

Equipping the Saints

by

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*Basic
Bible
Studies*

Equipping the Saints

Equipping the Saints is designed to both provide a comprehensive basic understanding of the Bible and equip the people of God to live the Christian life both as individuals and as a community. Equipping the Saints is six books in one: Basic Doctrines of the Christian Faith, Basic Practices of the Christian Faith, Walking in Love, Spiritual Warfare, How Do We Know, and Biblical Hermeneutics.

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CNG Publications

ISBN: 978-0-9890066-1-3

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Week 1: Repentance from Our Self Centered Nature

The Scripture is very clear in numerous places that we must repent of sin. The theme of repentance runs throughout the Bible in both the Old and New Testaments. This installment has two sections: one defines repentance from dead works and the other the necessity of repentance.

We must repent of our dead works because God cannot co-exist with anything contrary to His nature. On a metaphysical level it is because God is absolute truth and as such He cannot contradict Himself. The comingling of the life of God with evil would involve God contradicting Himself.

“Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR GOD TO LIE, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us.” – Hebrews 6:17–18

“But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things. I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and THAT NO LIE IS OF THE TRUTH” – 1 John 2:20–21

“Jesus said to him, “I am the way, THE TRUTH, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me” – John 14:6

The application of the absolute truth of God to morals is called righteousness or holiness. The application of the absolute truth of God to law is called righteousness or justice. Consider the following passages that reveal God as Holy and Just. Because God cannot co-exist with sin, we must repent of our sins. As we shall see in the next section we must repent not only of particular sins but of a self-centered nature.

“The LORD reigns; Let the earth rejoice; Let the multitude of isles be glad! Clouds and darkness surround Him; RIGHTEOUSNESS AND JUSTICE ARE THE FOUNDATION OF HIS THRONE. A fire goes before Him, And burns up His enemies round about. His lightnings light the world; The earth sees and trembles. The mountains melt like wax at the presence of the LORD, At the presence of the Lord of the whole earth. The heavens declare His righteousness, And all the peoples see His glory. ” – Psalm 97:1–6; also read Psalm 89:14

“You shall not make yourselves abominable with any creeping thing that creeps; nor shall you make yourselves unclean with them, lest you be defiled by them. For I am the LORD your God. You shall therefore CONSECRATE YOURSELVES, and you shall be holy; for I am holy. Neither shall you defile yourselves with any creeping thing that creeps on the earth. For I am the LORD who

***brings you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God. You shall therefore 'BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY.'* ” – Leviticus 11:43–45**

“BUT AS HE WHO CALLED YOU IS HOLY, YOU ALSO BE HOLY IN ALL YOUR CONDUCT, because it is written, 'BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY.' And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear”

– 1 Peter 1:15–17

“Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness. And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and IN HIM THERE IS NO SIN. Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him” – 1 John 3:4–6

Repentance from Our Self Centered Nature.

To understand what repentance from dead works is we must first define *dead works*. Dead works stand in contrast to living works. They do not have life, no energy. They are empty works. They are not necessarily bad works. While bad works are certainly dead works from a Biblical perspective, good works can also be.

To understand what makes a work dead one must understand God's purpose in the Creation and maintenance of the universe. God created the universe in such a way that He would be both the ground of Being (or foundation) and center of it. Consider the following passages.

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

“...Nor is He worshiped with men’s hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things. And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their pre-appointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; 28 FOR IN HIM WE LIVE AND MOVE AND HAVE OUR BEING, as also some of your own poets have said, ‘For we are also His offspring.’...” – Acts 17:25–28

God created the universe so that He would be the foundation and context of everything. ***“by Him”***, ***“for Him”***, ***“in Him”***, and ***“through Him”*** all indicate the preeminence of the Lord God. In the universe ***as it was created*** it is God’s power that creates and sustains everything. In the beginning there were no dead works. Where did dead works come from?

Dead works came because mankind rebelled. To understand how man was able to rebel, one must understand that man was created in God’s image and God’s likeness.

“Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’ So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”

– Genesis 1:26–27

Why did God create mankind in His image and likeness? For a love relationship. Love presupposes free choice. As long as mankind kept making choices that were pleasing to God, there was perfect harmony. The problem was that mankind did not continue in obedience to God.

“...And the woman said to the serpent, ‘ We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, “You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.” ‘... SO WHEN THE WOMAN SAW THAT THE TREE WAS GOOD FOR FOOD, THAT IT WAS PLEASANT TO THE EYES, AND A TREE DESIRABLE TO MAKE ONE WISE, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate. ” – Genesis 3:2–3,6

The essence of sin is the self-centered nature. When Eve shifted her focus from pleasing God to pleasing self, then she broke the command.

In Eve's heart, God was no longer the foundation and center. Adam repeated Eve's sin process.

“But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. 15 Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.” - James 1:14-15

Self-centered desire taints every work that proceeds from it. The expression of the self-centered nature stands in opposition to God as the true center of the universe. The expression of the self-centered nature is devoid of the reality of God. While the deeds done in the body have physical reality, they are mixed with self-centered expression that stands opposed to reality, thus corrupting physical reality and bringing death into the creation.

“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned— 13 (For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. 14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, EVEN OVER THOSE WHO HAD NOT SINNED ACCORDING TO THE LIKENESS OF THE TRANSGRESSION OF ADAM, who is a type of Him who was to come.” - Romans 5:12-14

Sin brought death to all of Adam's descendants, even those who did not break a command like Adam did. All of the children of Adam inherited a

self-centered sin nature which taints everything with death by reason of dead works, whether it be evil works or seemingly good works. Good works done from a self-centered nature still work corruption into the universe.

What does it mean to repent from dead works. The word repent comes from the Greek metanoia=Meta(change)+noia/nous(mind) which means to change the mind, which involves turning away from one thing toward another. It is absolutely necessary for salvation that we repent- turn away from- dead works The answer here is not to turn away from evil works toward good works, but to turn away from dead works towards living works.

Week 1 Questions

- 1.What is sin?
- 2.Why is it necessary to repent?
- 3.What aspect of God's Character makes sin such a barrier?
- 4.What are dead works?
- 5.What was the cause of dead works?
- 6.Why do good works motivated by the self-centered nature lead to death?
- 7.What does repentance mean?
- 8.Why is the self-centered nature a bad thing?

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Scripture references

Col 1:16–17; Acts 17:25–28; Gen 1:26–27

Gen 3:2–3,6; James 1:14–15; Romans 5

Heb 6:17–18; 1 John 2:20–27; 1 John 3:4–6; John 14:6

Psalm 97;89:14 ; Leviticus 11:43–45; 1 Peter 1:15–17

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Week 2: Faith Toward God

If repentance means that we are to change our minds, then our minds must turn from one thing and toward another. We are to turn away from dead works, that is works motivated and animated by the expression of the self-centered nature. What are we turning to?

In the perfect universe, God is the center and foundation of all. He initiated creation and holds the universe together. If everything we do is self-centered by definition, then only God can solve this problem. We must look to God and not ourselves. Our hearts and minds must turn towards God and see what He is doing.

The first thing to understand about faith is that it is impossible for a person to exercise faith unless God enables them to do so.

“NO ONE CAN COME TO ME UNLESS THE FATHER WHO SENT ME DRAWS HIM; and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, ‘And they shall all be taught by God.’ Therefore everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me. ”

– John 6:44–45

“For by grace you have been saved through FAITH, AND THAT NOT OF YOURSELVES; IT IS THE GIFT OF GOD, not of works, lest anyone should boast.”

– Ephesians 2:8–9

If God is truly the center and foundation of all, then He must initiate the process of faith or the resulting faith is simply another exercise in self-centeredness. God takes this initiative (the Bible calls this grace) to give us the ability to believe. Because God created us for a love relationship and love must be freely given, so faith is freely exercised rather than forced. A decision must be made to exercise faith. We cannot believe until God puts the options of faith in our perception. Faith can only come when we “hear” about the possibility. If we do not know about the possibility we cannot choose it. We cannot know truly about it until God reveals this to us. Hearing is by the word of God.

