Jesus or other "saints."

OT: In the singular, "Holy One" always and only refers to God (1Sam 2:2; Job 6:10; etc.), often also called "Holy One of Israel" (2Kgs 19:2; Isa 1:4; etc.). In the plural, "holy ones" can also refer to human or angelic beings that are close to God (Deut 33:2-3; Ps 16:3; 34:9; etc.)

NT: Jesus is called the "Holy One of God" by unclean spirits (Mark 1:24; Luke 4:34) and by Peter (John 6:69). Acts 2:27 and 13:35 quote Ps 16 to call Jesus the "Holy One"; and the title is also used of Jesus in Acts 3:14; 1John 2:20; Rev 3:7; 16:5.

I Am

In the Hebrew Bible, God's name (YHWH) means something close to "I am" (see Exod 3:14; 6:2-3; Deut 32:39; Isa 43:25; 51:12; etc.; cf. Matt 22:32). In the Synoptic Gospels this phrase is used only a few times by Jesus (Mark 14:62; Luke 22:70; 24:39), especially when Jesus walks on the water (Mark 6:50; Matt 14:27; cf. John 6:20), a story that functions as a "theophany" (appearance of a god). Messianic pretenders may also deceive people by saying "I am" (Mark 13:6; Matt 24:5; Luke 21:8).

In John's Gospel, Jesus himself says "I Am" (Greek εἰμι) fifty-four times. Twenty-four of these are emphatic (explicitly including the pronoun "EGO" for "I"), including some well known metaphorical images, when Jesus calls himself the bread of life, the light of the world, the door, the good shepherd, the resurrection and the life, the way and the truth and the life, and the true vine.

Son of God / God's Son

When Jesus called himself the Son of God and stated that He and the Father are one, the Jews took this as blasphemous. Calling Himself the Son of God meant that He was claiming to be Divine (John 10:30-36). In the model prayer (Matt. 6:9-13), Jesus taught His disciples to pray, "Our Father," signifying a special relationship with God. One does not have to be Divine to call God "Father," but Jesus is uniquely God's Son.

OT: In the singular or plural, God's "son" or "sons" can refer to angels (Gen 6:2), kings (Ps 2:7), good people (Wis 2:18), or the people of Israel overall (Exod 4:22), but it did not refer to a messianic figure until the 1st century BC, nor did it imply divinity.

NT: Jesus referred to God as *Abba* ("Father") and frequently referred to Himself as the Son. In Mark, only the Evangelist (1:1), unclean/ demonic spirits (3:11; 5:7), and a Roman centurion (15:39) directly call Jesus "Son of God," while the voice from heaven (1:11; 9:7), more demons (1:24), and the high priest (14:61) use *equivalent expressions* ("my beloved Son"; "Son of the Blessed One"; etc.). In Matthew and Luke these titles for Jesus are also used by Satan, the Holy Spirit, or Jesus' disciples, while Jesus himself calls some of his followers "sons/children of God" (Mt 5:9; Lk 20:36). Paul calls Jesus the "Son of God," and calls all Christians "sons/children of God" in a few important passages (esp. Rom & Gal). John has much more "Father/Son" language, and is the first to call Jesus the "*only-Son*" of God (Gk. μονογενής *monogenes*, lit. "the only-begotten one"; Jn 3:16, 18; cf. 1:14, 18; 1 John 4:9; similarly also Heb 1:5; 5:5).

Son of Man

Originally emphasizing someone's humanity, this title is later also used for a powerful heavenly figure.

OT: Used 93 times in Ezekiel and only 13 times in the rest of the OT (translated "mortal" in NRSV), it usually refers to *human* beings in contrast to God or angels, but it could also highlight the prophet's role as a special *representative* of the people. Daniel 7:13 is the only OT text where this phrase describes a *heavenly* figure nearly equivalent to God in power and authority; in later Jewish apocalyptic literature, the "Son of Man" is a figure of divine *judgement*.

NT: Used 85 times, mostly in the four Gospels (14 Mk, 30 Mt, 25 Lk, 13 Jn) and almost always by Jesus referring to himself, but with various meanings. Some "Son of Man" sayings refer to the *human* activity of Jesus (as in Ezekiel), while others refer to his future role in divine *judgment* (as in Daniel 7; cf. Rev 1:13). Brand new is Jesus' use of "Son of Man" when he is telling his disciples about his upcoming *suffering and death* (esp. Mark 8:31, 9:31, 10:33).

Son of David

Originally refers literally to descendants of the most famous king of ancient Israel, but as a title it later has several meanings.

OT: David had many sons (2 Sam 3), the most famous being Solomon, who succeeded him as king (2 Sam 11-12; 1 Kgs 1-2). In 2 Sam 7:8-16, God (through the prophet Nathan) promises that the Davidic royal dynasty will last forever, but after the Babylonian exile most Jewish rulers were not from David's family. Since King Herod was not, many people around the time of Jesus wanted another "Son of David" to become king again.

NT: As a title, "Son of David" (usually referring to Jesus) is not used very often (3 Mk, 10 Mt, 4 Lk, 0 Jn), although "David" is mentioned 56 times total. In Mark & Luke, the phrase seems to refer *not* to royal power, but rather to the magical/ healing power for which Solomon was famous (e.g. Mark 10:46-52). Only Matthew uses this more often and more clearly as a messianic title with royal connotations (already in 1:1, also 12:23; 21:9; etc.). Matthew also stresses Jesus' Jewish heritage by calling him "Son of Abraham" (1:1).

Son of Mary

As explained in the introduction above, most people in the ancient world did not have "last names," but were identified by their geographical origin ("Jesus of Nazareth"; "the Galilean"), or their occupation ("the carpenter"), or their fathers ("the son of Joseph"; "the carpenter's son"). Women were usually identified through the closest male relative (daughter of..., wife of..., mother of...), but identifying a man through his mother ("Jesus, the son of Mary" - Mark 6:3; cf. Matt 13:55) is rather unusual. "Son of Mary" did not become an important title for Jesus until later centuries, when Church Councils defined Jesus' two-fold nature ("fully human and fully divine"). Although "Son of Mary" seems to emphasize Jesus' human nature (with "Son of God" expressing his divine nature), Christian theology later defined Mary as "Mother of God" (*THEOTOKOS*), not just mother of the human side of Jesus. This title, "Mother of God," exalts Mary to a place, **where Scripture never intended**. It is idolatrous.

King of the Jews / King of Israel

Obviously a title connoting the political and military leadership of the Jewish people.

OT: From the 18th to 11th centuries, the Hebrews were a loose confederation of "tribes," not a monarchy. God was considered their king. The first human "kings" were Saul, David, and Solomon. Thereafter the "Kings of Israel" and the "Kings of Judah" ruled over separate realms. After the Babylonian exile, "Judah" was usually called "Judea," the land of the "Jews." The exact title "King of the Jews" is not used in the OT, but obviously there were many "kings" over the people.

NT: The phrase "King of the Jews" is only applied to Jesus, once at his birth (Matt 2:2) and 17 times at his trial and crucifixion (Mark 15:2, and in all 4 Gospels, but only by

opponents). Jesus is also called "King of Israel" four times (Matt 27:42; Mark 15:32; John 1:49; 12:13). Jesus himself refuses to be made king (Matt 4:8-10; John 6:15), but often speaks of the "Kingdom of God" and uses kings as characters in his parables. The inscription place on the cross above Jesus' head said "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews" (John 19:19; cf. Mark 15:2-26; Matt 27:11-37; Luke 3-38), from which is derived the common abbreviation **INRI** (from the Latin "**I**esus **N**azarenus **R**ex **I**udaeorum").

Prophet

A "prophet" is *not* primarily someone who "predicts" the future, but rather is a chosen messenger or *representative* of God, whose role is to speak God's words and to perform some miraculous and/or symbolic actions for the people to see. Jesus is the prophet Moses spoke about in Deuteronomy 18:15-19 and Peter confirms this in Acts 3:22-23.

OT: The most important early prophets are Elijah and Elisha (1 Kings 16 - 2 Kings 9), who both perform many miracles. The four major prophetic books are attributed to Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel. The OT also promises that "a prophet like Moses" will appear (Deut 18:15-18) and/or the prophet "Elijah will return" (Mal 4:5-6) in the last days.

NT: The OT prophets often mentioned and quoted, esp. in Matthew. Both John the Baptist and Jesus are appropriately considered "prophets," because of their speech and actions, even though they have very different styles. Jesus is also considered a great prophet by many people (Mk 6:14-16; 8:28; Mt 21:11; Lk 7:16; 24:19; Jn 6:14; etc.).

Rabbi / Rabboni / Teacher

Hebrew and Aramaic words meaning "my master" in general, or "my teacher" in particular. They were not used as titles in OT times, but were common titles of respect by the time of Jesus, especially but not only for teachers.

A Greek transliteration of the *Hebrew* "Rabbi" occurs only in the Gospels (3 Mk, 4 Mt, 0 Lk, 8 Jn), while a transliteration of the *Aramaic* "Rabboni" occurs only in Mark 10:51 and John 20:16. Both titles are explicitly translated in John as meaning "teacher" (1:38; 20:16), and both are almost always applied to Jesus (except Matt 23:7-8, where Jesus talks about people being called "rabbi", and in John 3:26, where John the Baptist is called "rabbi"; cf. Luke 3:12). These titles are used almost exclusively by his own disciples (Peter, Judas, etc.), or by a few minor characters (Bartimaeus, Nicodemus, or the "crowd" in general).

The NT frequently also uses the equivalent *Greek* word διδάσκαλος (meaning "teacher" - 12 Mk, 12 Mt, 17 Lk, 8 Jn), usually when Jesus is addressed by various people (disciples and opponents), but sometimes in Jesus' own sayings about "teachers" (see esp. Matt 10:24-25; 23:6-12). Outside of the Gospels, some early Christian leaders are also called "teachers" (Acts 13:1; Rom 2:20; 1Cor 12:28-29; Eph 4:11; etc.)

Savior

A title originally used for God or any human being who would "save" people from present or future dangers. In Greco-Roman politics, this title was also often applied to the emperor as a "benefactor," providing material benefits.

OT: "Savior" is sometimes applied to human leaders (e.g. Neh 9:27), but is used mainly as a title for God (*ca.* 12 times).

NT: The title is rarely used in most NT writings (0 Mk, 0 Mt, 3 Lk, 1 Jn, 2 Acts, 1 Paul), but is more common in the later epistles (25 times). In Luke, "Savior" only once refers to God (Luke 1:47), and twice to the new-born Jesus (1:67, 2:11). The longer phrase "Savior of the world" occurs only in John 4:42 and 1 John 4:14. However, as mentioned in the introduction above, the name "Jesus" (or "Joshua" or "Yeshua") itself means "God saves" (cf. Matt 1:21). Also, the verb "to save" is frequently applied to Jesus' ministry (cf. Matt 8:25; Mark 13:13; Luke 7:50; John 3:17; etc.). See Titus 2:13 for the joining of God and Savior.

Suffering Servant

The combination "suffering servant" is not really a biblical title, but a scholarly shorthand for the servant of God who suffers much (see the "Servant Songs" of Isaiah 42:1-4; 49:1-6; 50:4-9; 52:13-53:12), or any righteous person who suffers (even if not explicitly called a "servant" in Ps 22, which is quoted in Mark 15:34). Jesus often speaks of himself and his disciples as "servants" (Mark 9:35; 10:42-45; John 13:1-20; Acts 3:13-26; etc.), and also often speaks of the necessity of his upcoming suffering (Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:32; and par.). Matthew quotes and applies Isa 42 to Jesus (Matt 12:18-21), while Peter several times refers to the crucified and risen Jesus as God's servant (Acts 3:13, 26; 4:27, 30).

Emmanuel / Immanuel

A Hebrew *name* occurring in the NT only in Matt 1:23 (citing the LXX version of Isa 7:14), where it is correctly translated as meaning "God is with us." This OT prophetic text connects God's saving *presence* among his people with the birth of a child (Isa 7:13-17; cf. 8:1-10). Although it did not refer to a miraculous virgin birth in its original 8th-century BC context, it was applied by early Christians (such as the author of Matthew) to the birth of Jesus. Matthew also explicitly connects the name "Emmanuel" with the name "Jesus," which means "God saves" (1:21-23).

Logos / Word

Used as a Christological title only in John 1:1-18, but very common in later Christianity. The Greek word *logos* can refer not only to a single "word," but also to a "phrase," a "sentence," a "speech," or even the power of "reason" or the "mind." John's use of this title alludes especially to the OT story of God creating the world merely by speaking (Gen 1), while John's statement that "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (Jn 1:14) is somewhat similar to Matthew's use of the title "Emmanuel" (Mt 1:23).

Lamb of God

Used only in John 1:29, 36, as John the Baptist points to Jesus, this image became much more popular in later Christian art and in the Eucharist. In John it is related to the detail that Jesus' death occurs at the very same time that the Passover lambs were slaughtered in the Jerusalem Temple (John 19:28-42 - on the "Day of Preparation"), so Jesus himself replaces the sacrificial lambs, whose blood was necessary for the forgiveness of sins in the Jewish sacrificial system. The "lamb standing as if it had been slain" is also prominent in the Book of Revelation (5:6; and 30 times total).

Great High Priest

An official, one who offered sacrifices. In Judaism, all priests had to be from the Tribe of Levi, which Jesus was not. However, the Letter to the Hebrews calls Jesus a "great high priest" (4:14) of a different type, namely "according to the order of Melchizedek" (6:20). Melchizedek was the King of Salem (the city later called Jerusalem) at the time of Abraham (ca. 1800 BC), and is called "priest of God Most High" (cf. Gen 14:18-24).

Advocate / Paraclete

This title normally refers to the Holy Spirit in the Gospel of John (14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7), but 1 John says, "we have an *advocate* with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John 2:1). In Greek, a "paraclete" *paraklhtoj* is someone "called to your side" to assist you in some way; thus some translations also say "comforter" or "consoler."

Alpha & Omega; First & Last

The first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. Both God and Jesus are called "the Alpha and the Omega," with the same meaning as "the first and the last" and/or "the beginning and the end" (Rev 1:8, 17; 2:8; 21:6; 22:13).

Other Titles and Metaphorical Descriptions in the Bible:

- The bridegroom (Mark 2:19-20; Matt 9:15; Luke 5:34-35; John 3:29)
- The Son of Abraham (Matt 1:1)
- The judge of the living and the dead (Acts 10:42)
- The spiritual rock (1 Cor 10:1)
- The beloved (Eph 1:6)
- The cornerstone (Eph 2:20)
- The head of the church (Eph 5:23)
- The image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation (Col 1:15)
- The one mediator between God and humankind (1 Tim 2:5)
- The blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords (1 Tim 6:15; cf. Rev 19:16)
- The author and perfecter of our faith (Heb 12:2)
- The shepherd and guardian of your souls (1 Pet. 2:25)
- The Amen, the faithful and true witness, the origin of God's creation (Rev 3:14; cf. 3:7)
- The Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the root of David (Rev 5:5)

The root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star (Rev 22:16)

TWENTY SIX CLAIMS OF JESUS CHRIST

1. To be the Messiah, the King of the Jews, the Suffering Servant of Isaiah (Matt. 26:63-65; Mark 14:60-62; Luke 22:67-70; John 9:34,35).
2. To be the divine, eschatological Son of Man of Daniel 9 (considered blasphemous)
3. To be the Son of God (considered blasphemous) (Matt. 3:13; 17:1-5; John 1:49).

4. To be Lord of the Sabbath (Matt. 12:8; Mark 2:28; Luke 6:5).
5. To be able to forgive sins (considered blasphemous) (Mark 2:5-12; Luke 7:48)
6. To be an appropriate object of religious faith (Matt. 16:15-17; John 5:23; 8:24; 20:28)
7. To be the Heir to God (Matt. 28:18; John 3:35; Matt. 21:33-41)
8. To be greater than King David, Solomon, Jonah, the Temple (Matt. 12:3-8, 41,42; Luke 11:31,32)
9. To be 'owner' of the angels and the Elect (Matt. 13:41,42; Mark 13:26,27)
10. To speak eternally binding and existent sayings--own His OWN authority (Matt. 7:24-29; 24:35; John 12:48).
11. To be "able" to fulfill the OT scriptures (Matt. 5:17; Eph. 2:14-16; Heb. 8:6-13; 10:8-10).
12. To be the authoritative interpreter of the OT (Matt. 5:21,22, 27,28, 31,32, 33,34, 38,39, 43,44)
13. To be the issue upon which the eternal destinies depend (John 8:24; 12:48; 1 John 4:3).
14. To be worth higher loyalty and commitment than the family (Matt. 10:37).
15. To have EXCLUSIVE knowledge of the Father, and the SOLE 'dispenser' of that knowledge (John 1:18; 14:6-10; 1 John 5:20)
16. To send prophets (Matt. 23:34; Luke 11:49; John 16:12-14; 17:18-21)
17. To be omniscient (John 2:24,25; 13:10,11; Luke 22:31-34; John 21:15-17)
18. To be of equal status with the Father and the Spirit, and to share 'the Name' with them (Matt. 28:19; John 5:18; 10:30)
19. To be able to grant derivative authority over evil spirits (Matt. 10:1; Luke 9:1,2).
20. To be able to grant kingdom authority IN THE SAME WAY the FATHER does (Matt. 5:19,20; 7:21-23; 13:41-43; 16:17-19; 28:19)
21. To be "God" visiting them (as promised in messianic prophecies) (Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:23)
22. To be co-operative/interchangeable in some operations with the Spirit (John 14:25,26; 15:26,27; 16:7-15)
23. To have special knowledge of heavenly events (Luke 15:7,10; 16:19-31)
24. To have ALL authority in HEAVEN (Matt. 28:18; Eph. 1:20-22)
25. To have authority over the Holy Spirit (John 3:34,35; 16:13-15)
26. To be omnipresent (Matt. 28:20; John 1:48)

C. S. Lewis said in his classic, Mere Christianity:

"I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: 'I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept his claim to be God.' That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic--on a level with the man who says he is a poached egg—or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God; or else a madman or something worse. You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon, or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come away with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to."

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST

The Scripture itself was written by men who were eyewitnesses of Jesus' death, burial and resurrection. No other source of evidence can be considered as authoritative.

1. **Jesus predicted his resurrection and the day he would rise.**

John 2:19-21 "Destroy this temple (body), and in three days I will raise it up."

Matt 16:21 "From that time on Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day."

See also Matt 17:9,22,23; 20:18,19; 26:32; 27:63; Mark 8:31; 9:10,31; 10:32-34; 14:28,58; Luke 9:22-27; John 10:17-18.

2. **The suffering of Jesus shows that he actually died.**

Mark 15:15-20 Jesus was beaten and scourged by the Roman soldiers. Such scourging was often enough to kill a man.

Mark 15:21,22 So weak was Jesus that Simon a Cyrenian was compelled to bear his cross.

"They brought Him to the place Golgotha" (he needed assistance to get there) Lk. 23:26

John 19:31-37 Jesus was found to be dead already when the soldiers came to break his legs and hasten death. One of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, "and immediately blood and water came out."

Mark 15:42-45 Pilate marveled that Jesus was dead and would not release the body until he found out for sure from the centurion

John 19:38-42 If Jesus were not dead the burial procedures of wrapping the body in linen cloths and the mixture of myrrh and aloes would have suffocated him.

3. **Jesus appeared** to women and men, to people alone, to two disciples, to the ten disciples in the upper room, then to the twelve, to the seven by the lake, and to more than 500 at one time. The appearances occurred in many different places and under different circumstances. Not one person who witnessed the appearances ever denied what he saw, heard and touched. What Jesus did was not done in a corner (Acts 26:26).

4. **Jesus was touched.** The resurrection body was a real body: Luke 24:39-43: John 20:27,28; 21:9-13. See also John 20:16-17 (NASV; NKJV): "Stop clinging to me." Luke 24:42,43: "And he took it and ate it in their presence."

5. **The guard at the tomb and the seal of the governor. Matt. 27:62-66.** "Pilate said to them, 'You have a guard; go your way, make it as secure as you know how.' So they went and made the tomb secure, sealing the stone, and setting the guard." To break the seal was a criminal offense. The fact that Jesus' enemies asked for a guard showed that they took his prediction seriously.

After the raising of Lazarus, they were afraid that all men would believe in Jesus (John 11:45-53). Matt. 28:11-15 The guards witnessed the resurrection but were bribed to lie that the disciples stole the body. They claimed they were asleep. But the penalty for sleeping while on duty was very severe. This is why the promise to appease the governor and make them secure.

6. **The heavy stone covering the grave was moved.** Matt. 27:60; Mark 16:3,4; Luke 24:2; John 20:1. The wording of Matthew and John seem to indicate that there was a slope up which the stone was rolled. Matt. 28:2-4 "an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and

rolled back the stone from the door." "The guards shook for fear of him and became like dead men."

How could a weakened Jesus (if he had not died) have been able to move the heavy stone, if he had not died? How did the disciples and Jesus evade the guards at the tomb, if the disciples stole the body?

7. **The grave clothes were left orderly.** John 20:3-9. When Peter and John entered the tomb they found the grave clothes left orderly. If Jesus were dead, the grave clothes would have been left on him. If the body were stolen, they would not have taken the time to leave the grave clothes. How did Jesus get out of the grave clothes in his weakened condition? Lazarus was unable to remove his grave clothes (John 11:43,44).

8. **No evidence of a dead body was ever found by the enemies of Christ.** If the body of Christ could have been produced, the enemies of Christ would have done so and exposed the disciples as false witnesses. We may be sure that no stone was left unturned in the many efforts to disprove the resurrection and stop Christianity.

9. **The remarkable change in the disciples.**

BEFORE (weak, cowardly and unbelieving)	AFTER (convinced, determined, bold)
<p>Matt. 28:16,17 "when they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some doubted."</p> <p>Mark 16:9-14 they did not believe the women or the two; "He rebuked their unbelief and hardness of heart"</p> <p>Luke 24:10-11 the women's words seemed to them like "idle tales, and they did not believe them."</p> <p>Luke 24:19-27 the despair of the two on the road to Emmaus; the doubt of Peter and John because they did not see him</p> <p>John 20:19 "the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews"</p> <p>John 20:24-29 Thomas said, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe."</p>	<p>Acts 2:31-32 the boldness of Peter and the eleven at Pentecost preaching about Jesus' death, burial and resurrection, "to which we are all witnesses"</p> <p>Acts 3:13-22 Peter and John refused to listen to the council (Sanhedrin) which condemned Jesus</p> <p>Acts 5:17-21 apostles imprisoned but delivered by an angel went out to preach again</p> <p>Acts 5:26-32 the apostles brought again before the council; Peter responds, "We ought to obey God rather than men."</p> <p>Acts 7:59,60 Stephen stoned for preaching Jesus as the Christ</p> <p>Acts 12:1-4 James killed with the sword, Peter imprisoned for preaching Jesus Christ</p> <p>According to the traditions of history, they were all martyred for their faith except John. Would you die preaching something you knew was a lie? It is certainly not in the character or teachings of Jesus that one should lie. None of the disciples ever denied the resurrection, but they died preaching it.</p>

10. **The existence of the church.** The church did not just happen, it was caused by the power of God. Jesus predicted that the gates of hades would not prevent his building his church (Matt.

16:18). The early church turned the world upside down (Acts 17:6). The only adequate cause for this event is the resurrection.

11. **The faith and the preaching of the apostle Paul.** Paul (Saul of Tarsus) was originally a persecutor of the church and a scholarly man of the Jews (Acts 7:58-8:4). As a witness to the resurrection his testimony is especially important in view of his previous zeal against Christianity (1 Tim. 1:12-14). His testimony of the resurrection in 1 Cor. 15:3-9 is the earliest documentary evidence we have. Paul's conversion and subsequent life cannot be satisfactorily explained except in the way he himself explained it--he had seen the risen Christ.

Theories of the Resurrection Answered

I. THE SWOON THEORY

Theory: Christ did not really die but fainted from exhaustion. When he was laid in the tomb he revived and later showed himself to the disciples.