“How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent?... SO THEN FAITH COMES BY HEARING, AND HEARING BY THE WORD OF GOD”

- Romans 10:14-15,17

When God sees a faith that agrees with His initiative, he then counts that faith as righteousness. Because of the self-centered sin nature, we cannot do anything otherwise. We can only believe in God’s initiative to rescue us, and we can only believe that when He initiates this. Abraham acquired his righteousness by faith. God initiated faith to Abraham by speaking His Word. Abraham believed God’s Word and was justified by faith.

“Then He brought him outside and said, ‘Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them.’ And He said to him, “So shall your descendants be.’ And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness”

– Genesis 15:5–6 Also read Romans 4

If the only faith that counts is faith that God initiates, then a just God will only count the faith that contain good works in seed form. Otherwise God would be unjust to declare wickedness righteousness, and evil good. The Bible teaches that saving faith contains the seeds that produce good works.

“What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, “Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,” but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

“But someone will say, “You have faith, and I have works.” Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you MY FAITH BY MY WORKS. You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe —and tremble! But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith

without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? DO YOU SEE THAT FAITH WAS WORKING TOGETHER WITH HIS WORKS, AND BY WORKS FAITH WAS MADE PERFECT? And THE SCRIPTURE WAS FULFILLED WHICH SAYS, 'ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS ACCOUNTED TO HIM FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS.' And he was called the friend of God. You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only."

- James 2:14-24

"...The just shall live by faith..."

- Habbakkuk 2:4; Rom 1:17; Galatians 3:11; Heb 10:38

External works are described as faith and works working together. Saving faith, then, is a producer of good works. It is **not faith that is recited in the creeds, but faith that forms the basis for good deeds that God counts as saving faith.** Faith toward God is the basis of the life of those who are justified by faith. Those justified by faith will live by that same faith and produce the righteous that credits to that faith.

Week 2 Questions

1. What is the relationship between faith and repentance?
2. Who initiates faith? Why?
3. How does righteousness come by faith?

4. What is the relationship between faith and works?

5. What kind of faith saves?

Scripture references

John 6:44–45; Ephesians 2:8–9;

Romans 10 ; Genesis 15:6; Romans 4;

James 2:14–24; Habbakkuk 2:4; Rom 1:17; Gal 3:11; Heb 10:38

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Week 3: Baptisms – United in Christ’s Death

The word baptism comes from the Greek Baptizo, meaning to immerse. Baptism, in one form or another, predates Christianity. There are at least six baptisms referenced in Scripture. Noah’s Ark, circumcision, baptism into Moses, the Baptism of John, the Believers baptism into water, and Spiritual baptism into Christ. The first five baptisms illustrates various aspects of the Spiritual Baptism into Christ. These are Noah ark, circumcision, baptism into Moses, John Baptism, and the believers baptism.

Noah’s Ark

Noah’s ark is not explicitly presented as such in the Genesis account. It is however regarded as a baptism in the New Testament. In the Noahic flood, water destroyed sinners, while those in the ark are safe. In Christ we are safe while His blood destroys sins.

“...God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, and THIS WATER SYMBOLIZES BAPTISM that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God....” – 1 Peter 3:20–21 NIV

Fulfillment of Noah's Ark: The death of Jesus saves us from wrath on our particular crimes against God.

He died to take away all of our particular sins. He takes away both the guilt of our sins and the power of those sins. In Col 2:11–15 He takes away the criminal charges that are lodged against us both of our crimes against God. The term “ *handwriting of requirements*” literally means criminal charges.

“In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off THE BODY of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, BURIED WITH HIM IN BAPTISM, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross” – Colossians 2:11–14

Circumcision

God instituted circumcision in Abraham's time. Circumcision involves the cutting out of the flesh. While circumcision is not explicitly called a baptism in Genesis, in Col 3:11–12 baptism is equated with circumcision. Whereas the Noahic flood destroyed sinners, circumcision

destroys flesh or the ‘body of sin.’ Baptism into Christ destroys the “body of sin” or the self-centered or fleshly sin nature (1 Peter 3:20–21).

“In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the BODY of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, 12 buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.”

– Colossians 3:11–12

Fulfillment of Circumcision: The death of Jesus destroys the embodiment of all sin.

Colossians 2:11–14 also mentions destroying the “*THE BODY of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ*” by his death on the cross. The Cross not only destroys sins but the sin nature. This is also conformed in Rom 6:3–6.

“Or do you not know that as many of us as were BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST JESUS WERE BAPTIZED INTO HIS DEATH? 4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, 6 knowing this, that OUR OLD MAN WAS CRUCIFIED WITH HIM, THAT THE BODY OF

SIN MIGHT BE DONE AWAY WITH, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.”

– Romans 6:3–6

Baptism into Moses

Baptism into Moses was not explicitly called a baptism in Moses time. In 1 Cor 10:1–2 we are told that the children of Israel were “baptized into Moses” what does baptism into Moses mean. It simply means that they were admitted into the covenant and therefore were members of the covenant community. As baptism into Moses made them a part of Israel, so baptism into Christ makes us a part of the church.

“Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, all were BAPTIZED INTO MOSES in the cloud and in the sea”

– 1 Corinthians 10:1–2

Fulfillment of Baptism into Moses: The death of Jesus brings us into covenant with God.

The blood of Jesus brings us into the covenants of God. It is through union with Christ that we inherit the covenant rights that Christ has. It is by being His and of His household that we are counted among the

children of the covenant. Through Christ we are now fellow citizens with Israel as God's chosen.

“Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands— that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been BROUGHT NEAR BY THE BLOOD OF CHRIST...For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.¹⁹ Now, therefore, you are NO LONGER STRANGERS AND FOREIGNERS, BUT FELLOW CITIZENS with the saints and members of the household of God”

- Ephesians 2:11-13,18-19

The Baptism of John

The baptism of John was a baptism of repentance that was done to herald the coming of Jesus. When the Ephesian disciples were asked whether they had received the Holy Spirit, they said they knew only the baptism of John. Paul replied that John baptism was a baptism of repentance that pointed forward to the coming Messiah.

“ And it happened, while Apollos was at Corinth, that Paul, having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples

he said to them, 'Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?' So they said to him, 'We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit.' And he said to them, 'Into what then were you baptized?' So they said, 'Into John's baptism.' Then Paul said, 'John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus'. ” – Acts 19:1–4

Fulfillment of Baptism of John: The Death of Jesus Calls Us to Repentance.

Jesus told Nicodemus that just as Moses lifted up the bronze serpent in the wilderness, that He must be lifted up. The analogy that Christ makes for Nicodemus is one between the brass serpent and the Cross. Just as the Israelites looked to the bronze serpent, trusting it to deliver them from the poison of the bite of the physical snake; people are now called to look to the Cross of Christ to deliver them from the poison of sin that was introduced into the human race through the machinations of the spiritual snake – the devil.

The Believers Baptism

When Jesus Gave the great commission in Matt 28:18–20, He commanded them to Baptize “in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit”. The apostles began this in Acts 2:38–41. Water baptism was the expression of faith toward God. The water itself has no power to save, but it was a point of contact through which “*faith in the working of God*” could do an effective work. (Col 2:12).

“And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.” – Matthew 28:18–20

“Then Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.’ And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, ‘Be saved from this perverse generation.’ Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.” – Acts 2:38–41

“In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, buried with him in BAPTISM, IN WHICH you also were raised with him THROUGH FAITH IN THE WORKING OF GOD, who raised Him from the dead” – Colossians 2:11–12

Spiritual Baptism in Christ fulfills symbolic baptisms.

There is baptism into Christ through the Holy Spirit. When John baptizes people he points to the true baptism that saves. He points to Jesus and says that He baptizes with the Holy Spirit and with fire. This baptism in the Spirit is essentially baptism into Christ. We were baptized into Christ, putting to death the old sinful nature.