Answer:

1. Jesus was in a weakened condition and did actually die. The Roman soldiers were experts in killing and knew when a man was dead. Pilate had a centurion to reassure him of the death.
2. Jesus' body had gone through preparations for burial
3. How did Jesus remove the burial wrappings if he were alive and in a weakened condition?
4. How could Jesus have moved the huge stone in his weakened condition? How did he move it unnoticed by the guards?
5. After the 40 days of appearances, how did Jesus disguise himself for the rest of his life? His disciples went into all the world.
6. If Jesus were a hoax, why didn't the disciples disavow him? Why did they die for their faith in the resurrection?

II. THE VISION/HALLUCINATION THEORY

Theory: Christ appeared to His disciples but only in (a) spiritual visions or (b) hallucinations. Since the disciples were expecting to see Jesus, it would seem only natural for them to think that they did. The vision took the form of a bodily appearance.

Answer:

1. A vision is a miracle. This theory merely substitutes one miracle for another.
2. Why did the disciples think they saw a body if it were only a vision? Jesus in his appearances could speak, hear, eat, touch and be touched. See 1 John 1:1-4. Jesus proved himself alive by "many infallible proofs" (Acts 1:3).
3. How did the same vision occur to more than 500 people at one time?
4. The vision theory does not explain what happened at the tomb. What happened to the body of Jesus? What frightened the guards? Who rolled away the stone? Why were the linen wrappings left behind?
5. The disciples did not expect to see Jesus. In spite of his prophecies, the disciples were skeptical and unbelieving.
6. Why did the visions only last 40 days?
7. Why did the disciples agree to announce a lie? Why would they continue to lie until they were all killed?

III. LEGEND THEORY

Theory: Legends developed in Palestine some years after Christ's career that he rose from the dead. The resurrection was one of the legends.

Answer:

1. The Bible claims that the resurrection story was based on eye-witness accounts.
 - *Matthew and John were apostles and eyewitnesses
 - *2 Pet. 1:16 no cleverly-devised tales
 - *1 John 1:3 "that which we have seen and heard we declare to you"
 - *John 19:35; 20:30,31 John writes from first-hand experience
 - *Luke 1:1-3 Luke interviewed eyewitnesses
 - *Acts 26:24-26 "this thing was not done in a corner"
2. It is impossible to suppose that the early church did not know its own history; the very fact of the early church of the Bible account is evidence of its truth.
3. Wouldn't the Jews have shown the accounts to be false? See John 11:43-48; Acts 4:16,17.
4. What would cause the scholarly and zealous Saul of Tarsus to forsake Judaism and embrace a legend?
5. The evidence demonstrates that all the New Testament was written within 70 years of the time of Jesus. Most of it was written within 40 years. This is not enough time for stories to develop into legends. Legends usually take centuries to develop.

IV. THEORY THAT THE BODY WAS STOLEN BY THE DISCIPLES

Theory: The high priests and Roman soldiers were correct in their response to the Christian claim. The body was stolen.

Answer:

1. This is certainly out of character of the timid, fearful, unbelieving, and scattered disciples to risk their lives against the Roman soldiers at the tomb to steal his body. They were hiding because they feared jail for themselves (John 20:19).
2. A small band of Jews would not have frightened the Roman soldiers, who were under punishment of death if they failed in their duty.
3. It is impossible to believe that all the guard fell asleep at the same time.
4. The Jews were permitted to make the tomb as secure as they knew how (Matt. 27:65). There were probably several soldiers at the tomb.
5. What could a few, poor fishermen do against disciplined and well-armed soldiers? Why was no one reported wounded or killed?
6. Why did they leave the grave clothes? If the disciples stole the body, how could they have enough time to roll the stone away, take off the grave clothes, and leave undetected? Why would they undress the body? Why did they leave the clothes orderly? What did they do with the body?
7. The soldiers were either awake or asleep. If they were asleep, how did the soldier know the disciples stole the body? If they were awake, why should they allow the body to be taken?
8. Why didn't the Sanhedrin apprehend the apostles on Pentecost and imprison them until they confessed what really happened? If the disciples had stolen the body, they would likely have

remained hidden themselves and would never have openly confessed to being followers of Christ. The people knew that Jesus had arisen from the dead (Acts 2:22,32; Matt. 27:63).

9. What possible motive would the disciples have for stealing the body?

10. It is not the character of a follower of Jesus to be deceptive.

“This Simon . . . Stated that, if he were buried alive, he would rise the third day. And accordingly, having ordered a trench to be dug by his disciples, he directed himself to be interred there. They, then, executed the injunction given; whereas he remained (in that grave) until this day, for he was not the Christ.”

--Hippolytus, *The Refutation of All Heresies*

THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit as a Person

According to George Barna, most Christians do not believe that the Holy Spirit is a living force. Overall, 38% strongly agreed and 20% agreed somewhat that the Holy Spirit is “a symbol of God’s power or presence but is not a living entity.” Just one-third of Christians disagreed that the Holy Spirit is not a living force (9% disagreed somewhat, 25% disagreed strongly) while 9% were not sure.¹¹

The Scriptures consider the Holy Spirit as a person, a spirit, and Divine. The Holy Spirit should never be considered as some kind of "force" or influence, as if he had no personality.

The Holy Spirit is a Person

- He speaks (1 Tim. 4:1)
- He witnesses (John 15:26)
- He teaches (John 14:26; Luke 12:11-12; 1 Cor. 2:13)
- He guides (John 16:13; Acts 16:6-10)
- He makes intercession (Rom. 8:26)
- He possesses a mind (Rom. 8:27)
- He has knowledge (1 Cor. 2:11)
- He has affections (Rom. 15:30)
- He possesses a will (1 Cor. 12:11)
- He can be grieved (Eph. 4:30; Isa. 63:10)
- He can be despised (Heb. 10:29)
- He can be resisted (Acts 5:3)

Several passages describe the Spirit as “He” or “Him” (not “it”):

- John 14:16, 17, 26
- John 16:13-14

The Holy Spirit is a *παράκλητος*, paraclete, an advocate, helper, or comforter (John 14:26). Jesus describes the Spirit as “another Helper” (John 14:16), another of the same kind of Helper as Jesus Himself was.

His personality is proved

(1.) from the fact that the attributes of personality, as intelligence and volition, are ascribed to him (John 14:17, 26; 15:26; 1 Cor. 2:10, 11; 12:11). He reproves, helps, glorifies, intercedes (John 16:7-13; Rom. 8:26).

(2.) He executes the offices peculiar only to a person. The very nature of these offices involves personal distinction (Luke 12:12; Acts 5:32; 15:28; 16:6; 28:25; 1 Cor. 2:13; Heb. 2:4; 3:7; 2 Pet. 1:21).

¹¹ <https://www.barna.org/barna-update/faith-spirituality/260-most-american-christians-do-not-believe-that-satan-or-the-holy-spirit-exist>

His divinity is established

(1.) from the fact that the names of God are ascribed to him (Ex. 17:7; Ps. 95:7; compare Heb. 3:7-11); and

(2.) that divine attributes are also ascribed to him, omnipresence (Ps. 139:7; Eph. 2:17, 18; 1 Cor. 12:13); omniscience (1 Cor. 2:10, 11); omnipotence (Luke 1:35; Rom. 8:11); eternity (Heb. 9:4).

(3.) Creation is ascribed to him (Gen. 1:2; Job 26:13; Ps. 104:30), and the working of miracles (Matt. 12:28; 1 Cor. 12:9-11).

(4.) Worship is required and ascribed to him (Isa. 6:3; Acts 28:25; Rom. 9:1; Rev. 1:4; Matt. 28:19).

The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament

The Holy Spirit is mentioned by name in 23 of the 39 books of the Old Testament. Altogether there are some 88 references to the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament. He is called: Spirit, Spirit of God, Spirit of the Lord, and Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit of the New Testament is directly associated with the Spirit of God of the Old Testament.

The Holy Spirit and One God

Both the Old and New Testaments emphasize there is One God. This one God is shown to consist in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The OT shows that God and the Spirit of God are distinct from one another and not to be thought of as identical:

- Isa. 40:13 Who has directed the Spirit of the Lord, Or as His counselor has informed Him?
- Isa. 63:10 But they rebelled And grieved His Holy Spirit; Therefore He turned Himself to become their enemy, He fought against them.
- Psalm 139:7 Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence?
- Gen. 1:2 The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.
- Gen. 6:3 Then the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, because he also is flesh; nevertheless his days shall be one hundred and twenty years."
- Psalm 51:11 Do not cast me away from Your presence And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.
- Neh. 9:20 "You gave Your good Spirit to instruct them, Your manna You did not withhold from their mouth, And You gave them water for their thirst.

Concerning these passages, Garth Black observed, "These passages do not prove that God and the Spirit of God were thought of as distinct beings by the Old Testament writers but only that the Spirit had activities of His own distinct from God."¹²

The Hebrew words "Spirit of God" are *Ruah Elohim*. *Ruah*, is translated 180 times as spirit(s), 92 times as wind(s) and 32 times as breath(s). Keil and Delitzsch have expert insight to the usage of the word. *Ruah*, "denotes wind and spirit, like *pneuma*, from *pneuo*. *Ruach Elohim*, is not a breath of wind caused by God (as Theodoret suggested), for the verb does not suit this

¹² Garth W. Black, *The Holy Spirit* (Abilene: Biblical Research Press, 1967), 11.

meaning, but the creative Spirit of God, the principle of all life (Ps.33:6; 104:30), which worked upon the formless, lifeless mass, separating, quickening, and preparing the living forms, which were called into being by the creative words that followed." (Commentary on the Old Testament, Volume I, C.F.Keil and F. Delitzsch, Eerdmans Publishing Co., Fifth Printing, June 1978)

The Holy Spirit Empowers God's Servants for Service

In Numbers 11.25-26 the helpers appointed by Moses to assist him in his work are to receive the same 'spirit' as he enjoys - 'the Lord took some of the spirit that was upon him, and put it upon the seventy elders, and when the spirit rested upon them they prophesied'. The activity of the Spirit is revealed in prophesying, but in this case as a sign of permanent empowerment with the Spirit of wisdom.

When the ark of the covenant, the throne of the invisible God, is to be made, God inspires Bezalel and Oholiab for the task. "Behold --- I have filled him with the spirit of God, with ability and intelligence, with knowledge and all craftsmanship --". God enables His servant and the Spirit is revealed in perfect workmanship.

In fact we later learn that God's whole deliverance of His people is by His Spirit, the angel of His presence (Isaiah 63.7-14). It should be noted that apart from in creation God's Spirit only works through and enters into people. He is never said to enter or fill a place, even the Tabernacle. His presence is known by His activity through people.

When Moses has finally to be replaced it is by a man 'in whom is the Spirit' (Numbers 27.18), probably linking him with the seventy elders previously mentioned.

The Holy Spirit Inspires Deliverers

When Israel is in danger of being destroyed or absorbed into the surrounding nations, "the Spirit of the Lord" comes upon various leaders to enable them to deliver them from their enemies - for example, Othniel (Judges 3.9), Gideon (Judges 6.34), Jephthah (Judges 11.29), and Samson (Judges 14.6, 19; 15.14), the latter being first "stirred by the Spirit" (13.25). In all these cases the presence of the Spirit is seen in the successful outcome of events. There is no reason to think that they experienced any special emotions that they connected with the Spirit. It is true that Samson was aware that he had lost his strength, but this was because something he was trying to do made this obvious. These experiences would appear to have been temporary for the task in hand.

When Saul is chosen to be 'king' (the term here means warleader) of Israel, the Spirit of the Lord comes on him and he prophesies (1 Samuel 10.10), and the same Spirit comes on him to give victory in battle (1 Samuel 11.6). Unhappily, he did not maintain his obedience to God; and the Spirit of God leaves him (1 Samuel 16.14). He is no longer God's empowered leader, and this is revealed by his future failure. Here there is the idea of a more permanent presence of the Spirit, as with the elders of Moses, in contrast with the more temporary experiences of the Judges. (The Spirit leaving him refers to His special empowering. The thought of the Spirit's indwelling, as mentioned in the Psalms, is not in mind).

In the case of David 'the Spirit of the Lord' came on him "from that day forward" (1 Samuel 16.13) as is revealed by his continual success, until he has finally established God's

people firmly in the Promised Land. While he was a magnificent fighter and leader, his success is attributed to the Spirit of God.

The Holy Spirit and Inspiration

2 Peter 1:21 says "prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." The word moved in this verse literally means to be "borne along" or "carried along." Even though human beings were used in the process of writing down God's Word, they were all literally "borne along" by the Holy Spirit.

The human wills of the authors were not the originators or the carriers of God's message....God did not permit the will of man to divert, misdirect, or erroneously record His message. God moved and the prophet mouthed these truths; God revealed and man recorded His word. Interestingly, the Greek word for "moved" in 2 Peter 1:21 is the same word found in Acts 27:15-17. The experienced sailors could not navigate the ship because the wind was so strong. The ship was being driven, directed, and carried about by the wind. This is similar to the Spirit's driving, directing, and carrying the human authors of the Bible as He wished. Yet, just as the sailors were active on the ship (though the wind, not the sailors, controlled the ship's movement), so the human authors were active in writing as the Spirit directed.

Inspiration in the Old Testament

The Old Testament recognizes that it is the Holy Spirit who speaks through its writers (2 Samuel 23:2-3). Indeed, many Old Testament passages quoted in the New Testament are said to have the Holy Spirit as their author, even though a human prophet actually spoke the words in the Old Testament (see Mark 12:36; Acts 1:16; 28:25; Hebrews 3:7; 10:15-16).

Old Testament Designation/New Testament Designation

- The psalmist said (Psalm 95:7)/The Holy Spirit said (Hebrews 3:7)
- The psalmist said (Psalm 45:6)/God said (Hebrews 1:8)
- The psalmist said (Psalm 102:25,27)/God said (Hebrews 1:10-12)
- Isaiah said (Isaiah 7:14)/The Lord spoke by the prophet (Matthew 1:22-23)
- Hosea said (Hosea 11:1)/The Lord spoke by the prophet (Matthew 2:1).
- Eliphaz's words (Job 5:13)/God's Word (1 Corinthians 3:19)

More Examples:

- Acts 1:16 is a highly significant verse in this regard, for we read: "Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spoke before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus."
- Acts 4:24-25: "And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things?" (emphasis added).
- Acts 28:25: "When they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spoke the Holy Ghost by Isaiah the prophet unto our fathers."

God's Words in the Mouths of the Prophets

2 Samuel 23:2 David said, "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue."

Here is a clear reference to a human being used as a mouthpiece for the spirit of God.

Isaiah 59:21, "As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord; My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth..."

Jeremiah 1:9 "Then the Lord put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth."

Zechariah 7:12, "Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the Lord of hosts hath sent in his spirit by the former prophets: therefore came a great wrath from the Lord of hosts."

Though God used human beings in the process of communicating His words, it is clear that the Holy Spirit was in charge of the process so that no human error or opinion entered into the picture

Inspiration in the New Testament

Jesus promised His followers that it would be the work of the Holy Spirit to provide an accurate recounting of the events of His life (John 14:26; 16:12-13). And because of this, you and I can trust the Bible as the Word of God. The Holy Spirit superintended the process from beginning to end. Let's look at more details of this doctrine in the New Testament.

The New Testament Books Are "Scripture"

2 Timothy 3:16

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." When Paul said that "all Scripture" is inspired, did he have in mind just the Old Testament (which is a common New Testament usage of the word "Scripture"), or did he have a larger grouping in mind (a grouping that included some New Testament books)?

The apostle Paul had already described a specific New Testament book as "Scripture" in his first letter to Timothy (see 1 Timothy 5:18 where Luke 10:7 is called Scripture). It therefore makes sense that when Paul used the term "Scripture" in his second letter to Timothy, he was thinking not just of Old Testament books but also of New Testament books that had been written up to that time. The apostle Peter uses the same Greek word for "Scripture" to describe the writings of the apostle Paul (2 Peter 3:16).

By the time 2 Timothy 3:16 was written, all of the New Testament books had already been written except for 2 Peter, Hebrews, Jude, and the apostle John's writings. Since Paul uses the word "all" or "every," we may safely conclude that he meant not only that which had been written by prophets and apostles but also that which was to be written.

1 Timothy 5:18

In 1 Timothy 5:18, the apostle Paul joins an Old Testament reference and a New Testament reference and calls them both (collectively) Scripture (Deuteronomy 25:4 and Luke 10:7).

It was not unusual that in the context of first-century Judaism an Old Testament passage was called "Scripture" in the New Testament. It is highly significant that a New Testament book was called "Scripture" so soon after it was written. Luke was written around 60 AD; 1 Timothy was written around 63 A.D. Yet, Paul does not hesitate to place Luke on the same level as the Old Testament (the Book of Deuteronomy).

Jesus' View of the Bible

- Divine Inspiration: *Matthew 22:43*
- Indestructibility: *Matthew 5:17-18*
- Infallibility: *John 10:35*
- Final Authority: *Matthew 4:4,7,10*
- Historicity: *Matthew 12:40; 24:37*
- Scientific Accuracy: *Matthew 19:2-5*
- Factual Inerrancy: *John 17:17; Matthew 22:29*
- Christ-Centered Unity: *Luke 24:27; John 5:39*
- Spiritual Clarity: *Luke 24:25*
- Faith and Life Sufficiency: *Luke 16:31*

New Testament References Where the Writers Claim Divine Authority for their Writings

1 Corinthians 2:13

In 1 Corinthians 2:13 the apostle Paul said he spoke "not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual." In this passage Paul (who wrote a huge portion of the New Testament) affirms that his words were authoritative because they were rooted not in fallible man but infallible God (the Holy Spirit). The words were taught by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit here is the Spirit of truth who was promised to the apostles to teach and guide them into all the truth (see John 16:13).

1 Corinthians 14:37

In this verse Paul says, "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord." Paul's writings have divine authority because they are "commandments of the Lord," not the words of fallen man.

1 Thessalonians 2:13

In 1 Thessalonians 2:13 Paul says, "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe." Again, the reason why Paul's words were authoritative is that they were rooted in God, not in man. God used Paul as His instrument to communicate His word to man. Regarding this, note the following summary formulated by the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church in 1961: It is significant that Paul, while holding to the view of a canon of God-breathed writings which constitute "the oracles of God," claims for his own teaching, either oral or written, equal status.

The word that he preached was not "the word of men" but "the word of God" (1 Thess. 2:13).

- That which he wrote was "the commandment of the Lord" (1 Cor. 14:37).
- He that does not obey the writing of the apostle is to be disciplined (2 Thess. 3:14).
- If any man preach or teach any other gospel than that which Paul proclaimed, he is to be accursed (Gal. 1:8-9).
- When Paul speaks as an apostle of Jesus Christ to the churches it is "Christ that speaketh" in him (2 Cor. 13:3).
- Paul did not learn his gospel at the feet of men but rather received it "through revelations of Jesus Christ" (Gal. 1:12), some of which were "exceeding great" (2 Cor. 12:7).

The Holy Spirit and Conversion

That the Holy Spirit is involved in conversion is rarely if ever denied by any Christian. There are three views of how the Holy Spirit works in conversion:

1. He works through a direct operation on the heart of the lost
2. He works directly on the heart in conjunction with the preaching of the Word
3. He works indirectly through the Word, the preaching of the gospel.

In recent centuries most Protestants believed that there must be a “direct operation of the Holy Spirit” upon a sinner for that sinner to be saved. Many religious groups employ practices that emphasize the need for a convicted sinner to “come forward” to the “mourners’ bench” and wait for an emotional experience, which they were told was the coming of the Holy Spirit.¹³

This view arose theologically from John Calvin, who taught that man was predestined to be either saved or lost by a sovereign God. Nothing he could do would cause him to be saved if he not among the “elect.”

Total Hereditary Depravity
Unconditional Election
Limited Atonement
Irresistible Grace
Perseverance of the Saints

David Steele and Curtis Thomas in *The Five Points of Calvinism Defined, Defended, Documented* explain Efficacious or Irresistible Grace this way:

Simply stated, this doctrine asserts that the Holy Spirit never fails to bring to salvation those sinners whom He personally calls to Christ. He inevitably applies salvation to every sinner whom He intends to save, and it is His intention to save the elect.

The gospel invitation extends a call to salvation to every one who hears its message. It invites all men without distinction to drink freely of the water of life and live. It promises salvation to all who repent and believe. But this outward general call, extended to the elect and non-elect alike, will not bring sinners to Christ. Why? Because men are by nature dead in sin and under its power. They are of themselves unable and unwilling to forsake their evil ways and to turn to Christ for mercy. Consequently, the unregenerate will not respond to the gospel call to repentance and faith. No amount of external threatening or promises will cause blind, deaf, dead, rebellious sinners to bow before Christ as Lord and to look to Him alone for salvation. Such an act of faith and submission is contrary to the lost man’s nature.

Therefore, the Holy Spirit, in order to bring God’s elect to salvation, extends to them a special inward call in addition to the outward call contained in the gospel message. Through this special call the Holy Spirit performs a work of grace within the sinner which inevitably brings him to faith in Christ. The inward change wrought in the elect sinner enables him to understand and believe spiritual truth; in the spiritual realm he is given the seeing eye and the hearing ear. The Spirit creates within him a new heart and a new nature. This is accomplished through regeneration or the new birth by which the sinner is made a child of God and is given spiritual

¹³ Jimmy Jividen, *Alive in the Spirit*, 112.

life... Thus a once dead sinner is drawn to Christ by the inward supernatural call of the Spirit who through regeneration makes him alive and creates within him faith and repentance.¹⁴

The soul who sought salvation waited for an *emotional experience* which would give him an assurance or guarantee of his salvation. This guarantee assured the person that he was saved and could *never* be lost. This grace was irresistible. Since the Holy Spirit Himself was said to be the source of these experiences (automatic actions, speaking in ecstatic utterances), the person would feel convinced within himself of his salvation and the presence of God, a “better felt than told” experience.

Jividen observes, “It was no wonder that students of the Scriptures and reasonable men saw such doctrines as false and such experiences as mere emotional excitement.”¹⁵ Some have reacted to this “direct operation of the Holy Spirit” in conversion by going to the other extreme. They deny that the Holy Spirit has any work in the world at all today. Their method of refuting the false teaching of Calvinism is to argue the Holy Spirit does not do any work at all.

Instead of showing that such emotional experiences and spiritual exercises were not from the Holy Spirit, they ended up denying much of what the Holy Spirit does do. In some writings of that time (19th and 20th centuries) the reader would think that the Holy Spirit should be put in a box and shipped back to the first century where He belonged. In other writings of that time one would think that the Holy Spirit was imprisoned in the Bible and was forbidden to have free course in the world.¹⁶

The Holy Spirit does work in conversion. He works through the Word, but the Word does not reveal any example of emotional experiences or paranormal happenings at the point of conversion. Some examples of conversion in Calvinistic religious groups have more in common with pagan religions than with Biblical accounts. “Barking,” “praying through,” and “ecstatic utterances” were never signs of salvation in the New Testament.

How does the Spirit work?

He works through the Word by inspiring the apostles and prophets who wrote the Word (2 Pet. 1:21). Unquestionably, faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of Christ (Rom. 10:17).

The Holy Spirit is involved in baptism as much as the water is involved (see John 3:5; 1 Cor. 12:13; Tit. 3:5).

¹⁴ David Steele and Curtis C. Thomas, *The Five Points of Calvinism Defined, Defended, Documented* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Pub. Co., 1971), 48-49.

¹⁵ For a concise refutation of Calvinistic doctrine on this point, see J.J. Turner and Edward P. Myers, *Doctrine of the Godhead*, West Monroe: Let the Bible Speak, Inc., 1973), 113-115. See a longer refutation in Curtis A. Cates, *Does the Holy Spirit Operate Upon the Heart of a Saint?* The first proposition of the *Hardeman-Bogard Debate* contains a fine discussion of whether there is a direct operation of the Holy Spirit.

¹⁶ Jividen, 113. Jividen notes: Within the Restoration Movement were both extreme views of the work of the Holy Spirit in conversion. Alexander Campbell, following John Locke’s theory of knowledge, defended the exclusive agency of the Word of God in conversion. Jessie B. Ferguson in Nashville and W. S. Russell in Illinois held to the “direct operation of the Holy Spirit” in conversion. Tolbert Fanning became the most outspoken advocate of the view that the Holy Spirit can work in the world only through the Word of God. More recently Guy N. Woods and Foy E. Wallace Jr. argued this view. Robert Richardson, though denying the work of the Holy Spirit in conversion, advocated that the Holy Spirit did personally dwell in the child of God.

The Holy Spirit is involved in conversion as God's gift (Acts 2:38; 5:32), as God's pledge and seal that the convert is God's child (1 Cor. 6:18-19; 2 Cor. 5:5; Gal. 4:6; Eph. 1:13-14; 4:30). The Holy Spirit who dwells in the Christian gives him identity as God's child and as a brother or sister to all of God's children. This gift is received when one is baptized into Christ (Acts 2:38).

In the conversion of men, one should not rule out the Providence of God. The Scriptures are the means by which faith comes (Rom. 10:17) and are all-sufficient (2 Tim. 3:16-17). But does this mean we should rule God out of the picture? Can we arbitrarily say God has nothing to do with getting sinful man and His convicting Word together through providence?

The example of Onesimus comes to mind. As a slave of Philemon, he came to Paul in Rome, where he learned the gospel and became a Christian. In time Paul sent him back to Philemon with a letter encouraging Philemon to receive him as a brother. In the letter Paul infers that "perhaps" the providence of God played a part in his conversion. "For perhaps he was for this reason separated *from you* for a while, that you would have him back forever, no longer as a slave, but more than a slave, a beloved brother, especially to me, but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord" (Philemon 15-16). While we do not wish to attribute more to God than Paul does, neither do we wish to rule out that God works in the world today.

Wives who cannot teach their unconverted husbands by a spoken message *may* nevertheless win their husbands by living godly lives (1 Pet. 3:1,2). While the written word is the seed of the kingdom (Luke 8:11), the lived word of God can and does influence people to be receptive to the gospel. The Holy Spirit can and does work in both to bring about conversion.

We must also consider the command from the Holy Spirit through Paul: "Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with *an attitude of* thanksgiving; praying at the same time for us as well, that God will open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been imprisoned; that I may make it clear in the way I ought to speak" (Col. 4:2-4). If the Spirit works only through the Word, why does the Spirit move Paul to command Christians to pray that God will open a door for the Word? Opening the door for the Word is not the same as preaching the Word; it is preparatory. We do not know how God works in such matters to prepare opportunities and hearts so that they may hear and obey the gospel. Yet we are commanded to pray to God to open doors for the Word and to pray for the preacher that he may be bold. Do we believe such prayers matter? If we do, then we must admit that the Holy Spirit (God) is involved in opening doors for the Word to work.

In determining the truth, one should not look to emotional experiences but to the Scriptures themselves. Anytime one's feelings or experiences contradict the Scriptures, one must realize that while feelings may deceive, the Scriptures are always true.

"It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life" (John 6:63).

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek (Rom. 1:16).

But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart"—that is, the word of faith which we are preaching, ⁹that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and

believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; ¹⁰for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation (Rom.10:8-10).

In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we would be a kind of first fruits among His creatures...Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls (James 1:18, 21).

Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart, for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God. For, "All flesh is like grass, And all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, And the flower falls off, But the word of the Lord endures forever." And this is the word which was preached to you (1 Pet. 1:22-25).

In the parable of the sower, the seed is the word of God (Matt. 13:19-23; Luke 8:11). Scattering the seed, in which is life, is preaching the Word. Owen Olbricht said, "Without the Spirit there would be no Word; without the Word there could be no life or birth; and without life and birth no one could become a member of the kingdom."¹⁷ There is no indication here that a direct operation of the Holy Spirit brought about conversion; rather the seed of the Word brought about the life.

At this point we must raise a caution about the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. We must understand that the source of the Word of God is the Holy Spirit (2 Pet. 1:21). Jimmy Jividen said:

The Word of God and the Holy Spirit are not the same. They are, however, related in their work in the world. The Holy Spirit inspired the Word of God, and the Word of God reveals the work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the agent, and the Word of God is the instrument of much of the Spirit's work in the world.¹⁸

The Scriptures and the Holy Spirit cannot be separated any more than an agent can be separated from the instrument he uses. When the writer of Hebrews quoted Psalm 95:7, he said, "the Holy Spirit says" (Heb. 3:7). Though David (Heb. 4:7) was the human author of this psalm, the Hebrew writer understood that David was inspired by the Holy Spirit in writing it. David wrote it, but God through the Holy Spirit said it.

We must understand that the Holy Spirit does His work through the Word of God in many ways. Many of the things the Scriptures attribute to the Holy Spirit are also attributed to the Word of God. Jimmy Jividen gives us this chart:¹⁹

¹⁷ Owen Olbricht, *The Holy Spirit: Person and Work*, 87.

¹⁸ Jimmy Jividen, *Alive in the Spirit*, 53.

¹⁹ Jimmy Jividen, *Alive in the Spirit*, 54.

Activity	Holy Spirit	Word of God
Begotten/Born Again	John 3:3-5	James 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:23-25
Saved	Titus 3:5	James 1:21; Acts 11:14
Sanctified	2 Thessalonians 2:13	John 17:17
Convicts	John 16:8-11	Acts 2:37
Guides	John 16:13	2 Timothy 3:15-17
Comforts	John 14:16-18, 26	Romans 15:4

Many things done by the Holy Spirit are done through the Word of God. If you were to dig a hole with a shovel, it could be said that a *person* dug the hole or the *shovel* dug the hole. Both would be correct. One statement tells the *who*; the other statement tells the *instrument* that was used.

The Word of God reveals the work of the Holy Spirit. “One would know nothing of the Holy Spirit were it not for the Word of God. Just as the Scriptures are “God breathed” by the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit is revealed by the Scriptures.”²⁰

How the Spirit Works in Conversion

The Spirit played a great role in the Day of Pentecost. The apostles were “all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance” (Acts 2:4). This is the first time that the apostles preached “repentance for forgiveness of sins” in Jerusalem (Luke 24:47; Acts 2:5). Peter’s emphasis was not that day on feelings or experiences; he urged the people to “give heed to my words” (2:14). When they heard Peter preach the crucifixion and the resurrection of Jesus, knowing that they were guilty of his death, they were pierced to the heart by his words (Acts 2:37). Peter taught them to “repent and be baptized.” Those who “had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls” (2:41). Notice that the added were the obedient to the Word. In 2:47, the Scripture reveals, “And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved” (2:47). Those who gave heed to the preaching of the word were obedient in repentance and baptism; these are the ones saved and added to their number (i.e., the number in the church, God’s kingdom, Acts 4:4; 5:14; 6:1,7).

In the conversion stories of the book of Acts, one thing stands out clearly: those who were saved first heard the preaching of the gospel. The Spirit worked through the “sword of the Spirit” to pierce hearts and change hearts.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

Examples of Conversion	The Holy Spirit's influence on the messenger	The Holy Spirit's influence on the convert
Pentecost	Filled apostles with the Holy Spirit and gave them utterance (2:4)	Pierced to the heart by the things that they heard (2:37), they repented and were baptized (2:38) They gladly received Peter's word (2:41)
Philip at Samaria	Philip worked signs (Acts 8:6-7, 13) as he preached the gospel	The Samaritans believed the preaching and were baptized (8:12), witnessing the signs.
Ethiopian Eunuch	Angel of the Lord spoke to Philip (8:26); the Spirit told Philip to join the chariot (8:29)	Philip preached (evangelized) Jesus to him (8:35)
Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9, 22, 26)	Jesus appears to Saul and tells him to go into the city where he will be told what he must do (Acts 9:6). The Lord in a vision sent Ananias to Saul (9:10-18) to heal him and that he might be filled with the Spirit.	Ananias was to tell Saul what he must do. Ananias told Saul to be baptized and wash away his sins (22:16)
Cornelius (Acts 10 and 11) ²¹	Peter has a vision (Acts 10:9-16) whose purpose is to open his eyes to the need of the Gentiles for the repentance that leads to life (11:15). The falling of the Spirit on Cornelius was not to save but to convince the Jews of the open door for the Gentiles (11:17-18)	Cornelius has vision to send to Joppa for Peter (Acts 10:3-8). Peter will 'will speak words to you by which you will be saved, you and all your household' (11:14). Though the Holy Spirit filled the household of Cornelius and they spoke in tongues, the report was that the Word of God came to the Gentiles (11:1).
Lydia	Paul's vision of the Macedonian call (Acts 16:9-10)	was listening; and the Lord opened her heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul (Acts 16:14)
Jailer	Paul cast out the spirit of a slave girl, which landed him in jail. (Acts 16:17-21). God caused an earthquake and the freeing of the prisoners (16:25-26).	Paul spoke the word of the Lord to the Jailer and his household (16:32). They were baptized, having believed (16:33-34).
Thessalonica	The gospel came with the power of the Holy Spirit (1 Thess. 1:5).	Paul reasoned with Jews in synagogue, explaining and giving evidence that Christ had to suffer. Some were persuaded (17:1-4). The gospel (word of God) does its work in those who believe (1 Thess. 2:13). The Jews

²¹ Note Appendix A on "The Case of Cornelius"

		were “hindering us from speaking to the Gentiles so that they may be saved” (2:16).
Berea		Noble minded, they studied the Scriptures to see if the things Paul spoke were so (17:11). They believed after hearing.
Corinth		Paul was reasoning in the synagogue every Sabbath and trying to persuade Jews and Greeks (Acts 18:4). God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe (1 Cor. 1:21).
Twelve disciples at Ephesus (Acts 19)		When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus (Acts 19:5). After Paul laid his hands on them, they received the Holy Spirit and began speaking in tongues and prophesying (19:6-7). Paul reasoned and persuaded Ephesians concerning the kingdom of God (18:8); some became hardened and disobedient. “In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of <i>God’s own</i> possession, to the praise of His glory” (Eph. 1:13-14).

The consistent pattern of these examples shows that when the Holy Spirit intended to act directly, He acted upon *the messenger*. When the Holy Spirit worked on *the convert*, He worked through the Word. The Holy Spirit often used messengers to work signs of miracles in order to confirm the Word (Mark 16:20; Heb. 2:3-4). But the message of the gospel is the important means by which the Holy Spirit convicted and converted sinners. While the Holy Spirit supported and confirmed the message through signs, the Word itself without signs is fully able to bring about a change in the soul and life of a Christian.

Born of the Spirit

While forgiveness of sin and standing in the grace of God are most important features of the new birth, the point of conversion is more than merely cleaning up an individual. Conversion seeks to change the heart and life of a person. Calvinists believe that this takes place through a miraculous operation of the Spirit directly upon the heart of a sinner. This assumes that one is born totally, hereditarily depraved and is incapable of doing any good to bring about his salvation. Calvinists believe that faith and repentance are gifts of God and that God actually stimulates the repentance in a sinner in the emotional experience of salvation. But the imperative “repent” argues against this. Repentance is something the sinner does to “die to sin” (Rom. 6:1-2). Conversion is when the old man of sin is dead and a new man, made in the image of Christ, begins living to righteousness (Rom. 6:1-7, 12-19). Paul said to the Ephesians:

So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness. But you did not learn Christ in this way, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus, that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self, which in *the likeness of God* has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. (Eph. 4:17-24)

Conversion takes place when one is taught the truth (gospel) in Jesus and lays aside the old self (repents). The Christian life is built upon renewing the spirit of your mind by putting away the lusts of deceit and by becoming like God. We are to be transformed by the renewing of our minds (Rom. 12:1-2). A converted person is one who gets out of the sinning business and into the serving business. This is why conversion is not merely the cleaning up of a person; it is the transformation of a sinner into a saint.²² If a sinner were merely “cleaned up” but not changed inside, he becomes like the proverbial pig or dog (2 Peter. 2:20-22). Jesus tells of the man who cleans out his house:

“When the unclean spirit goes out of a man, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and not finding any, it says, ‘I will return to my house from which I came.’ And when it comes, it finds it swept and put in order. Then it goes and takes *along* seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they go in and live there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first.” (Luke 11:24-26)

Heaven would be filled with unchanged sinners, if man needs no change when he is converted. James said, “Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning

²² For an excellent discussion on this point, see Gus Nichols, *Lectures on the Holy Spirit*.

and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you” (James 4:7-10).

John 3:3-8

Jesus answered and said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

Nicodemus said* to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born, can he?” Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be amazed that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit.”

The new birth is a birth of water and the Spirit

The new birth involves both elements, both water and the Holy Spirit. Since the Scriptures are clear that baptism brings about both the death of the old man of sin but also newness of life; it may clearly be understood as the new birth (Rom. 6:3-7; Col. 2:12-13; Tit. 3:3-7). John was practicing baptism in water up to this point (John 1:26); and Jesus also was beginning to baptize (John 3:23ff.). Even among the covenant proselytes baptism was a prerequisite to becoming a “perfect Israelite.”²³ Proselyte baptism was performed in the presence of three witnesses and was a complete immersion. Alfred Edersheim describes proselyte baptism in these terms:

More especially was he to regard himself as a new man in reference to his past. Country, home, habits, friends, and relations were all changed. The past, with all that had belonged to it, was past, and he was a new man—the old, with its defilements, was buried in the waters of baptism. This was carried out with such pitiless logic as not only to determine such questions as those of inheritance, but that it was declared that, except for the sake of not bringing proselytism into contempt, a proselyte might have wedded his own mother or sister (comp. *Yeb. 22a; Sanh. 58b*).

The baptism of covenant-born Jews was rather remarkable. John’s baptism was a baptism of repentance, wherein the Jew was promising to leave sin and be committed to God. For Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews and a Pharisee that was committed to keeping the Law, this would have been quite a humbling matter. It meant that he needed repentance in his life.

²³ Alfred Edersheim, “On the Baptism of Proselytes,” Appendix 12, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*. Edersheim noted two types of proselytes: the “proselyte of the gate” (God-fearers who believed in God and promised to keep the seven laws of Noah) and the “proselyte of righteousness,” who would become a child of the covenant. To become a “perfect Israelite,” who was bound to covenant with all its promises and duties, a proselyte would have to be circumcised (if male), be baptized in water, and offer a sacrifice. That *baptism* was absolutely necessary to make it a proselyte is so frequently stated as not to be disputed (See *Maimonides*, u.s.; the tractate *Masseketh Gerim* in *Kirchheim’s* Septem Libri Talm. Parvi, pp. 38-44 [which, however, adds little to our knowledge]; Targum on Ex 12:44; Ber. 47b; Kerith. 9a; Jer. Yebam. p. 8d; Yebam. 45b, 46a and b, 48b, 76a; Ab. Sar. 57a, 59a, and other passages).

Baptism, whether among the proselytes, the Jews, or Christians, was always unalterably linked to repentance, a change of life.

The new birth is a spiritual birth.

In Christianity, the body is immersed in water, but it is the spirit of the person that is changed. Baptism is not for the filth of the flesh but an inquiry for a clean conscience (1 Pet. 3:21); it is the time when one's spiritual filth is washed away (Acts 22:16). One is changed as to sin, since he is made righteous (justified). One is changed as to relationship, since he is reconciled to God. One is changed in spirit, in that his purposes and practices also change (Eph. 4:17-24).

Jesus said, "That which is born of flesh is flesh, and that which is born of Spirit is spirit" (John 3:6). The new birth is one that takes place in our human spirit. Conversion means that one is free from sin, free from the love of sin, free from the purposes of sin, and free from the practice of sin. In repentance, one literally dies to the love of sin. We are freed from sin and its consequences by the cleansing blood of Jesus in baptism (Rev. 1:5); but our hearts (our inner spirits) are changed by the Spirit, when we turn our hearts from the love of sin to the love of God. This birth of spirit takes place as we believe, repent and obey the gospel in baptism. Belief and repentance are spiritual exercises which show themselves in confession, baptism, and a change of life. The Spirit regenerates us through the Word, the gospel of grace and mercy (Tit. 3:3-7). That story of love and the cross like a sword (Eph. 6:16) pierces the inner man to convict him of his sins and to bring about a commitment of heart, purpose, and desire.

While most people teach that the Spirit in John 3:5 means the Holy Spirit, there are several erroneous interpretations of "water."²⁴

1. "Water" viewed as the Word. Some refuse to see baptism associated with the word "water" in this verse and prefer to understand this as the cleansing effects of the Word of God (cf. Eph. 5:26; John 15:3). Olbricht notes that if the word "water" should be understood figuratively, why are the words "Spirit" and "kingdom" not figurative? In Eph. 5:26 one is washed in water accompanied by the word.
2. "Water" viewed as the Spirit. Some believe the Greek word "and" (*kai*) is better translated "even": "born of water, even the Spirit." Nothing in the context warrants this view. Some have appealed to John 7:38-39, "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.' But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet *given*, because Jesus was not yet glorified." This, however, is a reference to the Holy Spirit that is given to those who have believed and obeyed (Acts 5:32) the gospel in baptism (Acts 2:38).
3. "Water" viewed as physical birth. Some believe the water here is the embryonic fluid associated with birth. They build their case on Jesus' words: "that which is flesh is flesh, and that which is Spirit is spirit" (John 3:6). The problem with this view is that Jesus is not speaking about two different births in John 3:5; rather he is speaking about only one birth, a birth that includes both water and Spirit. John does not say "born of water and of

²⁴ See Olbricht, 82-85.

Spirit,” as if he were describing two events. Here is one preposition with two objects joined by *kai*, suggesting that the two are aspects of one concept.

4. “Water” viewed as only a sign. Others hold that Jesus meant the “water” of baptism as only a sign of their salvation. They argue that Jesus’ statement does not imply the necessity of baptism for salvation or entrance into heaven. The problem here is that Jesus said one “must” be born again and describes this birth as one of water and the Spirit. Those who have not been born both of “water and Spirit” cannot enter the kingdom of God.

That baptism as a birth of water and Spirit purifies can be seen in John 3:25-26:

Therefore there arose a discussion on the part of John’s disciples with a Jew about purification. And they came to John and said to him, “Rabbi, He who was with you beyond the Jordan, to whom you have testified, behold, He is baptizing and all are coming to Him.”

BAPTISM WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

The idea of being baptized “with the Holy Spirit” appears five times in the New Testament:

- Matt. 3:11 “As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.”
- Mark 1:8 “I baptized you with water; but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”
- Luke 3:16 John answered and said to them all, “As for me, I baptize you with water; but One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to untie the thong of His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.
- Acts 1:4-5 Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, “Which,” *He said*, “you heard of from Me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”
- Acts 11:15-18 “And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as *He did* upon us at the beginning. And I remembered the word of the Lord, how He used to say, ‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’ Therefore if God gave to them the same gift as *He gave* to us also after believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God’s way?” When they heard this, they quieted down and glorified God, saying, “Well then, God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance *that leads* to life.”

Jimmy Jividen notes from these five passages we can conclude the following about the baptism with the Holy Spirit:

- It was predicted by John the Baptist and contrasted with his own baptism in water.
- It was promised by Jesus in the context of discussing the kingdom of God.
- It was identified by Peter as being related to the events on the day of Pentecost and at Cornelius’ house. What happened at Cornelius’ house was the same gift. When the Holy Spirit fell on Cornelius’ house, it reminded Peter of the promise that Jesus had made about baptism with the Holy Spirit. This caused him to conclude that God approved of baptizing Gentiles as well as Jews.²⁵

Four distinctive things separate the baptism with the Holy Spirit from both John’s baptism and Christian baptism:²⁶

1. Baptism with the Holy Spirit cannot be commanded. It is not something one can do for himself or by himself. It is accomplished by a direct act of God without any prescribed conditions on the part of the one being baptized. No one in the Scriptures ever prayed to be baptized with the Holy Spirit.

²⁵ Jividen, *Alive in the Spirit*, 34.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 35.

2. Jesus Himself administered the baptism with the Holy Spirit. The apostles could not baptize anyone with the Holy Spirit. They could not accomplish it by the laying on of hands, by prayer, or by some emotional exercise. Jesus promised the Holy Spirit to the apostles and gave the Spirit to those whom He chose.
3. The baptism with the Holy Spirit had nothing to do with salvation in the Scriptures. God was the source of baptism with the Holy Spirit. Its purpose was inspiration and confirmation of the message (Heb. 2:3-4).
4. Baptism with the Holy Spirit was connected with men being able to speak in foreign languages that they had not learned in the normal way. Their speaking in foreign tongues was a miracle. These tongues were not some sort of ecstatic utterances or emotional feeling, but were discernible languages (Acts 2:5-13).

The Differences between Water Baptism and Baptism with the Holy Spirit

Point of Comparison	Baptism with the Holy Spirit	Water Baptism
1. Administered by	The Lord Himself (Matt. 3:11; John 1:33)	By men, those doing the teaching (Matt. 28:19; 1 Cor. 1:14)
2. Those being baptized	Twelve Apostles and Cornelius' household	Any penitent believer For all nations and required of every creature (Mark 16:15-16; Matt. 28:19)
3. Baptized in or with	The Holy Spirit	Water
4. Purpose	Confirmation from God	Forgiveness of sins and gift of the Holy Spirit
5. Whose choice	God	Whosoever wills
6. Accompanied by	Miracles	Preaching and repentance
7. Prerequisites	None given	Faith, Repentance and Confession
8. Kind of action	An act of the Lord (Acts 1:5)	An act of faith in obedience (Acts 2:38; 10:48; 22:16; Col. 2:12; Gal. 3:26-27)
9. In the "name"	No name at all, since it was not performed by man	"into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19) in the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:38; 8:14-16)
10. Duration	Only two events (Acts 2 & 10)	For all time (Eph. 4:4-6)
11. Nature	Received as a promise (Acts 1:4-5)	Obedied as a command (Acts 10:48)
12. Effect	Spoke in tongues (Acts 2:4; 10:44-46)	Rejoiced (Acts 8:39; 16:33-34)

1 Corinthians 12:13

For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

The preposition “by” in English is *en* in Greek and may be translated “by,” “with,” or “in.” This preposition is used every time baptism “with the Holy Spirit” is mentioned. When one is baptized in water into the body of Christ, it can also be said that he is baptized “*en*” the Holy Spirit. Jividen says:

This does not mean that water baptism is the same as the technical phrase “baptism with the Holy Spirit” predicted by John and promised by Jesus. The ...chart shows some of their differences. Even though water baptism is closely connected with the Holy Spirit, it cannot be understood as “baptism with the Holy Spirit” promised by Jesus.²⁷

Baptism in water, even in the case of the apostles, would not take the place of or be a substitute for Holy Spirit baptism. Neither would the Holy Spirit baptism alone be sufficient. As apostles, they first had to be baptized with water (Matt. 3:11; Luke 7:29-30; Acts 1:22-23). Even in the case of the household of Cornelius, Peter commanded them to be baptized in water (Acts 10:48).

The Holy Spirit Baptism Promised

John the Baptist said, “As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire” (Matt. 3:11). Notice that the apostles were present at this point (Acts 1:22-23).

Jesus promised the baptism with the Holy Spirit to the apostles.

Note Acts 1:

¹The first account I composed, Theophilus, about all that Jesus began to do and teach, ²until the day when He was taken up *to heaven*, after He had by the Holy Spirit given orders to the apostles whom He had chosen. ³To these He also presented Himself alive after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over *a period of* forty days and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God. ⁴Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, “Which,” *He said*, “you heard of from Me; ⁵for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

⁶So when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, “Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?” ⁷He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority; ⁸but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.”

⁹And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. ¹⁰And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was going, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them. ¹¹They also said, “Men of Galilee,

²⁷Jimmy Jividen, 37-38.

why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven.”