“I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.” – Matthew 3:11

“Or do you not know that as many of us as were BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST JESUS WERE BAPTIZED INTO HIS DEATH? 4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, 6 knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.” – Romans 6:3–6

“For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the BLOOD OF CHRIST, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, CLEANSE YOUR CONSCIENCE FROM DEAD

WORKS to serve the living God?...And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment, so CHRIST WAS OFFERED ONCE TO BEAR THE SINS OF MANY” - Hebrews 9:13-14,27-28

“For BY ONE SPIRIT we were all BAPTIZED INTO ONE BODY—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. ” - 1 Corinthians 12:13

How Spirit Baptism fulfills Previous Baptisms.

When we were baptized into Christ by the Holy Spirit the old self-centered sin nature was crucified with Christ. We were then raised with Christ to a new life where we can be led by the Spirit.

When we were baptized into Christ by the Holy Spirit, we were protected from God’s wrath: the blood of Jesus destroyed sins in the same way that the Noahic flood destroyed sinners.

When we were baptized into Christ by the Holy Spirit, that baptism destroyed the old sin nature in the same way circumcision. destroyed the flesh of the foreskin on a man’s penis (1 Peter 3:20-21).

When we were baptized into Christ by the Holy Spirit, we are admitted into the covenant and covenant community of the church as baptism into Moses admitted Israelites into the covenant of Israel.

Baptism into Christ is the result of both repentance signified by John's baptism and of the exercise of faith signified by the believers water baptism.

Weeks 3 Questions

- 1. What six things does baptism accomplish?**
- 2. What are the Old Testament symbols for baptism into Christ?**
- 3. How does baptism help you in your understanding of salvation?**

Scripture references

1 Peter 3:20–21; Colossians 2:11–14; 3:11–12

Romans 6:3–6; 1 Corinthians 10:1–2; Eph 2:11–13,18–19;

Acts 19:1–4; Matthew 28:18–20; Acts 2:38–41; Matthew 3:11; Hebrews 9:13–14,27–28; 1 Corinthians 12:13

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Week 4: Laying on of Hands.

The Bible often uses physical object as a point of contact through which the exercise of faith can access God's grace. The essence of the power is not in the object but in accessing God's grace through faith.

The primary contact point used most often the laying on of hands. Other points of contact involve the laying on of hands to activate them. In baptism the baptizer lay his hands upon the baptized before immersing them in water. In communion whoever officiates over the elements will generally use his hands when praying a blessing over the elements and then use his hands to distribute them. The laying on of hands can then mean both the primary act of laying on of hands and the broader application of using physical object as a point of contact to exercise faith.

The practice of the laying on of hands dates back to Moses. Throughout the Bible the laying of hands was a point of contact through which something could be transmitted. In Lev 16 the High Priest placed all of the sins of Israel on the scapegoat. Generally, the laying on of hands was often used to transmit authority, blessing or gifting from God.

“And when he has made an end of atoning for the Holy Place, the tabernacle of meeting, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat. AARON

SHALL LAY BOTH HIS HANDS ON THE HEAD OF THE LIVE GOAT, CONFESS OVER IT ALL THE INIQUITIES OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, and all their transgressions, concerning all their sins, putting them on the head of the goat, and shall send it away into the wilderness by the hand of a suitable man. The goat shall bear on itself all their. iniquities to an uninhabited land; and he shall release the goat in the wilderness. ” – Leviticus 16: 20–22

“Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. And when Simon saw that THROUGH THE LAYING ON OF THE APOSTLES’ HANDS THE HOLY SPIRIT WAS GIVEN, he offered them money, 19 saying, “Give me this power also, that anyone on whom I lay hands may receive the Holy Spirit.” – Acts 8:17–19

“Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you BY PROPHECY WITH THE LAYING ON OF THE HANDS of the eldership. Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all” – 1 Timothy 4:13–15

It is not only leadership that can lay on hands. There is no record of Ananias ever holding a position of leadership, but he was able to use God’s power to heal Paul through the laying on of hands.