Notice that the promise was not made to all mankind, nor to a multitude, nor to the “hundred and twenty,” but **Jesus made this promise to the apostles alone**. As the chapter ends the apostles gathered in an upper room to consider a replacement for Judas Iscariot. The lot fell on Matthias, and he was “added to the eleven apostles” (Acts 1:26). The word “apostles” is the last noun in chapter one and has been the specified group throughout the chapter. Remember that the New Testament was not broken into chapters until the fourth century (Codex Vaticanus). If we read the last few verses of chapter one with the first four verses of chapter two, we can easily see who received the baptism with the Holy Spirit:

²⁴And they prayed and said, “You, Lord, who know the hearts of all men, show which one of these two You have chosen ²⁵to occupy this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place.” ²⁶And they drew lots for them, and the lot fell to Matthias; and he was added to the eleven apostles.

¹When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. ²And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. ⁴And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.

⁵Now there were Jews living in Jerusalem, devout men from every nation under heaven. ⁶And when this sound occurred, the crowd came together, and were bewildered because each one of them was hearing them speak in his own language. ⁷They were amazed and astonished, saying, “Why, are not all these who are speaking Galileans?” ⁸“And how is it that we each hear them in our own language to which we were born?

¹⁴But Peter, taking his stand with the eleven, raised his voice and declared to them:

³³“Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He [Christ] has poured forth this which you both see and hear.

Notice that the ones speaking were Galileans (cf. Acts 1:9-11), Peter taking his stand with the other eleven apostles. Their speaking was a demonstration of the power of the Spirit (Acts 1). The Lord poured forth the ability to speak in tongues as a fulfillment of the promise of the Holy Spirit.

Why Were the Apostles Baptized With the Holy Spirit?²⁸

1. That they might “sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel” (Matt. 19:28; Luke 22:28-30). They received power when the Holy Spirit came upon them (Acts 1:8).

²⁸ Gus Nichols, *Lectures on the Holy Spirit*, 102-106.

2. That they might be empowered to function as apostles (Acts 1:8; Luke 24:49). This supernatural power would help them reveal and confirm the gospel, the New Testament for all time to come (Heb. 2:3-4).
3. That they might be able ministers of the New Testament (2 Cor. 3:6).
4. That they might be enabled to fulfill the promise of Jesus of doing greater works (John 14:12). They preached the gospel, bringing people into the kingdom.
5. That they might confirm the word of the gospel (Heb. 2:3-4).
6. That the Spirit might be their Comforter or Helper (John 14:16; Rom. 15:4; 1 Thess. 4:18).
7. That the Spirit might teach the apostles and bring to their remembrance all things (John 14:26; cf. Neh. 9:20, 30).
8. That the Spirit might guide them into all truth (John 16:13).
9. That the Spirit might show the apostles things to come (John 16:13). He foretold of the apostasy and predicted false teachers would come (2 Thess. 2:4; Acts 20:29-30; 1 Tim. 4:1-3).
10. That they might be enabled to lay hands on others to confer the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit on them (Acts 8:18). The apostles Peter and John could do what Philip could not do (Acts 8:14-19).
11. That they might make known the terms of forgiveness of sins (John 20:23).
12. That they might have the keys of the kingdom (Matt. 16:18-19) “to bind on earth what has been bound in heaven and loose on earth what has been loosed in heaven.”
13. That the apostles might be enabled as “witnesses” (Luke 24:48). Jesus told them to tarry for this power. They could testify as to the power God had given them (Acts 2:33).

“One function of an apostle was to be a witness; and a witness cannot have a successor. If a prominent and important witness in a legal case dies, we can’t have some neighbor, or anyone else, come in and take his place, and testify in his stead. A witness can’t have a successor! Since that is one of the prominent functions of an apostle—to be a witness—it follows therefore that we can no other apostles. These New Testament apostles are our only apostles.... They are on their thrones (Luke 22:30).... They have ruled, and do now rule; they have made inspired decisions and they are on record. Every decision necessary, every truth ever to be revealed, has been revealed by them and has been confirmed. This truth needs no revelation; and it needs no new miraculous confirmation. Thus, my friends, when we follow the apostles’ teaching in the New Testament, we are being governed and guided by the Holy Spirit through them. The New Testament apostles are our apostles—and we don’t need any living apostles’.... This was one purpose of the Holy Spirit baptism for the apostles (Acts 2:1-4).

Gus Nichols, *Lectures on the Holy Spirit*, 106.

14. That they might be enabled to preach the gospel to all nations (Matt. 28:19). There was a language barrier in their way, until the Spirit gave them power to speak in the tongues of the nations (Acts 2:1-14).
15. That they church or kingdom might be established. The Holy Spirit came (Acts 2:1-4) upon them with power; and the kingdom came “with power” (Mark 9:1; Acts 1:8). Peter revealed that the Holy Spirit fell on us at the beginning (Acts 11:15). We might ask, “the

beginning of what?” It is the beginning of the church or the kingdom, which came with power (Mark 9:1).

16. That they might be inspired. They spoke as the Spirit gave them utterance. The gospel is preached through the power of the Holy Spirit sent from Heaven (1 Pet. 1:12). All Scripture is given by inspiration (2 Tim. 3:16-17).
17. That they might be aided in the carrying out of the Great Commission. Whatever was required in the matter of revealing and confirming the great Gospel of Jesus Christ. He guided them into all the truth (John 16:13) for all time (Jude 3).

The Case of Cornelius

Cornelius and his household were also baptized with the Holy Spirit, but not for the purpose of revealing and confirming the New Testament, as were the apostles. The purpose of the baptismal measure of the Holy Spirit at the house of Cornelius (Acts 10, 11) differed in several ways from that which happened on Pentecost. As Peter began to speak (11:15), the Holy Spirit fell on all who were listening to the words (Acts 10:44). “All” is comprised of Cornelius’ kinsman and close friends (10:24), “many people” (10:26). They were Gentiles, both male and female, who received this “baptism.” This baptism fell on people who did not expect it (neither the Gentiles nor the Jews). The result of this “falling” was that they spoke in tongues (as did the apostles on Pentecost). Though eight years or so elapsed between Pentecost and this event, Peter could not think of any other case like it. He refers back to the baptism of the Spirit “at the beginning” (Acts 11:15; Acts 2:2-3). This was a miraculous outpouring (10:46), a visible manifestation of God’s power.

The Real Point of This Manifestation

The Spirit did not, nor does He now, have to fall on people to get them to obey the gospel—that is, people who were already understood to be involved in gospel provisions and promises. But these Gentiles did not understand themselves to be acceptable; neither did the Jews think Gentiles were acceptable. It took a miracle, in the first place, to get the Gentiles to send for a Jew, a preacher like Peter. The angel said to him, “Send men to Joppa and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter; who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved” (Acts 11:13-14). Cornelius sent for the preacher; but it took a miracle—the housetop vision—to convince Peter to go over there! Finally, the Spirit said, “Go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them” (10:20). So it took a miracle to make the Gentile send for a Jew; and a miraculous work was required on the preacher himself (a Jew) to get him ready to go to these Gentiles. But when he arrived he said, “God hath showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean” (10:28). These two miracles were for the purpose of getting the preacher and the unsaved together.

Gus Nichols, 109-110

Opening his mouth, Peter said: “I most certainly understand now that God is not one to show partiality, but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right is welcome to Him.” (Acts 10:34-35)

When Peter went back to the church at Jerusalem, the Jewish Christians took issue with him about his preaching to the Gentiles: “You went to uncircumcised men and ate with them” (11:3). Their view was that the Gentiles were unclean and unsuitable for the gospel. Only after Peter explained the matter in “orderly sequence” (chronological order and detail), did they hold their peace and remark that God has also granted to Gentiles the repentance that leads to life (11:4, 18). It took miracles to confirm to the Jewish nation that the gospel, as revealed and confirmed by the Holy Spirit, included Gentiles.

Comparing the Baptism of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and at the House of Cornelius

Points for Comparison	Pentecost (Acts 2)	Cornelius (Acts 10, 11)
Recipients	Apostles, only Jews	Only Gentiles
Miraculous Power	Speaking in tongues, Many signs and wonders (2:43); could lay hands on others (8:18)	Spoke in tongues; no other gift documented
When they received the power of the Spirit	After years of training (Acts 1:22-23)	Before they had heard the gospel (Acts 11:15)
Expectation	Expected as a fulfillment of the promise “not many days from now (1:4-8)	Unexpected to both the Jews and the Gentiles
Purpose	To reveal and to confirm the Word (Acts 2; Heb. 2:3-4)	To bear witness that the Gentiles can be saved (Acts 11:15-18; cf. Eph. 2:11-16; 3:6) Fulfills Joel 2:28
Salvation	Enabled apostles to preach the gospel; those who heard and obeyed were forgiven or saved (Acts 2:38, 41, 47)	Said to the Jews that Gentiles had been granted (the opportunity of) repentance that leads to life (Acts 11:18). Gentiles ordered to be baptized after hearing the Word (10:48)

One Baptism Now

In 59 AD, Paul wrote, “*There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, **one baptism**, one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all*” (Eph. 4:4-6). The Spirit baptized the household of Cornelius in ca. 41 AD. The gospel was to go to the Jew first, and then to the Greek (Rom. 1:16). By the time that Paul said in 59 AD there is one baptism, the baptism of the Holy Spirit had served its purpose and was no longer needed. The one baptism left is water baptism, which is for all people in all places for all time (Mark 16:15-16; Matt. 28:19; 1 Pet. 3:21; Titus 3:3-7).

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND MIRACULOUS GIFTS

Words That Denote Miracles:

“**Sign**” (*semeion*) in the New Testament is used of miracles taken as evidence of divine authority. Sometimes it is translated as “miracle” (Luke 23:8 NIV; Acts 4:16, 22 NASB, NIV).

“**Wonders**” (*teras*) translates a Greek word from which the word *terror* comes. It denotes something unusual that causes the beholder to marvel. Although it usually follows “signs,” it sometimes precedes it (Acts 2:22, 43; 6:8) or occurs alone (as in Acts 2:19). Whereas a sign appeals to the understanding, a wonder appeals to the imagination. “Wonders” are usually presented as God’s activity (Acts 2:19; 4:30; 5:12; 6:8; 7:36; 14:3; 15:12), though sometimes they refer to the work of Satan through human instruments (Matt. 24:24; Mark 13:22; 2 Thess. 2:9; Rev. 13:11-13).

New Testament writers also used *dunamis*, **power** or inherent ability, to refer to activity of supernatural origin or character (Mark 6:2; Acts 8:13; 19:11; Rom. 15:19; 1 Cor. 12:10, 28, 29; Gal. 3:5; 2 Thess. 2:9; Heb. 2:4).

“**Work**” (*ergon*) is also employed in the New Testament in the sense of “miracle.” John the Baptist heard of the “works” of Jesus while he was in prison (Matt. 11:2). The apostle John used the term frequently (5:20, 36; 7:3; 10:38; 14:11, 12; 15:24).

The Gift and the Gifts

The gifts given by the Holy Spirit are not to be confused with the “gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38). The gift (*dorea*) of the Holy Spirit is the Holy Spirit Himself (Acts 2:38; 10:44-45; 11:17); but the gifts (*charisma*) were divinely imparted, supernatural powers from the Holy Spirit (Rom. 1:11; 12:6; 1 Cor. 1:7; 12:4, 9, 28, 30, 31; 1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6). The Greek term *charisma* can also refer to non-miraculous gifts (Rom. 5:15, 16; 6:23; 11:29; 12:6-8; 1 Pet. 4:10-11).

Measures of the Holy Spirit:

1. **Christ** had the Holy Spirit “without measure.” John 3:34 says, “For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God; for He gives the Spirit without measure.” This implies that the Holy Spirit is at times given in a measured way.
2. The **apostles** of Christ and the household of Cornelius were baptized with the Holy Spirit (Acts 2, 10, and 11). The apostles had the ability to lay their hands on others and impart gifts (Acts 8:18; 19:6; 2 Tim. 1:6). There is no indication in Scripture that while the household of Cornelius could speak in tongues, they were also able to impart gifts.
3. **Those on whom the apostles laid their hands** received a miraculous measure of the Holy Spirit in one or more gifts (Acts 8:18; 19:6; 2 Tim. 1:6).
4. **The universal indwelling.** This is the ordinary gift of the Spirit that all Christians receive at baptism (Acts 2:38-39). This will be discussed at length in the next chapter. There is no miraculous power associated with this gift, but this gift identifies the child of God (Gal. 4:6; Rom. 8:9).

“The Holy Spirit is not something to be measured out as one would measure jars of water or bushels of wheat. He is our God and is not limited by time or space as a physical creation. He is

Spirit and does not have flesh and bones or other aspects of this physical world. He is personality and cannot be divided.”²⁹

The word measure is connected to the Holy Spirit only one time (John 3:34), and in that context it says that the Jesus had the Holy “without measure.” This is a reference to unrestricted power working in Jesus.

This chart is adapted from a chart by Jimmy Jividen:³⁰

Who	How	Why
Apostles and Cornelius	Baptism of the Holy Spirit	Confirmation from God
Selected Christians	Laying on of the apostles’ hands	Receive miraculous spiritual gifts to benefit the church
All Christians	By baptism	As a seal of our sonship and an earnest of our inheritance

While the Scriptures themselves do not outline various measures of the Holy Spirit, these categories do fit what the Scripture says about the Holy Spirit.

The apostles on the day of Pentecost received the baptism of the Holy Spirit to show God’s confirmation (Heb. 2:3-4) of the gospel message of salvation Peter and the eleven were preaching. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the household of Cornelius showed God’s confirmation of Peter’s preaching to the Gentiles and of their acceptance by God for membership in His church (Acts 2:33; 10:46,47; 11:17-18).

Certain Christians, but not all, received various spiritual gifts through the laying on of the apostles’ hands in the first century. The first people outside the apostles to work miracles were men on whom the apostles had laid their hands. Stephen and Philip were faithful Christians before they were endowed by the laying on of the apostles hands. Notice this timeline:

Acts 6:3	select seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom.
Acts 6:4	Stephen was a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit
Acts 6:6	after praying, the apostles laid their hands on them
Acts 6:8	Stephen, full of grace and power, performed great wonders and signs
Acts 8:6	Philip performed signs in Samaria and “great miracles” (8:13)

Acts 8:14-17 Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent them Peter and John, who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. For He had not yet fallen upon any of them; they had simply been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they *began* laying their hands on them, and they were receiving the Holy Spirit.

Acts 8:18-19 Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was bestowed through the laying on of the apostles’ hands, he offered them money, saying, “Give this authority to me as well, so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit.”

²⁹ Jividen, *Alive in the Spirit*, 68.

³⁰ Jividen, *Alive in the Spirit*, 62.

The Samaritans had already been baptized (8:12) but had not received the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit. There is a difference between the miraculous and the ordinary gift of the Holy Spirit. Note these additional examples cited by Jividen.³¹ In Acts 19, Paul taught 12 men who had known only the baptism of John. They did not know that there was a Holy Spirit. They were baptized in the name of Jesus, and Paul laid his hands on them. They began to speak in tongues and prophesy only after their baptism and the laying on of hands (19:6).

The church at Rome, which had no recorded visit from an apostle up to the time Paul wrote, still needed to have spiritual gifts imparted to them by Paul (Rom. 1:11). At the same time, the church at Corinth was “not lacking in any spiritual gift” after an apostle had been present with them for more than a year (1 Cor. 1:11).

Timothy possessed “the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands” (2 Tim. 1:6). Some people reading 1 Tim. 4:14 have mistaken the source of the gift. This verse reads “Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you, which was bestowed on you through prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by the presbytery.” They believe that Timothy’s spiritual gift came through the elders hands. This problem is solved, however, by examining the two prepositions:

1 Tim. 4:14	“with”	Accompaniment The prophetic utterance was the means; it was incidentally accompanied by the laying on of the elders’ hands
2 Tim. 1:6	“through” the laying on of my hands	Means by which the gift was given

Every baptized believer receives the “gift of the Holy Spirit” in the ordinary, indwelling sense. This is how Stephen could be “full of the Spirit” yet not be able to work signs and miracles until the apostles laid their hands on him. This universal indwelling is not a miraculous measure of the Spirit. It is not limited to the first century but extends to all whom the Lord calls (Acts 2:38-39). This gift identifies one as a child of God (Gal. 4:6) and is an earnest of our inheritance (Eph. 1:13-14). We will discuss this more in a later lesson.

The Various Spiritual Gifts:

1 Corinthians 12 mentions nine spiritual gifts, miraculous in nature. Concerning these gifts, Paul observes:

⁴Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. ⁵And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord. ⁶There are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all *persons*. ⁷But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

¹¹But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills.

Jimmy Jividen notes:

³¹ Jividen, 63.

The spiritual gifts were from the Holy Spirit. They were not all the same. Different Christians possessed different gifts. The diversity of the gifts was not a sign of holiness of the receiver but of the sovereign will of the Spirit who gave the gifts. The purpose was for the common good of all in the body.³²

The Lord gave gifts to build up the collective whole. He did not endow every Christian with the same abilities. Just as a body has different parts, so the body of Christ is endowed with a variety of gifts, each of which was important to the whole. Unfortunately, many immature Christians at Corinth had become puffed up over their particular gifts.

God gave these gifts to spiritually immature Christians to help them grow to maturity, not because they had already arrived at maturity (Acts 8:14-18; 19:6). Spiritual gifts were no evidence of spiritual superiority, deeper dedication, or greater closeness to God. Paul told the immature Corinthians:

And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to infants in Christ. ²I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able *to receive it*. Indeed, even now you are not yet able, ³for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men? (1 Cor. 3:1-3)

The nine gifts of 1 Cor. 12:8-11:

⁸For to one is given the **word of wisdom** through the Spirit, and to another the **word of knowledge** according to the same Spirit; ⁹to another **faith** by the same Spirit, and to another **gifts of healing** by the one Spirit, ¹⁰and to another the **effecting of miracles**, and to another **prophecy**, and to another the **distinguishing of spirits**, to another *various* kinds of **tongues**, and to another the **interpretation of tongues**.

1. *The Word of Wisdom*. An infant church would need wisdom.
2. *The Word of Knowledge*. There would be need for truth and getting the facts accurately. This inspired, miraculous knowledge is mentioned in 1 Cor. 13:2, 8.
3. *Faith*. This is miraculous faith, so as to remove mountains (1 Cor. 13:2). This is not the common faith which comes through hearing the word (Rom. 10:17). The Corinthians already had saving, gospel faith (1 Cor. 1:21). This miraculous faith served the Divine purpose in the first century.
4. *Gifts of Healing*. Some could heal miraculously, immediately, and completely. Apparently some elders were given this capability (James 5:14-15). This healing was not like the kind of healing that now takes place. When Jesus healed the sick, he healed lepers, the maimed, those with unclean spirits, the blind, the deaf, and all kinds of diseases (Matt. 15:29-31; Mark 7:31-37; John 7:23; Acts 3:7-11). People could see changes immediately. Jesus did not require a person to be present at a healing service to be healed. He could heal from afar (Matt. 8:5-13). One could see great differences between actual healing and the pretended healing of fakers today or even the sorcery of one like Simon (Acts 8:9-11).
5. *Working of Miracles*. Jesus stilled the raging storm, walked upon water, turned water into wine, cursed a barren fig tree, and fed thousands from very little food. His apostles could do the works that He did (John 14:12; Mark 16:14-20). These works were the signs of an

³² *Ibid.*, 68.

apostle (2 Cor. 12:12). Modern apostles are called “liars” and “false apostles” (2 Cor. 11:13-15; Rev. 2:1-2).

6. *Prophecy*. Prophecy was the ability to “speak forth” from God, speaking by inspiration of God. The disciples at Ephesus could prophesy (Acts 19:6) and so could the daughters of Philip (Acts 21:9). Apparently several men and women at Corinth could prophesy. Mark, Luke, Stephen and Philip were also prophets.
7. *Discerning of spirits*. In Acts 5:1-14 Luke gives the example of Peter discerning the lie that Ananias and Sapphira told. In the days before the New Testament was written, the ability to discern truth and error in others was valuable. Today we are to try them by the written word (1 John 4:1-6; Isa. 8:20; 2 Tim. 3:15-17).
8. *Tongue Speaking*. Jesus promised that his disciples would “speak with new tongues” (Mark 16:15-20). In Acts 2:1-11 the Holy Spirit enabled the apostles to speak in tongues (languages) of the people visiting from various nations. They heard the apostles speak in their own tongue (language), in which they were born. The household of Cornelius and the twelve at Ephesus spoke in tongues (Acts 10:46; 19:6). Speaking in tongues was a gift, but a gift that had to be controlled (1 Corinthians 14).
9. *Interpretation of Tongues*. This is the ability to serve the congregation by telling them what the tongue speaker (who spoke in a foreign language) has said. If no one understood what is said, then of what value was his speaking? One who speaks in a tongue should pray that he can interpret (14:13). Paul said, “In the church I desire to speak five words with my mind so that I may instruct others also, rather than ten thousand words in a tongue” (14:19). Tongue speakers were not allowed to address the church unless an interpreter was present (14:27-28).

Some Principles Related to Miracles

1. *Miracles were performed in the name of Jesus*. Jesus told his apostles that if they ask anything in His name, He will do it (John 14:14). Only the apostles were present at this time. When the seven sons of Sceva used Jesus’ name to cast out a demon, they acted presumptuously and without authority (Acts 19:13-15). Jesus denies knowing those who are lawless (Matt. 7:21-23). Peter and John, apostles, healed the lame man at the Temple in the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 3:1-16; 4:11-12).
2. *Miracles were not performed for money*. Jesus taught his apostles to freely give (Matt. 10:8), when it came to casting out demons, cleansing lepers, healing the sick, and raising the dead. Those who had miraculous power did not use it to grow wealthy, to build empires, or to start their own churches. Peter condemned Simon for his greediness (Acts 8:18-24).
3. *Miracles were not a “cure all.”* Jesus believed in physicians (Matt. 9:12; Mark 2:17; Luke 5:31). Luke was the beloved physician (Col. 4:14) and remained so throughout his life. Paul urged Timothy to use wine medicinally (1 Tim. 5:23). Paul did not always heal his companions (2 Tim. 4:20), and he was not always himself healed (2 Cor. 12:7-8). The use of healing was not just for the benefit of the healed; it was used to confirm the Word. Owen Olbricht notes, “Paul did not recommend faith and prayer to Timothy to heal him, but rather medicine as a remedy. If faith alone can heal, then Paul gave Timothy the wrong advice. If Paul could have healed Timothy and Trophimus but did not, then he did them a great

injustice....Healing must have been done only as a sign when such was needed to attract unbelievers or to confirm the message was from God.”³³

4. *Miraculous gifts were not a license to ignore the commandments of the Scriptures.* 1 Corinthians 14 reveals that the unfettered use of miraculous gifts were destructive to the unity and the effectiveness of the church at Corinth. In fact, the miraculous gifts were not “more excellent” than love (1 Cor. 12:32-13:13). Here are some restricting principles in 1 Corinthians 14:

- greater is one who prophesies than one who speaks in tongues, unless he interprets, so that the church may receive edifying (14:5).
- So also you, since you are zealous of spiritual *gifts*, seek to abound for the edification of the church. (14:12)
- let one who speaks in a tongue pray that he may interpret. (14:13)
- in the church I desire to speak five words with my mind so that I may instruct others also, rather than ten thousand words in a tongue. (14:19)
- Let all things be done for edification. (14:26)
- If anyone speaks in a tongue, *it should be* by two or at the most three, and *each* in turn, and one must interpret; ²⁸but if there is no interpreter, he must keep silent in the church; and let him speak to himself and to God. (14:27-28)
- Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others pass judgment. (14:29)
- But if a revelation is made to another who is seated, the first one must keep silent. ³¹For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all may be exhorted; ³²and the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets; ³³for God is not *a God* of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints. (14:30-33).
- The women are to keep silent in the churches; for they are not permitted to speak, but are to subject themselves, just as the Law also says. (14:34)
- If anyone thinks he is a prophet or spiritual, let him recognize that the things which I write to you are the Lord’s commandment. ³⁸But if anyone does not recognize *this*, he is not recognized. (14:37-38).
- Therefore, my brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy, and do not forbid to speak in tongues. (14:39)
- But all things must be done properly and in an orderly manner. (14:40)

³³ Olbricht, *The Holy Spirit: Person and Work*, 139.

DOES ANYONE HAVE MIRACULOUS GIFTS TODAY?

When people claim to speak from God and claim to work miracles to prove that their claim is true, Christians have a right and the duty to test those claims (1 John 4:1; Rev. 2:2). Many persons are arising today claiming to have miraculous gifts, saying that the miraculous gifts of the Bible are for people today. Citing such passages as Mark 16:17-20; John 14:12,13; and Hebrews 13:8, they think that there are no differences between the first century and the present. Our purpose is to ask why God gave miraculous gifts, how people got them, if they would cease, and what differences are there between modern faith healers and the healing one can read about in the New Testament.

The Argument from Purpose

First, the Lord gave men the power to work miraculous gifts in order to confirm the preaching of the gospel by the apostles and prophets (Mark 16:20; Heb. 2:3-4). These miraculous signs were proof or guarantees that they were speaking God's Word with God's blessing. God gave Moses a miraculous rod for this same purpose (Ex. 4:1-5), "that they may believe that the Lord God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath appeared unto thee." The writer of the book of Hebrews, however, tells us that the preaching of Christ and His apostles "was confirmed" by such signs and wonders (Heb. 2:3-4). The confirmation spoken of here is like that of a governmental seal upon a legal document; once the confirmation has been made, further proof is never needed. Now since the preaching of the gospel "was confirmed" in the first century, it no longer needs confirming. There is no longer a need for miracles. It also needs to be said that Jesus promised that all truth would be revealed to the apostles (John 16:12, 13; Acts 20:27; 2 Tim. 3:16,17; 2 Pet. 1:3; Jude 3). This revelation is complete and once for all; God is no longer inspiring men to reveal new truth. If this is the case, no miraculous signs are needed today.

The Argument from Access

Second, miraculous, spiritual gifts were given to the apostles directly by Christ Himself (Matt. 3:11; Acts 1:1-8). In Acts 2 the Holy Spirit was indeed poured out upon the apostles. Paul too received apostleship and power from Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 11:5; Gal. 2:11-17); Paul displayed the "signs" of an apostle (2 Cor. 12:12). The only persons "baptized with the Holy Spirit" other than the apostles were the household of Cornelius (Acts 10-11:16). But this happened to them before Peter began speaking to them and before they were believers in Christ (Acts 11:4,15). This baptism with the Holy Spirit took place to convince the Jews and Peter that the Gentiles were also granted repentance (Acts 11:15-18). No one else, however, is ever mentioned as being able to work miracles unless the apostles laid hands on them (Acts 2:43; 3:6; 5:12-15; 6:5-8; 8:5,6). A close reading of Acts 8 shows that while Philip had received power from the apostles, he could not pass it on to the Samaritans. Only the apostles could give these powers to others. (Note also Acts 19:6 and 2 Tim. 1:6.) If only the apostles could give these miraculous gifts, then after the apostles died and those on whom the apostles laid their hands died, the miraculous gifts would cease to be. This agrees with the purpose of the gifts coming to an end.

The Argument from Prophecy

Third, Paul clearly states the miraculous will cease in 1 Cor. 13:8-13. Paul used three chapters in I Corinthians to discuss miraculous gifts. In the middle of this discussion he declares that love is more important than any miraculous gift (13:1-3). Then he describes love (13:4-7). In the final section of the chapter (13:8-13), he shows that love is greater because it will outlast the spiritual gifts. Paul said, "Prophecies will fail, tongues will cease, and (miraculous) knowledge will be done away." These gifts cause Paul to say that "we know in part and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away" (9,10). These miraculous gifts were to cease when "that which is perfect is come."

What is "that which is perfect"? Since "perfect" means complete, it stands in contrast with that which is in part. The "part" is miraculous knowledge and prophecy, which revealed the Word of God orally. It is most natural, then, to realize that the complete or "perfect" is the full revelation given to man in the written record of the New Testament. This complete revelation of God's will, "the faith once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3), came into general possession about the end of the first century. When the complete revelation came, the partial revelation was done away. Since the New Testament records the complete will of God (2 Tim. 3:16, 17; 2 Pet. 1:3), there is no longer a need for miraculous gifts in the twentieth century to give us any more revelation.

1 Cor. 13:13 says: "But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love." Love will always be love; that's why it is the greatest. Faith, however, will turn to knowledge; and hope will turn to sight. Paul said, "For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he *already* sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it" (Rom. 8:24-25). Hope, then, is temporal. In spite of this hope continues on, stays, or abides, while the spiritual gifts cease. This means that the spiritual gifts must cease prior to the time the Lord returns, for when the Lord comes, hope will become sight. When Jesus comes, what we believe will come to be what we know. Faith abides while the gifts cease.

Knowledge and prophecy cease when the perfect comes.

Faith hope and love continue on until the Lord comes.

The Argument from Experience

Fourth, the last reason for denying miraculous gifts today comes from experience with those who claim these gifts. Just as there was a difference between Simon the sorcerer and Philip in Acts 8:5-13, so there is today a difference between so-called faith healers and the miracles Jesus and His apostles performed. Note these things about the biblical miracles:

(1) Jesus healed everyone who came to him without fail (Matt. 4:23,24; 8:16; 9:35; 12:15; 14:34-36; 15:29-31; Acts 5:16).

(2) Jesus healed everyone completely; no one came back in a few days still suffering. Crippled persons who had lost arms and legs and eyes were made whole, so that the crowd could see immediate physical changes (Matt. 15:29-31; Mark 7:31-37; John 7:23; Acts 3:7-11). (Maimed persons are crippled with arms or legs missing. (See Matt. 15:29-31; 18:8,9.) Who is putting on arms and legs today? I know no one!

(3) The enemies of Jesus admitted that he could work miracles (John 11:46-48; Acts 4:16), but today faith healers are regarded as frauds.

(4) Jesus and His apostles did not use their miraculous powers to become wealthy as Simon the sorcerer did and as some do today (Matt. 10:8-10; Acts 3:16). The apostles earned their living from their work, but they did not live lavishly. (See I Corinthians 9.)

(5) Jesus did not require a person to be present at a healing service to be healed. He could heal from afar (Matt. 8:5-13).

(6) Jesus did not require faith of everyone before He healed them; some did not believe and some could not believe, for they were dead (Luke 7:11,12; 8:54,55). Jesus worked miracles to cause people to believe (John 11:42; 20:30,31; Acts 13:11,12). Jesus never said that He could not work miracles because unbelievers were present. Jesus never made excuses, for He healed everyone. Some today claim to be able to heal but fail, and then they make excuses for their failures. The truth is that they never had the power to heal.

(7) Jesus did not require great stirrings of emotions or a special atmosphere to heal anyone, but modern, fake faith healers always have them.

(8) The apostles did not exalt themselves or use their powers to form a new denomination. Rather they pointed to Christ and to the one true church that Jesus died for. They taught against division (Acts 4:10-12; 1 Cor. 1:10-13).

The Holy Spirit's work was to guide the apostles into all the truth (John 16:12-13). The Holy Spirit does not lie; nor does the Holy Spirit say one thing to one person and another thing to another person. He does not cause confusion (1 Cor. 14:33). He does speak but one gospel (Gal. 1:6-9) and have but one faith (Eph. 4:5). Yet those who claim to be inspired and work miracles disagree among themselves as to what God says. They often contradict the plain, Bible teaching on baptism, on the plan of salvation, on Jesus Christ, and on the nature of the church.

They also break God's commandment by having women preachers (1 Cor. 14:34-37; 1 Tim. 2:8-11). Does the Holy Spirit lead men to disobey clear teachings of the Word of God? Is the Holy Spirit trying to confuse men? These things are not the Holy Spirit's work but the Devil's (Matt. 7:15-23; 2 Cor. 11:13-15; 2 Thess. 2:8-12).

The Test from God

Sometimes false teachers have apparent powers too. God permits them this power to test us to see if we will follow His Word (Deut. 13:1-5). If a man teaches a gospel that is different from the true gospel, he is to be accursed (Gal. 1:6-9). If a man does not have the doctrine of Christ, he does not have God and is not to be followed or supported (2 John 9-11). Christians, beware!

Study the Word of God and prove all things (1 Thess. 5:21, 22; 2 Tim. 2:15). Always follow the teachings of Jesus in the New Testament (John 12:48), for it truly has the whole counsel of God, all that pertains to life and godliness, and is able to completely furnish man unto every good work (Acts 20:27; 2 Tim. 3:16, 17; 2 Pet. 1:3). Since we have the Lord's Word, we do not have miraculous gifts today!

THE INDWELLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

That the Holy Spirit dwells within the Christian is admitted by all who understand and love the Scriptures. How the Holy Spirit dwells in the Christian is a matter of controversy within the Lord's church. The Holy Spirit either (1) really and truly dwells in us as faithful Christians in a personal manner, or (2) He dwells in us in some other manner, or (3) else He does not dwell in us at all. Since the third view denies many plain and easily-understood passages, we turn our study to the first two views.

Gus Nichols said, "I see no reason for disturbance among us over this question so long as all believe and teach that the Holy Spirit does dwell in faithful and obedient children of God in some way. The honest but misguided interpretations which may be made in trying to show how the Spirit dwells in us should not, by those on either side, disrupt brotherly love and unity, and ravage our brotherhood. There are many reasons why one's position as to how the Holy Spirit dwells in us should never be made a test of fellowship. The only reason which needs to be stated now is, that all who obey the gospel from the heart, the promise will be fulfilled as God planned it, whether or not we understand 'how' the Spirit dwells in us."

Lectures on the Holy Spirit, 155-156.

The fact that we are ignorant about how our human spirit dwells within our body does not mean that we do not have a human spirit. Failing to understand all we want to know about the human spirit is not essential to possessing a soul or a human spirit.

Does The Holy Spirit Dwell in Us?

- Acts 2:38-39 Peter *said* to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself."
- Acts 5:32 "And we are witnesses of these things; and *so is* the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him."
- Rom. 5:5 the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.
- Rom. 8:9-11 "However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. ¹⁰If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness. ¹¹But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you." Note: This is written to a church upon which no apostle had laid his hands and which possessed no miraculous, spiritual gift (Rom. 1:11).
- 1 Cor. 3:16 Do you not know that you are a temple of God and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you?
- 1 Cor. 6:19 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own.

- 2 Cor. 1:21-22 Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is God, who also sealed us and gave *us* the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge.
- Gal. 4:6 Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!”
- Eph. 1:13-14 In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of *God’s* own possession, to the praise of His glory.
- 1 Thess. 4:8 So, he who rejects *this* is not rejecting man but the God who gives His Holy Spirit to you.
- 2 Tim. 1:14 Guard, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the treasure which has been entrusted to *you*.
- Jude 19 These are the ones who cause divisions, worldly-minded, devoid of the Spirit.

What is the Gift of the Holy Spirit?

Acts 2:38 promises the “gift of the Holy Spirit” to those who repent and are baptized. Some think that this is a gift that the Holy Spirit gives (such as miraculous gifts or salvation); others hold that the Spirit himself is what is given. The Scriptures do answer this question:

- Acts 5:32 “And we are witnesses of these things; and *so is* the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him.”
- Rom. 5:5 the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.
- 1 Cor. 6:19 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own.
- 1 Thess. 4:8 So, he who rejects *this* is not rejecting man but the God who gives His Holy Spirit to you.

To Whom Has The Holy Spirit Been Given?

While most Bible students acknowledge that God gave His Spirit to the apostles (John 14:17, 26; 15:26; 16:12-13) and to those upon whom the apostles laid their hands (Acts 8:18; 19:6), they question whether the Spirit has been given in a non-miraculous sense to others.

- John 14:17 I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; ¹⁷*that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you.*
- Luke 11:13 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?”
- John 7:38-39 He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, ‘From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.’” But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet *given*, because Jesus was not yet glorified.
- Acts 2:38-39 Peter *said* to them, “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself.”

- Acts 5:32 “And we are witnesses of these things; and *so is* the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him.”
- Gal. 4:6 Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!”⁷ Therefore you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God.
- Gal. 3:2 did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith?

The general rule is that the world cannot receive the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is given to those who ask; however, asking for the Spirit is not the only requirement for receiving the Spirit. Obedience is also required (Acts 5:32), including faith, repentance, and baptism in the name of Jesus for the forgiveness of sins.³⁴ The Holy Spirit does not dwell in us separate and apart from the Word, for the Holy Spirit will not go where the Word has not gone. The Holy Spirit dwells in us conjointly with the Word, for it is by means of the Word that the Holy Spirit causes us to be born again (1 Pet. 1:22-25).

At this point, we recognize that some brethren understand that the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is not literal but “only through the Word.” We must be careful here not to confuse the Holy Spirit with the Word. The Holy Spirit is the source of the Word, the gospel (2 Pet. 1:20-21). The Spirit of Truth will never act contrary to the Truth. The Holy Spirit, however, is a Person; and the Word is His message (Eph. 6:16; 1 Cor. 2:11-14). There is no reason to believe that every time the word “Spirit” is used, the Spirit is speaking about something other than Himself. We must be careful not to read into Scripture that which is not there.

We hold these truths about the Word of God

1. The Word of God is inspired by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 2:11-14; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:20-21). The Holy Spirit moved the apostles and prophets to write the things found in the New Testament.
2. The Holy Spirit today communicates through the written Word alone and does inspire men or move on their hearts with new revelation (1 Cor. 13:8-10).
3. Because the Word of God is inspired, it partakes of the character of God and is inerrant, utterly trustworthy in all it says (John 10:35).
4. The Word of God stands authoritative and true throughout time (Matt. 24:35; 28:18-20; John 12:48; Jude 3). The teaching of Jesus will judge us in the last day.
5. The Word of God is final and all-sufficient as delivered to the apostles in the first century (John 16:12-13; Jude 3; Eph. 4:4-6; 2 John 9-11; Gal. 1:6-9). To ignore, change, or substitute other things for God’s Word is sinful and leads to division and condemnation.

By all-sufficient, we mean that the word of God contains all the instruction that is necessary for eternal life and for godliness (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:3; Psalm 19:7-11).

There are three views regarding the indwelling:

1. The Holy Spirit dwells in us figuratively and representatively only through the Word.
2. The Holy Spirit dwells in us literally and personally conjointly with the Word.

³⁴ Olbricht, 167-168.

3. The Holy Spirit dwells in us separate and apart from the Word.

Arguments Favoring an Indwelling “Only through the Word”

1. We have knowledge of the Holy only through the Word.
2. The Holy Spirit dwells within those who have obeyed the Gospel, and it is by the Word that the hope and provisions of the Gospel are known.
3. The Holy Spirit does not continue to dwell in those who live in rebellion to God’s will; and God’s will, as far as we are concerned, is the Word.
4. The Holy Spirit is called the “Spirit of Truth” (John 14:17). Making truth known to man is inherent in the Holy Spirit’s work. As far as we know this is fundamental to what He is; it is a part of His life, nature and character. It is impossible, except in thought, to separate a person from a quality of character which He possesses; and consequently, wherever the Holy is, that part of his nature which caused him to be called the “Spirit of Truth” is there as well.

Z. T. Sweeny, *The Spirit and the Word* (Nashville: Gospel Advocate), 118, 126.

“The above Scriptures clearly teach that when the words, thought and the gospel control us, Christ dwells in us; that when we receive the gospel by the hearing of faith, the Spirit dwells in us.”

James Baird noted: Brother Sweeney has listed sixteen things which the Holy Spirit might accomplish by a direct, personal indwelling and then showed that it was promised that the word of God would do each of these things: “give us faith, give us light, give us wisdom, convert us, open our eyes, give us understanding, quicken us, save us, sanctify us, purify us, cleanse us, make us free from sin, impart a divine nature, fit us for glory, strengthen us.” “Inasmuch as the word can do all of these things, and it is not claimed that a direct indwelling of the Spirit makes any new revelations...of what use, then, would a direct indwelling be? We are necessarily, therefore, led to the conclusion that in dealing with his children today, God deals with them in the same psychological way that he deals with men in inducing them to become children.”

The Holy Spirit	Activity	The Word
Eph. 3:16	Strengthens	Eph. 6:10-17; 2 Tim. 2:1
2 Thess. 2:13	sanctifies	John 17:17
Tit. 3:5	Saves	James 1:21
1 Tim. 3:16	Justifies	Rom. 5:1; 10:17
Heb. 10:15	Witnesses to us	John 5:39
Rom. 5:5	Prompts us to love God	John 3:16
Rom. 8:9, 16	Leads us as God’s Sons	Psalm 119:105
Rom. 8:11	Raise us up from the dead	Hear his voice John 5:28,29

James W. Zachary, *The Witness of the Spirits* (Nashville: Gospel Advocate, 1954), 14, 16.

“This theory of the direct, abstract, immediate, inconceivable, independent, mysterious, and supernatural influence of the Spirit on the heart of man has been and is today the heart, soul and life of nearly every false religion beneath the vaulted sky...In opposition to the theory already stated and as a proposition embodying the truth on this question, I affirm that Reason and the

Bible teach that the Holy Spirit wields an influence over the mind of man only through medium (i.e., the Word) except in some miracles.” *James Baird noted, “If the Holy Spirit exerts an influence over the mind other than through the Word, I would not know how.”*

Foy E. Wallace Jr., *The Mission and the Medium of the Holy Spirit* (Wallace Publications), 7. The *modus operandi*—the mode, the medium, the how—is the Word of God. “The Spirit of God is ever present with his truth, operating in it, and through it, and by it,” said Alexander Campbell in the debate with Rice. This statement is incontrovertible and unassailable and covers the whole issue. Independent of the Word we could never know “whether there be any Holy Spirit.” All the knowledge of God, Christ, salvation and spiritual influence comes only from the Word of God. Apart from the inspiration of the apostles and prophets it is impossible for spirit to communicate with spirit except through words. God and Christ never personally occupied anyone; and for the same reason the Holy Spirit does not personally occupy anyone.

The Holy Spirit is a substantive Being but the influence is metonymical—that is, the use of one word for another in naming the cause for the effect, which means the Word is representative of the Spirit, as it is with the indwelling of God and Christ. It cannot be the case of any of the three—God, Christ or the Spirit—a literal, substantive, personal indwelling in a direct supernatural movement upon the soul.

Guy N. Woods, Tract: *How the Holy Spirit Dwells in the Christian*, 20.

It is truly a strange form of exegesis which interprets the scripture which says the Father and the Son are in us, as indicating a representative indwelling, but which affects to see in a similar passage regarding the Holy Spirit, an actual indwelling. It is a conclusion which results from disregard of the personality of the Holy Spirit. One **person**, though he be in another by his teaching and influence, cannot literally inhabit another. It is simply and only the denominational doctrine of the direct operation of the Spirit on the heart of the sinner applied to the Christian. It is no less false because advocated by some brethren, or because of the transition from sinner to saint.

Arguments Opposing an Indwelling Only through the Word

1. “And ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38). Here the gift of the Holy Spirit was to be after repentance and after baptism. But the receiving of the Word came before baptism. “Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them three thousand souls” (Acts 2:41). It follows, therefore, that receiving the word was not the same as receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit promised by Peter to the penitent and obedient (Acts 5:32). Peter put the gift of the Spirit after salvation, after baptism (Acts 2:38). People receive the gospel, the Word, before they are baptized and saved. James 1:21 says we are to receive the implanted word which is able to save your souls. The gospel is for sinners, for the unsaved. The gift of the Spirit comes “because we are sons of God” and saved (Gal. 4:6). Hence, the reception of the “word” by the sinner is not the gift of the Holy Spirit promised by Peter.

2. If the gift of the “word” is the same as the “gift of the Holy Spirit” promised by Peter (Acts 2:38), why did he not say what he meant? Why did he not say, “And ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Word?”
3. It is argued that “Let the word of Christ dwell in your richly” in Colossians 3:16 and “be filled with the Spirit” in Ephesians 5:18 mean the same thing. Consequently, the Spirit dwells in us by the “word’s” dwelling in us. Actually, the Ephesians already had the “gift of the Spirit” dwelling in them when they were baptized (Eph. 1:13-14; 4:30). What Paul is urging is that the Ephesians not get their excitement from wine as the heathen did but to be filled with the Spirit by speaking in song to one another. By this means the Scriptures, the word, could dwell in them and give them hope, peace and encouragement. Paul is not telling them to be filled with something they already have (i.e., the gift of the Spirit); he is telling them to let the Spirit influence them through their singing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs which were filled with the word of God.
4. It is impossible to escape the truth that the world was not to receive the Holy Spirit (John 14:17), and yet any man can learn passages of Scripture. Nikita Khrushchev (who ruled the USSR during the cold war) trained early in life in the Russian Orthodox Church and could quote large portions of Scripture. His knowledge of the Word did not keep him from ruling an atheistic nation.
5. There is no evidence that leads us to deny the literal intent of the passages which teach the Holy Spirit indwells in us. There is no evidence that we must understand them “figuratively.” We can understand literally that the Holy Spirit dwells in us.
 - a. An Omnipresent Being, the Holy Spirit can be anywhere without being anywhere else to a lesser degree (Psalm 139:7-8).
 - b. We cannot understand fully how our own spirit dwells within our bodies but believe it actually so. The Holy Spirit’s dwelling within us presents no greater mystery.
6. The Holy Spirit actually came “into” people in the Old Testament, though for a special purpose. Ezekiel 2:2 says, “He set me upon my feet.” Therefore there is no basis for denying a personal indwelling in the New Testament.
7. The Holy Spirit dwelt within Christ, who was both man and God. If He dwelt with Christ in his humanity, can He not dwell within humanity today?
8. Evil spirits dwelt within men during the days of Christ and the early church (Mark 5:8). This establishes that one spirit can dwell within another spirit. We cannot believe that unclean spirits (demons) can do what the divine Holy Spirit is incapable of doing.
9. Some argue that Eph. 5:18 and Col. 3:16 are parallel verses and thus mean that the Holy Spirit indwells the Christian through the word. But this is a wrong conclusion. As pointed out by Thomas Warren in *A Resource and Reference Volume on the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit*, p. 1320, it is a “logical fallacy” to hold to such a view. It would be like saying “the dog dwells in the house, the cat dwells in the house, therefore, the dog dwells in the house through the cat”. Actually both dwell in conjunction in the house..

For these reasons, we suggest the Holy Spirit dwells within us actually and personally. Furthermore, He does by His indwelling what the Scripture says He does. The Scriptures refer to His work with the Christian. Any attempt to separate what He does, while dwelling within, from the Word of God and its influence is virtually impossible.

The Holy Spirit is *Not* the “Word”

While the Word came by the Holy Spirit, the Word should not be confused with the Spirit. The Spirit is the producer, and the Word is the product. While we admit freely that the Spirit makes His presence and will known to us by means of the Word, we also realize that the Spirit acts through other means and not through the Word alone. For instance, the Spirit intercedes for us with prayers (Rom. 8:26-27). The Spirit raised Jesus from the dead and will one day give life to our mortal bodies (Rom. 8:11). Ephesians 3:16 notes that the Spirit strengthens our inner man in answer to prayer. Each of these actions of the Spirit on the Christian is by means other than the Word. We know this, because the Word says so. While the Spirit will never act inconsistently to the teaching of His Word, the Word itself testifies that He does things His Word cannot do.

Comparing the Indwelling through the Word with a Personal Indwelling

“Word” Indwelling	“Personal, Actual” Indwelling
Word preached before repentance and baptism	Gift of Spirit received after repentance and baptism
The word dwells in our hearts (Col. 3:16)	Our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19-20) the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us (Rom. 5:5)
The word strengthens us (Rom. 16:25-27)	God strengthens us in the inner man through His Spirit in answer to prayer (Eph. 3:16) and does it according to the power that works within us. (We should not assume here that the “us” here includes only miraculously endowed brethren, since all were sealed with Holy Spirit of promise—Eph. 1:13-14. The power of Eph. 3:16 is the same power of 3:20-21 which God uses to answer prayers)
The word tells of the Holy Spirit as a seal and earnest of our inheritance	After hearing and trusting the word of truth, the gospel of our salvation, God seals us with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance (Eph. 1:13-14)
The Word tells of the Holy Spirit praying and interceding for us (Rom. 8:26-27)	The Holy Spirit actually prays and intercedes for us (Rom. 8:26-27)
Word tells us of the Holy Spirit raising Jesus and giving life to our mortal bodies (Rom. 8:11)	The Spirit who dwells in us actually raised Jesus and actually gives life to our mortal bodies (Rom. 8:11)

A Personal Indwelling Conjointly With the Word

The Holy Spirit can and does literally, personally, actually dwell within Christians, making their bodies a temple of the Holy Spirit. His indwelling is non-miraculous and non-emotional. He communicates to the Christian only through the written Word, but the Spirit personally prays and strengthens Christians. The personal presence of the Holy Spirit does not diminish the influence of His word; and the Word teaches that the Holy Spirit personally indwells. The Scriptures teach that the Holy Spirit personally indwells conjointly and consistently with the Word.