“And Ananias went his way and entered the house; and laying his hands on him he said, “Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.” 18 Immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he received his sight at once; and he arose and was baptized” – Acts 9:17–18

The laying on of hands and other physical points of contact has power only in connection to the faith of those involved. Consider the teaching of Romans 4:9–12 which clearly teaches that righteousness comes through faith alone while it is still alone.

“Does this blessedness then come upon the circumcised only, or upon the uncircumcised also? For we say that faith was accounted to Abraham for righteousness. How then was it accounted? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised. AND HE RECEIVED THE SIGN OF CIRCUMCISION, A SEAL OF THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE FAITH WHICH HE HAD WHILE STILL UNCIRCUMCISED, that he might be the father of all those who believe, though they are uncircumcised, that righteousness might be imputed to them also, and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also walk in the steps of the faith which our father Abraham had while still uncircumcised.” – Romans 4:9–12

Good works, including fulfillment of Christian rites such as baptism, laying on of hands etc are the result of saving faith not the cause of

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saving faith. Salvation by grace through faith requires that the saved **subsequently live** by faith. To attribute saving power to these external things apart from faith is to bring confusion concerning the doctrine of salvation.

The belief that external rituals have salvational or spiritual power in themselves is called sacramentalism. Salvation by the sacraments is based upon the official position of the pastor or priest in the church rather than the faith of priest or the person receiving the sacrament, resulting in a faith that rests upon the wisdom and power of men rather than God. A sacramental view of salvation can result a person believing that as long as they recite the right creeds and take the sacraments, they can base their lives on beliefs that are alien, and even hostile to the Christian faith. Salvation is by faith in the operation of God, not the sacraments.

Week 6 Questions

1. Why did the saints engage in the laying on of hands?
2. Why does God use physical points of contact?
3. Why are physical elements or sacraments useless in themselves to save?

Scripture references

Leviticus 16: 20–22; Acts 8:17–19; 1 Timothy 4:13–15

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Acts 9:17–18; Romans 4:9–12

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Week 5: Resurrection from the Dead

The Bible clearly teaches bodily resurrection from the dead. The teaching on resurrection with is covered in two installments. This week we will cover Jesus bodily resurrection from the dead and our spiritual union with Christ in His resurrection. Next week we will cover how the resurrection empowered the early church and how we will somebody experience bodily resurrection ourselves.

Jesus Bodily Rose from the Dead.

All of the gospels record Jesus rose bodily from the dead. These accounts include details that necessitate bodily resurrection and not merely survival of the spirit. Jesus was seen by over 500 witnesses. He ate fish in His resurrection body. He had scars and holes from where the nails pierced His body to prove that He was bodily resurrected.

“Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it. His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men.

But the angel answered and said to the women, ‘Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is

going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you.’ So they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring His disciples word.” – Matthew 28:1–8

“Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, ‘Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.’ ” – Acts 1:9–11

“Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time. ”

–1 Corinthians 15:1–8

We are united spiritually with Christ in His resurrection.

Just as we are united spiritually with Christ in His death through baptism, we are united spiritually with Christ in His resurrection. We are united spiritually with Christ's resurrection now.

“FOR IF WE HAVE BEEN UNITED TOGETHER IN THE LIKENESS OF HIS DEATH, CERTAINLY WE ALSO SHALL BE IN THE LIKENESS OF HIS RESURRECTION, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. 7 For he who has died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. Likewise you also, RECKON YOURSELVES TO BE DEAD INDEED TO SIN, BUT ALIVE TO GOD IN CHRIST JESUS our Lord. ” – Romans 6:5–11

“ But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, MADE US ALIVE TOGETHER WITH CHRIST (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.”

– Ephesians 2:4–7

How are we united with Christ? How are we in His body? Our bodies are not literally joined to His, but we have His Spirit. Just as your body is your body because your spirit lives there so we are Christ's body because the Spirit of Christ lives within us. If we are part of Christ's body and Christ's body is resurrected then resurrection power is available through the Holy Spirit now.

“But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His. And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.” – Romans 8:9–11

The Resurrection Power Displayed in Church History.