Belief in the personal indwelling does not deny the all-sufficiency of the Word of God. The all-sufficiency of the Word of God was never intended to replace prayer or God's answer to prayer.

Belief in the personal indwelling does not mean one must embrace Calvinism or charismatic beliefs. In conversion, the Holy Spirit acts only through the Word; we deny any direct operation of the Holy Spirit in conversion. This, however, does not mean that after conversion the Holy Spirit cannot intercede for Christians (Rom. 8:26-27) or cannot strengthen Christians in answer to prayer (Eph. 3:16). As to Calvinism and Charismatic religion, Jimmy Jividen observed, "We must not be guilty of reacting so strongly to error on one extreme that we fall into error on the other extreme" (*Alive in the Spirit*, 86, footnote 2).

Belief in a personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit gives room to the Providence of God. While it recognizes the all-sufficiency of the Word of God, it realizes that the *Scriptures* point to the activity of God outside the Scriptures and in the normal walks of life. One does not deny the all-sufficiency of Scripture if one recognizes that angels are ministering spirits to saints (Heb. 1:13). It is true that we know nothing about angelic ministry, except what the Word teaches; but we do not deny that angels minister in some fashion we don't understand. In the same way, we understand the Holy Spirit dwells in us personally (1 Cor. 6:19). We do not know anything about how or what He does in that indwelling, except what the Word tells us; but we do not deny it either.

Belief in the personal indwelling deals fairly with the Scripture. It does not feel the need to interpret literal statements figuratively and strain the meaning. It accepts by faith the plain meaning of the text, without giving credence to heresy.

We certainly do not question that God works through His all-sufficient Word. We do question whether God meant the Word to do all that He intends to do. We also question the assertion whether the only means God can act today is through the Word.

An Abuse of the Doctrine of the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

Sometimes brethren abuse the doctrine of the personal indwelling by attributing too much to the work of the Holy Spirit. To hear some speak, every profound thought that enters their minds has been directly planted by the Spirit. They regard this direct "moving" on the heart as an evidence of relationship with God.

Why some people would argue for the Spirit "moving their hearts."

- this reduces human responsibility and accountability
- this allows them to alter the Bible's teaching on human freedom

- this makes God a respecter of persons (Acts 10:34)
- this makes “feeling” the proof of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit
- this holds that miracles are performed today against the obvious evidence that they are not
- this minimizes or sets aside God’s authority through the Word and allows them to do as they desire

How this overstatement of the nature of the Holy Spirit’s indwelling can be expressed:

- “He dwells within us in a way or to a degree so that we know of His indwelling by a certain emotional pattern.”
- “Christian growth is a matter of what He does; we should not make an effort to grow as Christians; good qualities are the ‘fruit of the Spirit.’”
- There is a direct revelation or moving from God to us by the Holy Spirit.
- God is performing miracles today.³⁵

³⁵ Adapted from James O. Baird, “Indwelling of the Holy Spirit,” OCC Lecture notes, n.d.

**Some Considerations of the History of the Doctrine
of the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit among Our Brethren**
by James O. Baird

As the above outline indicates, the teaching of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit has been abused, like any other Christian truth, in two ways. Furthermore, the form of the abuse of this doctrine has been related to the philosophical and religious trends of a particular time. On the whole, Protestantism, bulwarked by Calvinistic theology, has over-stated the work of the Holy Spirit.

It was reaction from this abuse that established, as a part of restoration history, one train of thought which we consider to be an overstatement in another direction. Calvinism taught that a man could not have what was considered “saving faith” unless the Holy Spirit operated directly on his heart to make it possible. Also, even a true knowledge of God’s will was understood to be a result of the Holy Spirit’s direct influence upon the human understanding.

The restoration leaders took a strong stand against error and rightfully so. They emphasized that the knowledge of God’s will, revealed through the Bible, was the means which God used to open the sinner’s heart; that man with his reason was capable of understanding and receiving this word. The ability of the Word to create faith was a cardinal principle of the restoration leaders and one for which we owe them a great debt of gratitude. This is a Biblical principle (John 20:30-31; Rom. 10:17).

Our forebearers of the restoration were aided in this position regarding the Bible’s ability to influence the mind and hence the decisions of man, by a philosophical point of view which had had great influence both in Europe and America. This was the work of John Locke. Both Alexander Campbell and his father studied at the University of Glasgow where Locke’s influence, through a man by the name of Thomas Reid, was particularly strong. Campbell referred to Locke as “the Christian philosopher.”³⁶

Locke’s best known work was “An Essay on Human Understanding” in which he advocated primarily that man, above all else, was a creature of reason; and the mind, as the center of reason, determined human actions. Furthermore, man reasoned about and held in his understanding that which came through his senses.

The religious application of this in opposing Calvinism is apparent. Whereas the Calvinists would await a “saving faith,” Campbell and the other restoration leaders taught a turning to the Bible, a use of one’s senses in the receiving of its message into one’s mind, and with its truths accepted, acting upon them!

From this application of the work of the Holy Spirit in conversion, it was an easy step to hold the position that the work of the Holy Spirit in the Christian was identical. That is, the word influenced the non-Christian’s direction to become a Christian through the agency of the word. Similarly, the Christian studies the word and by the influence of the word studies, prays, and is active in good works. However, this is the crux of the entire issue. Granted that the word is the seed of the kingdom and granted that there is no clear way to establish the Holy Spirit’s indwelling apart from the Word, is the process in both instances identical?

One line of logic, which bulwarked the “word alone” view, as Richardson called it, was a psychological notion that could be readily argued in Campbell’s day, but which would not be as

³⁶ Alexander Campbell, *The Christian Baptist*, 82.

readily accepted today. This was the oft-stated premise that “the only way one person can influence another person is through words.” If this is absolutely true, then it would follow that both in the Christian and non-Christian all that could be done was done by words. However, today, most people would accept the fact that whereas words, as conveying ideas, comprise a fundamental way in which one person can have an effect on another, one person’s influence on another is not limited to this. For instance, a mother’s presence in the kitchen has kept many a small boy away from the cookie jar. How often a husband and wife communicate by a gesture or glance!

At any rate, the accusation was hurled against the restoration leaders that they did not believe in the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The strength of their opposition to the false doctrine of the direct operation of the Holy Spirit in conversion led some credence to this.

There were some that took the application of this notion to the extreme as it applied to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in Christians. Describing their views, Alexander Campbell’s best known biographer, Richardson, writes:

“Hence, while his opponents raised a clamor against him as denying (the operation of the Holy Spirit), some of those who were professed advocates of the Reformation [*i.e.*, the Restoration movement, PDS] were led to construct a word-alone theory which virtually dispensed with the great promise of the gospel—the gift of the Holy Spirit to believers.

“They were disposed to resolve religion entirely into a system of moral motivity; to disbelieve the actual indwelling of the Holy Spirit in believers; to deny special providences and guidings, and by consequence, the efficacy of prayer. Taking Locke’s philosophy as the basis of their system, and carrying his ‘Essay on Human Understanding’ along with the Bible in their saddlebags, they denied even to its Creator any access to the human soul except by ‘words and arguments,’ while they conceded to the Author of evil a direct approach, and had more to say in their discourses about the laws of human nature than about the gospel of Christ.”³⁷

Campbell himself, maintaining strongly the role of the word in conversion, was ambiguous as to whether or not the Holy Spirit’s indwelling the Christian was by the word alone.

In 1835 A. Campbell published *Christianity Restored*, which contained rules for Bible interpretation and articles on several fundamentals of the Christian faith. One of the longer of the latter essays was entitled, “Dialogue on the Holy Spirit,” which in the style of the day, was a series of imaginary conversations between Austin and Timothy, in which Austin was inquiring as to the nature of the influence of the Holy Spirit in “converting and sanctifying men.” By the series of questions and answers, Campbell brilliantly set forth the power of the Holy Scriptures on the mind of man and how through the influence of the Scriptures man’s life was altered as a man was a creature of reason.

In 1838, the second edition of the book was issued under the title, *The Christian System*. In this book the “Dialogue on the Holy Spirit” was omitted. In his biography of Campbell, Richardson attributed this to the fact that in writing this piece he “was led to employ abstractions and philosophical distinctions in relation to ‘more and physical power,’ etc. with a view, as he said, to make himself understood but which only opened the way to new misunderstandings. As these distinctions were unknown to Scripture, and some of the conclusions built upon them

³⁷ Robert Richardson, *Memoirs of Alexander Campbell*, Volume 1, J.B. Lippencott and Co., 1870, 355-356.

seemed peculiarly liable to misconceptions, Thomas Campbell quite disapproved of the “Dialogue” as a full and just presentation of the subject, and it was from respect to his judgment that Mr. Campbell subsequently omitted it from a volume labeled, ‘Christianity Restored’ in the first edition of which it had been inserted.”³⁸

On the whole, however, most of the brethren known as restoration leaders held that the Holy Spirit dwelled within Christians in a personal sense. In his commentary on Romans, Jimmy Allen says, “Many prominent men in the Restoration Movement believed in the personal indwelling of the Spirit. Some of them were Thomas Campbell, Walter Scott, Robert Richardson, T. W. Brents, Robert Milligan, and Moses Lard.”³⁹

Other quotes are listed as an appendix. However, in all honesty, this dual approach to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit exists to this day. H. Leo Boles says in his great work on the Holy Spirit that as God and Christ dwell representatively in the Christian through the Holy Spirit, so the Holy Spirit dwells representatively within the Christian through the Word.

Even granting the use of the phrase “representatively,” it would appear that to maintain that the Holy Spirit dwells representatively within the Christian by the word, as God and Christ dwell representatively by the Holy Spirit, is an inadequate parallel because the Holy Spirit is a person representing other persons, but the word is not a person....

It is important today to give careful consideration to the Bible’s teaching on the Holy Spirit. Conditions are ripe today for an abuse of the doctrine of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit by attributing a role to the Holy Spirit which He does not fill. As our own brother W. E. Jones has pointed out, these conditions are:

- The current of religious emotion is strong today. There seems to be a special need to *feel* something.
- Many are talking about alleged weaknesses in the church today, *i.e.*, the need for renewal; crossing lines of fellowship, etc.
- There is a tendency to soft-pedal teaching on the Holy Spirit lest division be multiplied by differences of opinion.

Conclusion

It would appear that some of our good brethren are emphasizing the position that they do because of a just fear of an abuse of the teaching regarding the Holy Spirit and the disastrous effects this can have on the church. In my judgment, a better course is to hold by faith that the Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit dwells actually within Christians. Furthermore, that this indwelling, as far as our understanding can perceive, both because of the nature of the Holy Spirit and the truth He sets forth, cannot be separated from the word.

We should hold this view with kindness, firmness and love and be very wary of those who, by overstatement, wrest the Holy Spirit’s work.

Appendix A

T. W. Brents, *The Gospel Plan of Salvation* (Nashville, Tenn.: McQuiddy Printing Co.), 639.

(Commenting on Romans 8:9-11) “That this passage is applicable to Christians now is admitted by all. . . . What can this language mean? We can not say that God will quicken our

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 355.

³⁹ Jimmy Allen, *Survey of Romans* (Searcy, Ark.: Harding College, 1973), 378-379.

mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth figuratively in us; and to say that He will quicken our mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth metonymically in us would be no better. Nor will it do to say that God will quicken our mortal bodies by his disposition that dwelleth in us. To our mind, the passage admits of one interpretation, and only one; namely, that the Spirit of God—the Holy Spirit—dwells literally and really in every Christian, and by it God will re-animate his body in the great day.”

Moses E. Lard, *Commentary on Romans* (Delight, Ark.: Gospel Light), 156-157.

(On Romans 5:5) “‘Because the love of God has been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which was given us.’ To us Jews, to us Gentiles, to all who are justified. The Holy Spirit is given to us by being sent into our hearts to dwell there. This is the fact asserted by the Apostle and no false exegesis must be allowed to negative it. Inexplicable it is, I grant; but it must not therefore be rejected. The argument on hope, then, stands thus: The Holy Spirit is given to us as an earnest of our future inheritance, Eph. 1:14, 15. By the Spirit our hearts are filled with love.”

Robert Milligan, *Scheme of Redemption* (St. Louis: Bethany Press), 283.

“But if it (the Holy Spirit) operates on the heart of the Christian only by means of the word of truth, and through the ordinary events of God’s providence, then why does it sustain to him a relation different from that which it sustains to the unbeliever? Why is it given to us; why does it dwell in us?”

J. W. McGarvey and Philip Pendleton, *Commentary on Thessalonians, Corinthians, Galatians, and Romans* (Delight, Ark.: Gospel Light).

“And this hope is not so fickle as to disappoint or mock him, but gives him triumphant certainty, because the love which God has toward him fills his heart, being inwardly manifested to him by the Holy Spirit, who is given to all believers—at the time of their regeneration.”

Walter Scott, *The Evangelist*, No. 2, Vol. 2, Feb. 4, 1833, 48.

“...The gift of the Spirit means no more than the Spirit itself.”

E. G. Sewell and David Lipscomb, *Questions Answered*, ed. by M.C. Kurfees, Gospel Advocate, 317-318.

Sewell states, “Peter certainly meant more than that the Word should be received, for they had by faith already received the truth of the gospel, and their repentance and baptism was still further reception of the Word into their hearts and their lives; and then the promise of the Holy Spirit was something beyond this, the reception of which depended upon their obedience to the gospel.... The gift of the Holy Ghost is mentioned in this passage we understand to be the Holy Spirit himself, which everyone that obeyed the commands given had the promise of receiving.”

Thomas B. Warren, *20th Century Christian*, 1966, 10.

(in reference to the above statement by E. G. Sewell) “During all the period of my life during which I have been aware of the problem, I have agreed basically with the...statement by E. G. Sewell.”

Jimmy Jividen, *Alive in the Spirit* (Nashville: Gospel Advocate, 1990), 85.

The Holy Spirit does not dwell in a Christian by His teaching and influence only. If that were the case, then an infidel who happened to be a Biblical scholar would have the Holy Spirit dwelling in him.

No one can deny that the teachings of one person can have an effect upon another person. There is a word to describe this: “influence.” It is not “indwelling.” Just saying that “influence” means “indwelling” does not make it so. It is such uncritical definitions of words that lead to confusion and misunderstanding.

It may be true that one person cannot inhabit another person in a physical sense. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit, however, is not physical. He does not take up space nor is He limited by time. He is God.

...The nature of God is such that He can dwell in a man if He so desires. He is not limited by physical matter or human limitations. We are really limiting God when we suggest that He can only dwell in man through His influence and teachings.

Owen Olbricht, *The Holy Spirit: Person and Work* (Delight, Ark.: Gospel Light, 1999), 177.

We have the Spirit in us if we are sons of God. We become sons of God by being born again by God’s Word when, through faith, we are baptized into Christ (Gal. 3:26-27). The giving of the Spirit is not like the receiving of the Word of God; it is not something we accept, learn from, or develop within us. God gives us the Spirit (Luke 11:13; Acts 5:32; Rom. 5:5; 1 Cor. 6:19; 1 Thess. 4:8; 1 John 3:24). God sends Him into our hearts because we have become His children (Gal. 4:6).

THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

The Significance of the Indwelling Spirit to the Christian

As a Representative of God

God dwells in us (1 John 4:12-15; John 14:23; 2 Cor. 6:16)

Jesus dwells in our hearts by faith (Eph. 3:17)

The Father and Son dwell in us through the Spirit (1 John 4:12-15; Eph. 2:22)

As a Proof of our Sonship

Gal. 4:6 Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!”

Rom. 8:9 However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.

As a Seal

A signet containing a distinctive mark which stood for the individual who owned it. The earliest seals found so far date to before 3000 B.C. Seals varied in shapes and sizes. Some were round and were worn around the neck. Others were rings worn on the finger. The mark was made by stamping the seal into soft clay. Tamar asked for Judah’s signet as collateral on a pledge he made (Gen. 38:18). Joseph was given pharaoh’s ring when he was placed in command of the country (Gen. 41:42), symbolizing Joseph’s right to act with the ruler’s authority.

A seal was a mark of possession, ownership. It is official and genuine. A seal also signified security and authority (Matt. 27:66).

Eph. 1:13-14 In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of *God’s own* possession, to the praise of His glory.

Eph. 4:30 Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

2 Cor. 1:21,22 Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is God, who also sealed us and gave *us* the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge.

1 Thess. 5:19 Do not quench the Spirit;

As a pledge or earnest (arrabon)

The Greek word *arrabon* is a first payment on a purchase which obligates the purchaser to make further payments. A payment made in advance, it secures legal claim to an article or validates a sales contract before the full price is paid. God has given believers the Holy Spirit in their hearts as an earnest or pledge of the salvation to come ([2 Cor. 1:22](#); [5:5](#); [Eph. 1:14](#)).

2 Cor. 1:21, 22 Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is God, who also sealed us and gave *us* the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge.

2 Cor. 5:5 Now He who prepared us for this very purpose is God, who gave to us the Spirit as a pledge.

Eph. 1:13-14 In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of *God's* own possession, to the praise of His glory.

The Personal Comfort and Assurance of the Indwelling

The Holy Spirit is always with me and knows what I am going through. The Holy Spirit's presence is a reminder to me not to defile the temple. The Holy Spirit given as a seal and a pledge give me confidence and assurance of my salvation.

The Work of the Holy Spirit in the Life of the Church

Everett Ferguson⁴⁰

The Spirit is present in and energizes many activities in the church.

1. *Baptism*. “For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body” (1 Cor. 12:13). “He saved us... through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit” (Tit. 3:5). The Holy Spirit is at work in baptism. He imparts the new life of Christ and becomes the bond uniting Christ with Christians and Christians with one another.
2. *Sanctification*. “You were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God” (1 Cor. 6:11). As “Holy” Spirit, his work is to make holy, to sanctify (2 Thess. 2:13; 1 Pet. 1:2). That begins in baptism and is carried forward in the Christian life.
3. *Christian growth*. The Spirit produces the fruit of holiness (Gal. 5:22-23). In the natural world, growth is often slow and imperceptible, and it requires the presence of certain conditions. So it is in the spiritual realm: growth is often unspectacular and requires the right growing conditions, but it is the result of the influence of God's Spirit responded to in faith amidst the circumstances of life.
4. *Love*. The Holy Spirit brings God's love to human hearts (Rom. 5:5; Gal. 5:22-23). The Spirit is the Spirit of God (Rom. 8:9), and God is love (1 John 4:16), so the close association between the Spirit and love is to be expected. Love is the highest and greatest of God's gifts (1 Cor. 13:13). Where the Spirit is, there is love.
5. *Joy*. The Holy Spirit inspires joy in those who receive the word of the gospel (1 Thess. 1:6).
6. *Morality*. The indwelling Holy Spirit serves as the basis of Christian moral conduct (1 Cor. 6:19).
7. *Serving God*. All Christian service to God is done in the Spirit and is made possible by the new life of the Spirit (Rom. 7:6).
8. *Worship*. Christian worship is now performed “in the Spirit” (John 4:23-24; Phil. 3:3) and is the offering of “spiritual sacrifices” (1 Pet. 2:5). Specific acts of corporate worship are offered “in the Spirit” or “with the spirit” (1 Cor. 14:15).
9. *Prayer*. Prayer is offered “in the Spirit” (Eph. 6:18; Jude 20). The presence of the Spirit within makes possible the address to God as “Abba, Father” (Gal. 4:6). “The Spirit intercedes” when “we do not know how to pray as we ought” (Rom. 8:26).

⁴⁰ Everett Ferguson, *The Church of Christ* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1996), 109-110.

10. *Preaching*. The Holy Spirit is active in the preaching of the gospel (1 Thess. 1:5). He inspired the prophets (1 Pet. 1:11), and the word of God is his sword in the warfare with evil (Eph. 6:17; cf. Rev. 1:16).
11. *Leadership and ministry*. The Holy Spirit qualifies and calls persons for leadership and ministry in the church (Acts 20:28; 1 Cor. 12:4, 28).
12. *Guarding the truth*. The indwelling Holy Spirit makes possible the defense and safekeeping of the apostolic teachings deposited in the church (2 Tim. 1:14).
13. *Enduring suffering*. It is by the Holy Spirit that Christians are able to meet persecution and suffering (1 Pet. 4:14). “If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.”
14. *Creating unity*. The Spirit creates reconciliation and unity (Eph. 2:14-18, 21-22; 4:3-4) and this out of diversity (1 Corinthians 12). The Spirit is the principle of unity in the church.
15. *Spiritual power*. The above points may be summed up in the thought that the Holy Spirit of God is the source of spiritual strength for living the Christian life (Eph. 3:16). All these things represent but the first fruits of the Spirit (Rom. 8:23), for the power of the Spirit will result ultimately in resurrection (Rom. 8:11).

We have emphasized what the Spirit does and so what participation in the Spirit means. The Spirit is God’s gift and assistance to his people in becoming what he wants them to be.

The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit **Hugo McCord**

I. Representative Indwelling?

A sincere gospel preacher writes that “Satan entered into Judas” (Luke 22:3) “representatively, by putting the “idea to betray Jesus into the heart of Judas.” Both Luke (22:3) and John (13:27) wrote that Satan “entered” (*eiselthen*) Judas. If one assumes that the entrance was not actual, but only representative, still the parallel does not follow that the Holy Spirit only dwells “representatively,” “not directly,” in Christians.

Essential to salvation are the “words” of the Holy Spirit (cf. John 6:63; Acts 11:14), but John wrote that believers were to receive more than words, namely the “Spirit” (John 7:39). As a result of that inspired promise, about 3000 penitent believers, after they had “gladly” received “the word” of the Spirit, and, after their baptism, received both remission of sins and “the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38-41).

One could say that the penitent believers had received the Spirit representatively when they heard “the word” from Peter’s mouth, but if they received the Spirit representatively when they heard the “word,” what was “the gift of the Holy Spirit” which came later? The subsequent “gift of the Holy Spirit” could not have been a gift from the Holy Spirit, but the gift was “the Holy Spirit whom God” gives to “them that obey Him” (Acts 5:32).

The Spirit’s word is in Christians (Col. 3:16), and also the Spirit is in Christians (1 Cor. 6:19). It is impossible for the Spirit’s word to dwell in a physical body, but the Spirit dwells in a Christian’s physical “body,” “the temple of the Holy Spirit” (1 Cor. 6:18-19).

Christians have “tasted the good word of God,” and also they are “partakers of the Holy Spirit” (Heb.6:4). Being filled with the Spirit’s words (Col. 3:16), and being filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18) go along together, but they are not identical activities. It is possible for non-Christians to be filled with the Spirit’s words, but only Christians can be filled with the Spirit (John 14:17). (The divine imperative in Ephesians 5:18 is more personal and vivid by the Greek middle voice, “Keep yourselves filled with the Spirit.”)

God dwells in Christians “through the Spirit” (Eph. 2:22), but how the Spirit dwells in Christians is not revealed, only the fact of it (Rom. 8:11). Some have objected that if the Spirit dwells in Christians, they would become deity incarnate. But the Bible still says that the Spirit dwells in Christians (Rom. 8:9).

Also, some object that if the Spirit dwells in Christians, they could not stand such a presence within them. But the Bible still says that the Spirit dwells in Christians (1 Cor. 3:16). Further, it is objected that if the Spirit dwells in Christians, he would become greatly fragmented. But the Bible still says that God gives the Spirit to them that obey him (Acts 5:32), and that if a person does not have the Spirit he does not belong to God (Rom. 8:9).

II. The Indwelling Does Not:

1. Give a Feeling. Since good Christians make the objections cited above, it is apparent that the Spirit’s indwelling is not sensory, not physically perceptible. Though all dedicated Christians keep themselves filled with the Spirit, they would not know that fact if the Bible had not told them. One can feel the effects of wine or coffee in one’s body, but the presence of the Holy Spirit cannot be felt. As far as feelings are concerned, one would not even know there is a Holy Spirit. The feeling of joy in a Christian’s heart is not because of the Spirit’s presence, but because he has obeyed the Spirit’s words about Jesus, and he goes “on his way rejoicing” (Acts 8:39).
2. Instruct. If a Christian waits for the Spirit in his body to instruct him he will remain ignorant. Instruction only comes from the Spirit’s words (Eph. 3:4; Rev. 2:7). From the day he was baptized, young Timothy had the indwelling of the Spirit (2 Tim. 1:14), but instruction came through two Pauline letters (1 Tim. 4:1, 13; 2 Tim. 1:1).
3. Lead. If a person is not led by the Spirit of God, he is led by the devil (Rom. 8:14; 1 John 3:8). But the Spirit does his leading, not by his indwelling, but by his words (Eph. 3:4; Psalm 73:24; 119:105). If the Spirit’s indwelling leads a Christian, then if he makes a mistake it is the Spirit’s fault.
4. Strengthen. Spiritual strength comes from the Spirit (Eph. 3:16), but not by his indwelling. Though all the Ephesian Christians had received the seal and the earnest of the Spirit (Eph. 1:13-14), six chapters were written to them that they might be “strong in the Lord and in the power of his might” (6:10). In their case, however, they failed to avail themselves of the Spirit’s strengthening medium. Instead, they grieved the Spirit who had sealed them (4:30), and unless they repented, Jesus rejected them (Rev. 2:1-7).

At Corinth many Christians were “weak and sickly” (1 Cor. 11:30), though they had the indwelling of the Spirit (1 Cor. 3:16). At Ephesus some young Christians were strong, not because the Spirit dwelt in them (though he did, 1 John 3:24; 4:13), but because the Spirit’s “word” dwelt in them, by which “word” they had conquered the Evil One (1 John 2:14). If

Christians today wait for the indwelling of the Spirit to strengthen them they will shrivel and atrophy.

*While I hesitate to disagree with my beloved teacher, Hugo McCord, whom I deeply respect, I feel I must point out some things on Eph. 3:16. The context of this verse shows that Paul was **praying** that “He [God] would grant [give] you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man.”*

The fact that Paul was praying for strength rather than pointing the brethren to the “word” is significant. While there can be no doubt that the Word strengthens (Rom. 16:25-27), Paul did not here point the Ephesians to the Word for strength but prayed for it. God, in answer to prayer, was to strengthen them “with power” through (by means of) the Spirit.

*The Spirit was the medium through which God was to strengthen them with power. This strengthening took place in the inner man. In Ephesians 3:20-21 Paul said, “Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.” Paul said that God can do abundantly more than we ask or think according to the **power** that works “within” us. Paul had previously prayed that they would have their eyes opened to what is the surpassing greatness of his power towards us who believe (1:19).*

We are not suggesting here either Calvinism or charismatic religion. What we are saying is that when we pray for strength, God answers that prayer through the Spirit. The fact that Paul prays for this strength rather than pointing to the Word as the agent of the strengthening implies that the Spirit is here acting in answer to prayer in a way conjointly with the Word.

--Phil Sanders

5. Bear Fruit. The Spirit wants nine luscious spiritual qualities combined into one fruit in every Christian: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Gal. 5:22-23). Every Christian at his baptism receives the indwelling of the Spirit, but some do not cultivate all the excellent fruitage that the Spirit's words are capable of producing.

How does the Spirit affect those nine noble qualities in a Christian's life? Not by his indwelling, else all would have them in abundance. In fact, some non-Christians, with no Spirit indwelling, do a better job than some Christians in making themselves loving, joyful, peaceful, patient, kind, good, faithful, gentle, with self-control. On a practical basis, fruit-bearing Christians have found that those admirable characteristics adorn a person as a direct result of their applying the Spirit's teachings on love (1 John 4:19), joy (Phil. 4:4), peace (Phil. 4:9), patience (Eph. 4:1-2), kindness (Eph. 4:32), goodness (Tit. 3:1), faith (Rev. 2:10), gentleness (Tit. 3:2), and self-control (Phil. 4:5).

It is sad that some sincere gospel preachers think that the indwelling of the Spirit helps in a Christian's producing the fruit of the Spirit. Some use the word “urge” or “an inner nudge” to

describe what they think the Spirit's doing inside of them. One preacher writes that there is a "supernatural, spiritual, divine influence of the Holy Spirit today" in Christians. Another writes that "it takes more than the written Word of God and the strong will of a man to live a life of holiness. True holiness is only possible because of the help that God gives through the Holy Spirit."

All such statements say that God was unable or did not care enough to write a book that would supply "us all things that pertain to life and godliness" (2 Pet. 1:3). Furthermore, all such statements are a denial that "all Scripture" furnishes "the man of God" completely "for every good work" (2 Tim. 3:16).

III. The Indwelling Does:

1. Certify the Christian's Acceptance by God. Abraham had an outward, physical certification that he was accepted by the Lord, namely, his circumcision (Rom. 4:11). A Christian has an inward, spiritual certification, a seal, a *sphragis*, namely the indwelling Spirit, that he has been adopted into God's spiritual family, and may exclaim, "Abba, Father" (Rom. 8:15; Eph. 1:13; Gal. 4:6). The indwelling Spirit "himself testifies" (not audibly) by his presence along "with our spirit that we are God's children" (Rom. 8:16).

The indwelling Spirit does nothing! He is mute and motionless, but he is the Christian's most precious possession, like "one pearl of great price" (Matt. 13:46) kept in a bank lockbox. The pearl and the Spirit do nothing, but both are of great value.

2. Guarantee the Christian's inheritance. The presence of the Spirit "in our hearts," said Paul, is not only a certification of our being God's children, but also his presence is a guaranty, God's own down payment if you please, a pledge, an *arrobbon*, a divine promissory of "an imperishable and unstained and never-fading inheritance, reserved in heaven" (2 Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:13-14; 1 Pet. 1:4). A promissory note in a lockbox, like a certificate of adoption, does nothing, but it is of inestimable value!

But God's promissory note is conditional on a Christian's being "faithful unto death" (Rev. 2:10). Christians are still free, moral agents, and they can so "grieve the Holy Spirit" (Eph. 4:30) that he is forced to leave (Jude 19). He had left the lukewarm Laodicean Christians, but he still loved them, and stood at the door of their hearts, wanting them to repent, that he might again "come in to" them (Rev. 3:30).

written by Hugo McCord on 4-28-03 (emailed message sent to many, including Phil Sanders 8/18/03)

THE GODHEAD: ONE GOD, THREE PERSONS

Biblical Support for the Trinity

Scriptures on the Oneness of God:

(1) Deuteronomy 6:4 Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!

Verse 4 is subject to various translations, though the statement is likely stressing the uniqueness of Yahweh and should be translated, “The LORD is our God, the LORD alone.” A secondary emphasis, His indivisibility, is apparent in most English translations ... This confession does not preclude the later revelation of the Trinity, for the word *God* (Elohim) is a plural word, and the word *one* is also used of the union of Adam and Eve (Gen. 2:24) to describe two persons in one flesh.⁴¹

The word for one is the Hebrew *echad* and means one in a collective sense, like one cluster of grapes rather than in an absolute sense.

The oneness of God is implied in those Old Testament passages that declare that there is no other God beside Yahweh, the God of Israel.

(2) Deuteronomy 4:35 To you it was shown that you might know that the LORD, He is God; there is no other besides Him.

(3) Isaiah 46:9 Remember the former things long past, For I am God, and there is no other; *I am* God, and there is no one like Me,

(4) Isaiah 43:10 “You are My witnesses,” declares the LORD, “And My servant whom I have chosen, In order that you may know and believe Me, And understand that I am He. Before Me there was no God formed, And there will be none after Me.”

(5) 1 Corinthians 8:4-6 Therefore concerning the eating of things sacrificed to idols, we know that there is no such thing as an idol in the world, and that there is no God but one. For even if there are so-called gods whether in heaven or on earth, as indeed there are many gods and many lords, yet for us there is *but* one God, the Father, from whom are all things, and we *exist* for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we *exist* through Him.

(6) Ephesians 4:4-6 *There is* one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.

(7) James 2:19 You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder.

Scriptures Demonstrating That God, Who Is One, Is Also Three:

Old Testament Teaching:

While there is no explicit statement in the Old Testament affirming the Triunity, we can confidently say that the Old Testament not only allows for the Triunity, but also implies that God is a triune Being in a number of ways:

(1) The name *Elohim*, translated *God*, is the plural form of *El*. While this is what is called a plural of plenitude pointing to the power and majesty of God, it certainly allows for the New Testament revelation of the Triunity of God.

(2) There are many instances where God uses the plural pronoun to describe Himself (see Gen. 1:26; 3:22; 11:7; Isa. 6:8).

⁴¹ Charles C. Ryrie, *Ryrie Study Bible, Expanded Edition*, NASB, Moody Press, Chicago, 1995, pp. 285-286.

(3) In the creation account, both God the Father and the Holy Spirit are seen in the work of creation. It is stated that God created heaven and earth (Gen. 1:1), but that it was the Holy Spirit who moved over the earth to infuse it with life in the sense of protecting and participating in the work of creation (Gen. 1:2).

(4) Writing about the Messiah, Isaiah reveals Him to be equal with God, calling Him the “Mighty God” and “Eternal Father” (Isa. 9:6).

(5) Several passages reveal a distinction of persons within the Godhead. (a) In Psalm 110:1, David demonstrates there is a distinction of persons between “LORD,” the one speaking, and the one addressed called by David, “my Lord.” David was indicating the Messiah was no ordinary king, but his own Lord, *Adoni* (my Lord), one who was God Himself. So God the first person addresses God the second person. This is precisely Peter’s point when He quotes this Psalm to show the resurrection of the Messiah was anticipated in the Old Testament. (b) The Redeemer (who must be divine, Isa. 7:14; 9:6) is distinguished from the Lord (Isa. 59:20). (c) The Lord is distinguished from the Lord in Hosea 1:6-7. (d) The Spirit is distinguished from the Lord in a number of passages (Isa. 48:16; 59:21; 63:9-10).

(6) In the Messianic prophecy of Isaiah 7:14, God made it clear that the one who would be born of the virgin would also be Immanuel, God with us.

(7) Two other passages which imply the Trinity are Isaiah 48:16 and 61:1. Here all three persons are mentioned and yet seen as distinct from each other. See also Gen. 22:15-16.

New Testament:

The case for the Triunity of God is even stronger in the New Testament. Here it can be unequivocally demonstrated the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God. Furthermore, the New Testament teaches us that these three names are not synonymous, but speak of three distinct and equal persons.

(1) *The Father is called God* (John 6:27; 1 Pet. 1:2).

(2) *Jesus Christ, the Son is declared to be God.* His deity is proven by the divine names given to Him, by His works that only God could do (upholding all things, Col. 1:17; creation, Col. 1:16; John 1:3; and future judgment, John 5:27), by His divine attributes (eternality, John 17:5; omnipresence, Matt. 28:20; omnipotence, Heb. 1:3; omniscience, Matt. 9:4), and by explicit statements declaring His deity (John 1:1; 20:28; Titus 2:13; Heb. 1:8).

(3) *The Holy Spirit is recognized as God.* He is called God in Acts 5:3-4, He has the attributes which only God can possess, like omniscience (1 Cor. 2:10) and omnipresence (1 Cor. 6:19), and He regenerates people to new life (John 3:5-6, 8; Tit. 3:5) which must of necessity be a work of God for only God has the power of life. Finally, His deity is evident by the divine names used for the Spirit as “the Spirit of our God” (1 Cor. 6:11).

Matthew 28:19 best states both the oneness and threeness by associating equally the three Persons and uniting them in one singular name. Other passages like Matthew 3:16-17 and 2 Corinthians 13:14 associate equally the three Persons but do not contain the strong emphasis on unity as does Matthew 28:19.

ONE GOD: THREE PERSONS

The Scriptures clearly and boldly teach there is only one God. Here are some statements from the Old Testament which declare this: Moses wrote in Deuteronomy 6:4, “Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!” In his prayer of thanksgiving David prayed in 2 Samuel 7:22, “For this reason You are great, O Lord GOD; for there is none like You, and there is no God besides You, according to all that we have heard with our ears.” At another time David sang in Psalm 86:10, “For You are great and do wondrous deeds; You alone are God.” Nehemiah declared in Nehemiah 9:6, “You alone are the LORD. You have made the heavens, The heaven of heavens with all their host, The earth and all that is on it, The seas and all that is in them. You give life to all of them And the heavenly host bows down before You.”

The prophet Isaiah quoted the Lord in Isaiah 45:5–7, “I am the LORD, and there is no other; Besides Me there is no God. I will gird you, though you have not known Me; That men may know from the rising to the setting of the sun that there is no one besides Me. I am the LORD, and there is no other, The One forming light and creating darkness, Causing well-being and creating calamity; I am the LORD who does all these.” In 2 Kings 19:15, “Hezekiah prayed before the LORD and said, “O LORD, the God of Israel, who are enthroned above the cherubim, You are the God, You alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth.” So it is clear the Old Testament teaches monotheism, that is, there is but one God.

In the same way, the New Testament also clearly emphasizes there is one God. The Lord Jesus in Mark 12 answered a scribe who asked Him what the foremost commandment of all was. He said in verses 29–30, “The foremost is, ‘Hear, O Israel! the Lord our God is one Lord; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.’” Jesus certainly taught there is one Lord and no other. The apostle Paul by inspiration taught in 1 Corinthians 8:4, “we know that there is no such thing as an idol in the world, and that there is no God but one.” James also said in James 2:19, “You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder.” According to Rex Turner and Don Shakelford in their book, *Biblical Theology*, there are more than forty-five passages in the Old and New Testament which express the concept that there is “one God,” there is “only one God,” and there is no other God.

How can there be one God, if all three persons are considered God?

The New Testament writers help us to understand this problem by their reference to the Godhead or to Deity. This designation “Godhead” anticipates the concept of Deity revealed in God the Father, Christ the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Although it doesn’t appear in the Old Testament, “Godhead” appears three times in the King James translation of the New Testament. Newer versions translate the words for Godhead as Deity or the Divine Nature.

This word first appears in Paul’s speech at Mars Hill in Athens. Paul said in Acts 17:29, KJV “Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man’s device.” The word “Godhead” in this passage is an adjective meaning “that which belongs to nature or status of deity, divine.” Paul was making clear that the true and living God was not like the idols of the pagan world. Since He created all things, He didn’t live in temples made with hands.

The word “Godhead” appears a second time in the King James Version in Romans 1:20. Paul said, “For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being

understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.” We have seen how the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit were all involved in the creation of the world. When we look at the how great and magnificent our world is, it is easy to see how only a supernatural, divine Being could have created it. The amazing design and harmony found within the universe points to the unity of the Godhead in purpose.

The word “Godhead” appears the third time in the King James Version in Colossians 2:9. Paul wrote, “For in him (Jesus) dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” This word “Godhead,” found in the last two passages is an abstract noun describing “the state of being God, divine in character or nature, deity.” So again we see the divine nature of God dwelling in Jesus in bodily form. This passage helps us understand that the one God is a Godhead and distinguishes the Son as having a body.

The New Testament says much more about the three persons in the Godhead. The New Testament in two passages list the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. These passages unite these three with the word “and.” The word “and” here means these three all fit in the same category. First, the Lord Jesus said in Matthew 28:19–20, “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” People are baptized in the name (singular) of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. To be baptized into Christ means we are baptized into the name of all three. When you become a Christian by being baptized into Christ, you have God as your Father, Jesus as your Lord and Savior, and the Holy Spirit as the earnest or guarantee of your inheritance according to Ephesians 1:13–14.

The second passage listing all three comes in Paul’s final greeting to the church at Corinth found in 2 Corinthians 13:14. Paul said, “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.” Each of these three persons of the Godhead bless us. They act together in unison with one purpose to bless us with their grace, love and fellowship. If Paul did not think of all three as divine, he would not have listed them together.

“How can three be one?” Consider with me the prayer of Jesus to the Father found in John 17:20–23, “I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me. The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one; I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me.” Jesus wanted His followers to be one, to be united, “just as We are one.” Just as the church can have many members yet be one body, so the Father, Son, and Spirit can united as one.

God the Father was not alone in the beginning. John 1:1–3 says, “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 came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.” So while the Father is God, the Son or the Word was God and was with God. Genesis 1:2 speaks of the Spirit “hovering” over the face of the waters, so we know all three were present in the beginning and were involved in creation. While the Old Testament doesn’t use a word describing the Godhead, some passages do recognize the fact of a plurality of

persons as the one God. For instance, Genesis 1:26, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness.” These passages necessarily show God the Father was not alone at the time of the creation.

In the same way, the writer of the book of Hebrews in Hebrews 1:8 quoted from Psalm 45:6-7. The Hebrew writer said God was speaking about His Son Jesus. God said, “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever”; and verse nine says, “You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions.” Here you have one person in the Godhead speaking to another.

The New Testament also reveals how each person in the Godhead interacted with the others and how the Father, Son and Spirit are distinct. You might remember when Jesus came to John the Baptist to be baptized. Matthew 3:16–17 says, “After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and lighting on Him, and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.’” Wouldn’t it be absurd to suggest the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit were the same person?

For instance, the Lord Jesus said to the apostles in John 14:16–17, “I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you.” All three are distinct in one passage. The Lord Jesus prayed to Father that the disciples would have another Helper or Comforter to be with them forever.

John 14:26, “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.” Here again we have three persons! The Father will send the Holy Spirit to teach and to bring to the remembrance of the apostles the things Jesus taught. Each were involved in the teaching of the church.

John 15:26, “When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me.” Here Jesus is sending forth the Spirit from the Father to testify about the Lord Jesus. If the Father, Son and Holy Spirit were all the same person, it would be illogical and meaningless to speak of them interacting with one another as these passages do. Jesus would not make such an error. Nor should we. It’s right to believe in One God in three Persons.

Errors to Avoid Concerning the Godhead

Tri-theism. This is the teaching that there are three Gods who are sometimes related, but only in a loose association. Such an approach abandons the biblical oneness of God and the unity within the Trinity.

Sabellianism or Modalism. Sabellius (A.D. 200), the originator of this viewpoint, spoke of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but he understood all three as no more than three manifestations of one God. This teaching came to be known as *modalism* because it views one God who variously manifests Himself in three modes of existence: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Arianism. This doctrine had its roots in Tertullian, who made the Son subordinate to the Father. Origen took this further by teaching that the Son was subordinate to the Father “in respect to essence.” The result was ultimately Arianism which denied the deity of Christ. Arius taught that only God was the uncreated One; because Christ was begotten of the Father it meant Christ was created by the Father. Arius believed there was a time when Christ did not exist. Arius and his teaching was condemned at the Council of Nicea in A.D. 325.⁴²

⁴² Paul Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology*, Moody Press, Chicago, IL, 1989, p. 199.

Appendix A

GLOSSARY

Abba. In Aramaic, it means "dear father," or "daddy." Jesus used this phrase in prayer.

Agnostic. One who believes that the limits of human knowledge will not allow man to settle the question of God's existence or other spiritual truths.

Arianism. This doctrine had its roots in Tertullian, who made the Son subordinate to the Father. Origen took this further by teaching that the Son was subordinate to the Father "in respect to essence." The result was ultimately Arianism which denied the deity of Christ. Arius taught that only God was the uncreated One; because Christ was begotten of the Father it meant Christ was created by the Father. Arius believed there was a time when Christ did not exist. Arius and his teaching was condemned at the Council of Nicea in A.D. 325.

Atheist. One who believes there is no god.

Christology. The study of the nature of Jesus Christ, and in particular the relation between the divine and human in him.

Deism. The belief that God exists but reveals Himself through nature rather than directly through the coming of Jesus or through the Bible.

Divinity. The being of God. Christians believe that Jesus existed in the form of God and shares the divine nature with His Father and the Holy Spirit (Phil. 2:5-11).

Dualism. The belief that there are equal and opposite forces of good and evil at work in the universe. This is an old heresy into which it is all too easy to fall when speaking of the devil and the presence of evil.

Epistemology. The philosophy of knowledge, particularly inquiring as to how we know and what are the sources of our knowledge.

Eternity. The state of being beyond and unlimited by time. God is eternal and grants eternal life to those who believe and obey Him (John 3:36). The Christian hope is that though he may die in this life, he will live on through eternity (John 11:25,26).

Ethics. The study of morality and moral choices. Christian ethics seek to relate the moral teaching of the Bible to its application in everyday life.

Evil. Harm which comes to human beings, turning us away from God and from goodness. Moral evil is harm which comes through sinful, human choice and action. Natural evil is harm which comes through events in nature such as disease or earthquakes. The origin of natural evil is usually associated with the moral evil in the fall of Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:14-24).

Evolution. The theory (not established fact) that the development of all forms of life takes place through a series of modifications, the direction of which is governed by environmental factors. This theory, put forward by Charles Darwin in the mid-nineteenth century, has come under strong attack but is still accepted by many scientists. Some of its proponents use it as a philosophy, explaining many aspects of life and society in a way which excludes God. Christians hold that creation and evolution are mutually exclusive concepts.

Existentialist. One who rejects externally imposed values or codes, in the belief that a person has to make his or her own choices in terms that make sense of his or her own existence. It is a modern philosophy, sometimes leading to despair, though sometimes to courage. Many existentialists are atheists; others have tried to integrate existentialism with Christianity (such as Søren Kierkegaard).

Fatalism. The belief that an individual's destiny is shaped by impersonal spiritual forces that do not take personal welfare or choice into consideration. Often this belief leads one to an attitude of helpless resignation. It cannot co-exist with faith in a personal, loving God.

Father, God as. The quality in God which relates to humanity in a parental way, so that God is caring, guiding and disciplining His children. "Father" was the characteristic way that Jesus referred to God. Christians commonly speak of "God the Father" to distinguish Him from "God the Son" and "God the Holy Spirit."

Free Moral Agent. The human quality that describes his ability to make moral choices freely and not be governed by any outside factors. This quality is what holds him responsible for those choices. God could not justly judge humans if they were not able to make choices in whether or not to follow His will. Free moral agency denies that individuals are predestined to heaven or hell and beyond change.

Gifts of the Spirit. (spiritual gifts) Miraculous abilities given to believers by the Holy Spirit, to be used for the good of the whole body (1 Cor. 12:4-11). These gifts are directly from the Holy Spirit and not natural talents.

Gnostic. Member of one of the group of movements holding that salvation is attained through a secret knowledge (gnosis). The early roots of Gnosticism can be seen in the NT and was opposed by Paul and John. Some Gnostics believed that Jesus was merely human and that the Christ did not come in the flesh (1 John 4:1-3).

God. Christians believe specifically in a Person, God, whom Jesus called Father. This Person is eternal, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, all-loving, just, holy and perfect. While God is transcendent (beyond our ability to fully understand), He is also close to us in our everyday lives and relates to us as a Father. He is the creator of the universe and the sustainer of our lives. He sent Jesus His Son to die for our sins on the cross, that we might live eternally with Him.

Holy. A quality of purity that initially comes from God and refers to a separation from anything defiled or sinful. Saints are "holy" people, who have been sanctified by the blood of Christ. Christians are commanded to live holy or morally pure lives, so that they reflect the nature of God in their behavior.

Holy Spirit. The third person of the Godhead, who dwells in Christians today. He is not a force or an influence but a Divine Person. He is regarded as the author of the Scriptures (2 Pet. 1:20,21) and the source of miracles (Heb. 2:3,4). In the OT the Holy Spirit was given to particular individuals for special tasks. Since the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit has been given to all who repent and are baptized (Acts 2:38,39).