In 1 Corinthians 15, Paul gives an argument for the resurrection. The argument asserts several logical conclusions that necessarily follow if Christ is not raised from the dead. He is not, as some suppose, giving conditions by which the Christian faith may be falsified, but is showing that denial of the resurrection **necessarily** leads to conclusions that have been conclusively false. Because denial of the resurrection necessarily

leads to falsehood, it follows that faith in the resurrection of Christ is true and that the resurrection of Christ is a fact.

“Now if Christ is preached that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty. Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up—if in fact the dead do not rise. For if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins! Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable. But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.”

– 1 Corinthians 15:12–19

Below is an analysis of Paul argument in defense of the resurrection of Christ found in 1 Corinthians 15:12–20. If Christ is not raised then:

If Christ did not rise from the dead our faith and preaching would be in vain because both the Christian faith and message deny any source of spiritual or supernatural power apart from the body of Christ. The Christian faith rejects the notion that we are god and repudiates the

Satanic counterfeits to God. The Christian faith sees the body of Christ as the only access point through which the individual can access the power of God in the natural world. If Christ stays dead then any and all access to the power of God is permanently gone. If Christ did not rise from the dead then the Christian has only the natural means with which to attempt to live the Christian life. As we shall soon see, living the Christian life with only natural abilities is impossible.

If Christ did not rise from the dead we are still in our sins because it is possible to escape the self-centered nature only if the life of God is involved in our life on a deep personal level. The Christian faith says that such access can be done only through the body of Christ. If the body of Christ stays dead, that means no access to the life of God. If Christ did not rise from the dead, then there would no miraculous reports of changed lives.

If Christ did not rise from the early Christian would be found false witnesses. If the early Christians believed they had seen Christ raised from the dead due to some type of hallucination, then that hallucination so severely affected them as to render them extremely mentally ill—mental illness along the lines of paranoid schizophrenics who cannot function in normal society. If they knew Christ did not rise and simply lied, the entire Christian faith is a fraud. If Christ did not rise from the dead then not only would the early church had been liars or mentally ill, but they would have been quickly exposed as such. The early naysayers

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of Christianity would have produced the corpse as the final polemic against Christianity. Could a ragtag group of liars and mental cases who were exposed as such not only survive the hostile culture but eventually displace it. Could they have done this with a message that had been thoroughly debunked? It takes less faith to believe the resurrection than to believe the spin of the skeptics.

The early church functioned in a very hostile environment. The nature of the Christian faith is such that so that the early Christians would be cut off from alternate sources of supernatural power. The nature of the Christian faith is also such that, in the absence of an actual resurrection of Christ, it would require its early practitioners to persist in faith in Christ at the expense of normal mental functioning. The early Church would have failed miserably apart from the resurrection power of Christ.

We will somebody experience bodily resurrection ourselves.

Because we are united with Christ in His resurrection, we will someday experience bodily resurrection ourselves. Those who have trusted Christ will rise to live forever, while those who have rejected Christ will rise to be damned forever.

“But someone will say, “How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come?” Foolish one, what you sow is not made alive unless it dies. And what you sow, you do not sow that body that shall be, but mere grain—perhaps wheat or some other grain. But God gives it a body as He pleases, and to each seed its own body. All flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of animals, another of fish, and another of birds. There are also celestial bodies and terrestrial bodies; but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differs from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.” – 1 Corinthians 15:35–44

“Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I tell you a mystery: WE SHALL NOT ALL SLEEP, BUT WE SHALL ALL BE CHANGED— in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be

brought to pass the saying that is written: 'Death is swallowed up in victory.' 'O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?' ”

- 1 Corinthians 15:50-55

“But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

“For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.” - 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17

Week 5 Questions

1. How did the apostles know Jesus rose from the dead?
2. How are we united with the resurrection of Christ?
3. By what means or by whom do we have access to the resurrection power of Christ now?
4. In what ways did the church demonstrate the resurrection of Christ?