Humanist. One who holds a high view of the capacity of human nature, such that man is his own god and there is nothing higher in the universe. A Christian humanist believes in God but holds that man by his aesthetic and moral senses and by his education is able to save himself.

Image of God. The characteristics in human beings which reflect the nature of God, such as a moral sense, a conscience, freedom of choice, reason, memory, aesthetic abilities, and love. Man's moral sense of right and wrong especially comes from man's creation "in the image of God" (Gen. 1:26,27).

Immanence. The quality in God which causes him to be involved in the life of humanity and the world and not stay remote from it. God is near. That Jesus as the Son of God became flesh is the supreme example of God's association with man. God is both immanent (near) and yet transcendent (holy and beyond our full understanding).

Incarnation. (lit., "taking flesh") The action by which Jesus as God took on human flesh and became subject to space, time and the problems of this world (John 1:1,14; Phil. 2:5-11). What made Jesus unique as a human was his freedom from sin (Heb. 4:14-16). His life as both God and man gave mankind an opportunity to understand the character of God.

Inerrant. The quality of being without any mistakes of fact or interpretation. Things divine are regarded as inerrant. Jesus was inerrant. The Scriptures are inerrant in so far as the Holy Spirit originally delivered them.

Infallible. A term very close in meaning to inerrant and may be used of the Scriptures. Catholics incorrectly apply this term to the pope when he is pronouncing a matter of doctrine.

Inspiration. (lit., "God-breathed" from 2 Tim. 3:16) The means by which God through the Holy Spirit moved man to write the sacred Scriptures so that they can be fully trusted as the Word of God (2 Pet. 1:20,21). The Holy Spirit so moved the writers that their books contain the meaning God intended, yet not lessening the individuality of the writers.

Intercession. The aspect of prayer in which believers make petitions to God on behalf of themselves or others. Jesus is now in heaven and makes intercession for us (Heb. 7:25). Because we do not know how to pray as we ought the Holy Spirit also intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express (Rom. 8:26,27).

Jesus. (lit., "one who saves" from Matt. 1:21) The God-man born in Bethlehem and brought up in Nazareth who became an itinerant teacher and healer, was crucified and rose again. He was indeed the fulfillment of the promised Messiah, the Christ, and is the Son of God.

Kenosis. (lit., "he emptied himself" from Phil. 2:7) The belief that when Jesus took on flesh and became a man that he emptied himself of all distinctively divine attributes and revealed himself as God simply and solely through his humanity.

Lamb of God. A description of Jesus used by John the Baptist and by John in the book of Revelation (John 1:29,35; Rev. 5:6). This title highlights the sacrifice of Jesus for our sins and the victory he won in his death.

Lord, The. A title for God in both the OT and the NT. It is generally written in the Bible in small capital letters. The "Lord" translates the Hebrew term "Yahweh" or "Jehovah," and is used to describe the self-existent nature of God, who says of Himself, "I am that I am" (Ex. 3:14; cf. 6:3). Later Jews regarded the name too holy to be spoken. The title is used in the NT to refer to Jesus Christ and reflects His Deity and His absolute authority.

Love. An active caring for others, such that one puts another's interests first, regardless of the cost and whether or not the other person deserves it. God demonstrated His love for man in the giving of His Son Jesus (John 3:16; Rom. 5:6-9). The greatest commandment is to love God with all one's heart, soul, mind and strength and to love one's neighbor as himself (Deut. 6:5; Matt. 22:36-40). Jesus gave a new commandment, that we love one another, even as He has loved us (John 13:34). Loving one another is a mark of a disciple (John 13:35). The apostle Paul describes the greatness of love in 1 Corinthians 13.

Materialist. One who gives highest value to the physical and observable in life, and does not accept the reality of anything that cannot be seen, touched or measured.

Mediator. One who stands between parties who are at variance and works toward their reconciliation. Jesus is uniquely qualified to mediate between God and man (1 Tim. 2:3-6), since He is both Divine and human (John 1:1,14; Phil. 2:5-11).

Messiah. (lit., "anointed one") The one whose coming was prophesied in the Old Testament, who was to be prophet, priest and king. He was to set his people free (Matt. 1:21) and establish a kingdom that would never end (Daniel 2; Luke 1:33). Jesus said that faith in Him as the Messiah was necessary (John 8:12-24). The Greek term for Messiah is the word "Christ." Calling Jesus the Christ is to acknowledge that He is the Messiah.

Miracle. A mighty work, beyond the normal functioning of nature and beyond the ability of man. Miracles evoke awe and amazement. Their purpose is twofold: to evoke faith in those who acknowledge them and to confirm the truth of the message preached (John 20:30,31; Heb. 2:3,4).

Monism. The belief that all things, material and immaterial, personal and impersonal, are essentially one stuff. It is the underlying philosophy of Hinduism.

Monotheist. One who believes that there is only one God, as opposed to the polytheists. This belief is basic to both the OT and NT. Belief in the Trinity is not an affirmation that there are three gods; rather it is affirming one god in three persons.

Mystic. One who pursues the inner life of the spirit, using any of a vast number of spiritual methods in the effort to know and experience God at the deepest possible level.

Myth. A story through which people seek to encapsulate a religious idea. When Biblical scholars speak of myths in the Bible, they are usually using the technical term that does not regard whether the story is historical or not. When the NT uses the term, it is used in contrast to historical reality and truth (2 Pet. 1:16; 2 Tim. 4:4; Tit. 1:14).

Natural Theology. The belief that a knowledge of God may be reached through experience of the world and reason alone without the need for special revelation. It is often considered as complementary to revealed religion.

Neo-orthodoxy. The type of twentieth-century theology associated with Karl Barth and which provided a critical reaction to liberal theology. It stresses the importance of God's revelation through the Word of God.

Omnipotent. Almighty, able to do all things (except things which are logically impossible).

Omnipresent. Present everywhere, not confined to any locality.

Omniscient. Knowing everything, unlimited in knowledge.

Ontological. Pertaining to the essential nature of things. The "ontological argument" for the existence of God maintains that, in the nature of things, a Being must exist who is greater than everything else or there would not be a supreme being.

Pagan. One who is thought to be unenlightened as to the truth, an alien (Eph. 2:12). It is often used of primitive religions but may be used of those who have no faith.

Panentheist. One who holds that everything exists in God and emphasizes that God is imminent. Panentheism should not be confused with pantheism.

Pantheist. One who holds that everything is divine, so that many pantheists worship nature. A tendency of pantheism is to be morally neutral, since everything is an aspect of the divine being.

Paraclete. (lit., "one who is called alongside") A term used to describe the Holy Spirit (John 14:26; 15:26), who was given to the apostles to be a "Comforter" or "Helper." Jesus is described as our "advocate" when we sin (1 John 2:1,2).

Polytheist. One who believes in more than one god. Polytheism was the popular religion in the Near Eastern, Greek and Roman societies in Biblical times.

Practical atheist. Someone who claims to believe in God but lives in rebellion or in willful ignorance of God. They live as if there was no God at all.

Providence. The care God takes of all existing things. Whether through His acts of salvation or His giving man and animals their daily food, God provides for His own. God is able to provide for everything because of His wisdom and power. (See Gen. 22:13,14).

Rationalist. One who believes that everything can be judged by unaided reason, and that reason is superior (or equivalent) to revelation. Rationalism was an important school of philosophy in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and its influence is still felt today.

Reincarnation. The belief that we live a series of succeeding lives, sometimes at different levels of being. This concept is wholly foreign to the Scriptures, which teaches that after death comes judgment (Heb. 9:27). The idea is important in Hinduism and New Age thinking.

Revelation. God's action of making Himself, His will, and His way known to man. Specifically, this revealing has been made in history through particular acts of revelation, such as prophecy, visions, dreams, miraculous events, and theophanies. The record and correct understanding of these historical acts are in the Bible, which Christians believe that God has so inspired as to ensure that his revelation is fully accurate and accessible to us. The greatest act of revelation of the character, love and righteousness of God is in the sending of His Son Jesus to live on the earth. There is a sense in which the character and power of God can be seen in the physical universe and nature (Rom. 1:18-20; Psalm 8). A complete and true understanding of God's nature cannot be realized without the written revelation found in the Bible (1 Cor. 1:21).

Satan. (lit., "adversary") the Devil, the chief opponent of God and the church, who is pictured as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour (1 Pet. 5:8). Satan was a created being (probably an angel) who, being lifted up with pride, rebelled against God. Hell is the place God prepared to punish the Devil and his angels (2 Pet. 2:4-11; Matt. 25:41-46).

Sabellianism or Modalism. Sabellius (A.D. 200), the originator of this viewpoint, spoke of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but he understood all three as no more than three manifestations of one God. This teaching came to be known as modalism because it views one God who variously manifests Himself in three modes of existence: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Secular. Concerned exclusively with this world, taking no account of a spiritual dimension. Secularism is the most characteristic feature of the modern Western world.

Self-existent. Looking to no one or nothing else as the source of existence. This describes the nature of God, since everything else has come into being through him (John 1:1-3).

Son of God. A title given to Jesus Christ, designating him as one who is pre-existent and shares the nature and essence of God. It is as the Son of God that Jesus is spoken of as being the second person of the Godhead.

Son of Man. A title given to Jesus, designating both his divinity and his humanity. Jesus uses this title most frequently when he refers to himself. The phrase coming from Daniel refers to a divine figure who would come from heaven; the "son of man" was widely expected in Jesus' time.

Soul. In the Bible, this term variously refers to the whole person (1 Pet. 3:20), the life force within a person (Matt. 16:25), or the eternal essence of a person which survives death (Rev. 6:9; 20:4; Jam. 1:21; 5:20). "Soul" and "spirit" are not entirely synonymous terms (1 Thess. 5:23; Heb. 4:12); yet they do sometimes refer to the non-material seat of a person's consciousness, mind, heart, and volition.

Sovereignty. A quality of God denoting his freedom from any kind of outward restraint. He is free to act as He wills, without limitation. In spite of this, God will only act in accordance with His character, which means that His actions are reliable, not arbitrary, and always for the good of His people.

Spirit. (pneuma) That aspect of a person which is given directly to us from God (Heb. 12:9); which is able to think, reason, feel, and choose; which is able to have a relationship with God; and which survives death (James 2:26; Eccl. 12:7). This is the same term, which is used to describe the Holy Spirit. Paul often contrasts the spirit with the flesh.

Substance. A technical term used in defining the doctrine of the trinity. It means "being," so that one may say that God is one in "being" or "substance" with the Father. The trinity is three persons and one substance.

Substitute. A way of describing the role Jesus fulfilled in his death. He died instead of us, who deserved to be separated from God as a result of our sin. Because He died, believers can be free from sin and guilt.

Sustainer. God as the one who source of our continued or sustained lives and being (Acts 17:23-28; Col. 1:15-17; Heb. 1:3). He causes all the conditions necessary for life to carry on. This Biblical concept denies the view that God started the universe and has left it to run down on its own.

Syncretism. The combining of different faiths in such a way as to blur their distinctiveness. This destroys true faith in the one true and living God. It is compromise that leads to condemnation (cf. 1 Kings 11:1-13; 2 Kings 17).

Theism. Belief in God. Christianity starts with theism and builds from there, giving specific content to theism through God's revelation and particularly thought the character and teaching of Jesus.

Theodicy. The justification of the ways of God, especially dealing with the problem of suffering and injustice.

Theodicy seeks to defend belief in an omnipotent and all-loving God in spite of the existence of the suffering of innocent people. The book of Job may be considered a theodicy, as well as many passages in the writings of Paul and Peter.

Theology. The study of God. Christian theology is not based on speculation about him but studies Him through understanding the revelation he has made for himself through Jesus and through the Scriptures.

Transcendent. Extending beyond human and earthly limitations and knowledge. God is transcendent and always stretches beyond our comprehension. But He is also immanent, so that his "otherness" does not make him remote.

Transfiguration. The occasion on the mountain when the appearance of Jesus changed to a glorified state in the presence of Peter, James and John. (See Matt. 17:1-8; Luke 9:28-36).

Trinity. Within the one essence of the Godhead we have to distinguish three persons who are neither three gods on the one side, not three parts or modes of God on the other, but coequally and co-eternally God. "The Lord our God is one Lord" (Deut. 6:4); yet the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are all three in essence that one Lord (Matt. 28:19).

Tri-theism. This is the teaching that there are three Gods who are sometimes related, but only in a loose association. Such an approach abandons the biblical oneness of God and the unity within the Trinity.

Unitarian. One who believes that only the Father is God, and that Jesus and the Holy Spirit are not divine. Such a belief is foreign to the Scriptures.

Universalist. One who believes that all humanity will eventually receive salvation, even if many have no faith in Jesus Christ. This view is mistakenly based on NT teaching that all things will finally be summed up in Jesus Christ, and it ignores the teaching on the final judgment (John 5:28,29; Rev. 20:11-15).

Virgin Birth. The teaching that Mary conceived and gave birth to Jesus while still a virgin, through the miraculous intervention of the Holy Spirit. (See Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:18-25).

Word of God. (with a capital "W") A title given to Jesus which points to him as the revelation of God in the flesh (John 1:1-3). This idea has an extensive background both in Jewish and in Greek thought. Its Greek form is logos.

Yahweh. (rendered "Jehovah" or "Lord") The Hebrew name for God, thought to be too holy to be spoken in OT times. No one today knows how to pronounce it. It originates from the phrase "I AM THAT I AM" (Ex. 3:14). This name was first known to Moses (Ex. 6:2,3).

Appendix B

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECIES ABOUT JESUS CHRIST

<u>PROPHECY</u>	<u>FULFILLMENT</u>
1. He was to be born of the seed of the woman Gen. 3:15	Matt. 1:18
2. He would be the Son of God Psalm 2:7; 1 Chron. 17:11-14; 2 Sam. 7:12-16	Luke 1:32-35
3. He would overcome the serpent Gen. 3:15	Heb. 2:14
4. He would be of the seed of Abraham Gen. 12:1-3; 17:7; 22:18	Gal. 3:16
5. He would be of the seed of Isaac Gen. 21:12	Heb. 11:18
6. He would be of the seed of Jacob Num. 24:17; Gen. 35:10-12	Luke 3:23,34
7. He would be of the seed of Judah Gen. 49:10	Heb. 7:14
8. He would be of the seed of Jesse Isa. 11:1	Luke 3:23,32
9. He would be of the seed of David Psalm 132:11; Jer. 23:5	Acts 13:23; Rom. 1:3
10. The time of His coming and death Dan. 9:24-27	Luke 2:1
11. Born of a virgin Isa. 7:14	Matt. 1:18; Luke 2:7
12. He was to be called Immanuel Isa. 7:14	Matt. 1:22-23
13. Born in Bethlehem Micah 5:2	Matt. 2:1; Luke 2:4-6
14. Great Men shall come and bow down to him Psalm 72:10-15	Matt. 2:1-11
15. Children slaughtered: that He might be killed Jer. 31:15	Matt. 2:16-18
16. Introduced by John the Baptist Isa. 40:3; Mal. 3:1; 4:5-6	Matt. 3:1-3; Luke 1:17
17. Was anointed by the Holy Spirit Psalm 45:7; Isa. 11:2; 61:1	Matt. 3:16,17; John 3:34; Acts 10:38
18. Was a prophet like Moses Deut. 18:15-18	Acts 3:20-22
19. He was sent as a deliverer to the people Isa. 61:1-3	Luke 4:16-21, 43
20. He is the light to Zebulun and Naphtali	

Isa. 9:1-3	Matt. 4:12-16
21. He comes to the temple and cleanses it Haggai 2:7-9; Malachi 3:1; Isa. 56:7; Jer. 7:11	Luke 19:45,46; John 2:13-16
22. His poverty Isa. 53:2	Mark 6:3; Luke 9:58
23. He was meek and not loud Isa. 42:1,2	Phil. 2:5-8
24. His compassion Isa. 40:11; 42:3	Matt. 12:15-20; Heb. 4:15
25. He was without guile Isa. 53:9	1 Pet. 2:22
26. He had great Zeal for God's house Psalm 69:9	John 2:17
27. He taught by parables Psalm 78:2	Matt. 13:34,35
28. He performed miracles Isa. 35:5,6	Luke 7:18-23; Matt. 9:35
29. His brothers rejected him Psalm 69:8	John 2:17; Mark 3:21,31
30. The Jews hated him Psalm 69:4; Isa. 53:3	John 1:11; 7:5
31. The Jewish rulers rejected him Psalm 118: 22	John 7:48; Matt. 21:42
32. He was a stumbling stone and a rock of offense Isa. 8:14	1 Pet. 2:8; Rom. 9:32
33. His flesh did not decay Psalm 16:8-10;	Acts 2:31
34. He rose from the dead on the third day Psalm 16:8-10; 30:3; 41:10; 118:17	Luke 24:6, 31, 34
35. He ascended into the heavens Psalm 68:18; 24:7-9	Luke 24:51; Acts 1:9
36. He became a priest like Melchizedek, who was both king and priest Psalm 110:4; Zech. 6:12,13	Heb. 5:5-6
37. His Law went forth from Zion and his word from Jerusalem in the last days Isa. 2:1-3; Micah 4:12	Luke 24:46; Acts 2:1-40
38. He would enlist Gentiles into his service Isa. 11:10; 42:1; Psalm 2:8	John 10:16; Acts 10:44-48; Rom. 15:9-12
39. The righteousness of his reign Isa. 9:6,7; Num. 24:17-19; Micah 5:2	Rom. 3:23-26; 1 John 2:2
40. His Pre-Existence Micah 5:2; Isa. 9:6,7; 44:6	Col. 1:17; John 1:1,2; 8:58; Rev. 1:17
41. He shall be called Lord Psalm 110:1	Luke 2:11; 20:41-44

42. He shall be seated at the right hand of God
Psalm 110:1

Heb. 1:3; Acts 2:34,35

Prophecies of the Sufferings of the Messiah

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| 1. Betrayed by a friend
Psalm 41:9; 55:12-14 | John 13:18-21 |
| 2. Forsaken by his disciples
Zech. 13:7 | Matt. 26:31-56; Mark 14:50 |
| 3. He was sold for thirty pieces of silver
Zech. 11:12 | Matt. 26:15 |
| 4. This money was thrown into the temple
Zech. 11:13 | Matt. 27:5 |
| 5. This money was given to buy the potter's field
Zech. 11:13 | Matt. 27:7 |
| 6. He was patient and silent in his sufferings
Isa. 53:7 | Matt. 26:63; 27:12-14 |
| 7. He was smitten on the cheek
Micah 5:1 | Matt. 27:30 |
| 8. His sufferings were intense
Psalm 22:14,15 | Luke 22:42-44 |
| 9. He was scourged and spat upon
Psalm 35:15; Isa. 50:6 | Mark 14:65; John 19:1 |
| 10. His face was greatly marred
Isa. 52:14; 53:3 | John 19:1-5 |
| 11. He suffered that he might bear our sins
Isa. 53:4-6, 12; Dan. 9:26 | Matt. 20:28; 26:28 |
| 12. The rulers, Jews and Gentiles, combine against him to put him to death
Psalm 2:1-4 | Luke 23:12; Acts 4:27,28 |
| 13. He was extended on the cross, and his hands and feet were nailed to the wood
Isa. 25:10,11; Psalm 22:16; Zech. 12:10 | John 19:18; 20:25; Luke 23:33 |
| 14. He was numbered among the thieves
Isa. 53:12 | Matt. 27:38; Mark 15:27, 28 |
| 15. They gave him gall and vinegar
Psalm 69:21 | Matt. 27:39-44 |
| 16. He was mocked
Psalm 22:7,8; 35:15-21 | Matt. 27:39-44 |
| 17. He was separated from the Father
Isa. 63:1-3; Psalm 22:1 | Matt. 27:46 |
| 18. They divided his garments and cast lots for them
Psalm 22:18 | Matt. 27:35 |
| 19. He became a curse for us and bore our reproach
Psalm 22:6; Isa. 49:7 | Rom. 15:3; Heb. 13:13; Gal. 3:13 |

20. He made intercession for his persecutors and for the thieves	
Isa. 53:12	Luke 23:34
21. He was pierced after His death	
Zech. 12:10	John 19:34-37
22. They did not break a bone of his body	
Ex. 12:46; Psalm 34:20	John 19:33-36
23. He was buried with the rich	
Isa. 53:9	Matt. 27:57-60
24. People shook their heads	
Psalm 109:25; 22:7	Matt. 27:39
25. Darkness came over the face of the land	
Amos 8:9	Matt. 27:45

Many prophecies Jesus fulfilled were totally beyond the power of human control, such as: (1) place of birth, (2) time of birth, (3) manner of birth of a virgin woman, (4) betrayal, (5) manner of death in crucifixion, (6) people's reactions at his death, (7) piercing, and (8) his burial.

Concerning these eight prophecies, Peter Stoner in *Science Speaks* estimated the probability of anyone fulfilling all of them is 1 in 10^{17} . That would be 1 in 100,000,000,000,000,000. In order to help us comprehend this staggering probability, Stoner illustrates it by supposing Awe take 10^{17} silver dollars and lay them on the face of Texas. They will cover all of the state two feet deep. Now mark one of these silver dollars and stir the whole mass thoroughly, all over the state. Blindfold a man and tell him that he can travel as far as he wishes, but he must pick up one silver dollar and say that this is the right one. What chance would he have of getting the right one? Just the same chance that the prophets would have had of writing these eight prophecies and having them all come true in any one man, from their day to the present time, providing they wrote them in their own wisdom.

Now these prophecies were either given by inspiration of God or the prophets just wrote them as they thought they should be. In such a case the prophets had just one chance in 10^{17} of having them come true in any man, but they all came true in Christ.⁴³

Chances of Fulfillment

"There is only 1 chance in 480 Billion x 1 Billion x 1 Trillion that 17 Old Testament predictions would be fulfilled in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ." (*The Signature of God*, Grant R. Jeffrey, Frontier Research Publications, Toronto, Ontario, pg. 181. This probability is based on particular prophecies referenced in the book, pages 172-181. Some of those listed prophecies are referenced below.)

⁴³ Peter Stoner, *Science Speaks* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1963), pp. 100-107.

PROPHECIES OF ISAIAH 53

PROPHECY	ISAIAH 53	NEW TESTAMENT FULFILLMENT
Despised	3	Matt. 27:39-43
Rejected	3	John 1:10,11; 7:5, 48
Acquainted with Grief	3	Heb. 4:15
Bearer of Grief and Sorrows	4	Matt. 8:16,17
Without Deceit	9	1 Pet. 2:22
Dumb Before His Persecutors	7	Matt. 26:63; 27:12,14
A Bearer of our stripes	5	1 Pet. 2:24,25
A sin-bearer	5, 12	1 Cor. 15:3; 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 9:28;
Numbered with transgressors	12	Luke 22:37
Intercessor for transgressors	12	Luke 23:34
Deprived of Justice	8	Matt. 27:24
Buried with the Rich	9	Matt. 27:57-60
Raised from the Dead	10	Mark 16:9
Exalted and Honored	12	Phil. 2:9-11
Pierced Through	5	John 19:34; 20:25

“Truly eight centuries ahead Isaiah saw the glory of Jesus and ‘spoke of him’ (John 12:41). In his 53rd chapter vividness of detail causes readers to think they are looking at history not prophecy. Unbelievers have searched heaven and earth, the living and the dead, to find anybody but Jesus (cf. Moses, Uzziah, Zerubbabel, Jeremiah, Zedekiah, Isaiah, Jehoiachin, Israel) to fit the chapter’s statements; but nobody except Jesus fits. Further, it would be impossible for anybody else purposely to arrange his life so as to make Isaiah 53 tell of him.” (Hugo McCord, *Messianic Prophecies*, 44.)

“How could the same Messiah be a Mighty God and an Eternal King, yet also be despised and rejected by men and be cruelly put to death? The Jewish scribes wrestled with this paradox for centuries without finding the answer, but now that it has all been fulfilled, we can see how beautifully it all came to pass in the life of Jesus. When prophecy contains numerous detail, all of which is exactly fulfilled, that is infallible proof that the prophecy is from God” (Herbert C. Casteel, *Beyond a Reasonable Doubt*, 170).