5. Could the early church have succeeded without the resurrection of Christ?

6. Why do Christians have the hope of future resurrection?

Scripture references

Matthew 28:1–8; Acts 1:9–11; 1 Corinthians 15:1–8

Romans 6:5–11 ; Eph 2:4–7; Romans 8:9–11

1 Corinthians 15; 1 Thessalonians 4

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Week 6: Eternal Judgment.

The Bible clearly teaches that there are immutable, eternal principles. Contrary to the popular view of the world that says that everything is relative. There are eternal principles. Relativism is itself self refuting. If everything is relative, then relativism itself is either only true relative to some context, which would mean that in other contexts that there are absolute truths, or relativism is itself absolutely true.

There are three implications concerning the existence of eternal judgment. These implications cover past, present and future. The first is that God has foreordained many things from eternity past. The second is that we have a choice concerning Christ which will have eternal consequences. The third is that everything done in history will be brought to eternal and final judgment.

God has Foreordained Many Things From Eternity Past.

The Bible plainly states that God predestines the affairs of people. God know everything that will happen, and everything that might happen. The phrase “*works all things according to the counsel of his will*” means that God anticipates everything that could happen, and the consequences of His decisions, and judges accordingly. Specifically, He has chosen the elect from before the creation of the world.

“...just as HE CHOSE US IN HIM BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having PREDESTINED US to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, ... having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him. In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, BEING PREDESTINED ACCORDING TO

THE PURPOSE OF HIM WHO WORKS ALL THINGS ACCORDING TO THE COUNSEL OF HIS WILL,” – Ephesians 1:4–5, 9–11

“FOR WHOM HE FOREKNEW, HE ALSO PREDESTINED to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified”

– Romans 8:29–30

We have a choice concerning Christ which will have eternal consequences.

Predestination does not mean that people do not have free choice concerning whether to believe in Christ. God does not force people to

choose Christ, nor does He cause people to make a certain choice. We are told that God wants everyone to come to Christ to have life.

“But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, NOT WANTING ANYONE TO PERISH, BUT EVERYONE TO COME TO REPENTANCE.” – 2 Peter 3:8–9

“And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, CHOOSE FOR YOURSELVES THIS DAY WHOM YOU WILL SERVE, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But AS FOR ME AND MY HOUSE, WE WILL SERVE THE LORD” – Joshua 24:15

Why do not all come to repentance? Because God gave people a choice. How is choice and predestination compatible? God knows every possible choice and its consequences. God knows the algorithms that each of us has created freely that governs our decision making processes; God knows how different possible variables will influence our choices. God uses this knowledge to calculate the decision He makes to control the context in which individuals and nations make choices. God foreknew what would draw you towards your choice to believe in Him.

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Given that we do have a choice, then the choice whether or not to believe in Christ, accept His sacrifice and pledge allegiance to Him is a decision that has eternal consequences. If you die without Christ, you will spend eternity in the lake of fire. If you accept Him, you will spend eternity with Him.

Everything done in history will be brought to eternal and final judgment.

Ecclesiastes tells us every work will be brought to a final judgment which will determine whether it is good or evil.

“Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them; While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain:

...Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. FOR GOD SHALL BRING EVERY WORK INTO JUDGMENT, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.” – Ecclesiastes 12:1–2,13–14

This judgment also includes a final judgment of people for the purposes of determining their eternal destiny. Everyone who has ever lived will either enter the Presence of God for eternity or be cast into the Lake of Fire for eternity.

“But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things. And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; Who will render to every man according to his deeds: TO THEM WHO BY PATIENT CONTINUANCE IN WELL DOING SEEK FOR GLORY AND HONOUR AND IMMORTALITY, ETERNAL LIFE: BUT UNTO THEM THAT ARE CONTENTIOUS, AND DO NOT OBEY THE TRUTH, BUT OBEY UNRIGHTEOUSNESS, INDIGNATION AND WRATH, Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: For there is no respect of persons with God.

“For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law; (For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which shew the work of the law written in their

hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;) In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel. ”

– Romans 2:2–16 KJV

“ And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus,

and for the word of God, AND WHICH HAD NOT WORSHIPPED THE BEAST, NEITHER HIS IMAGE, NEITHER HAD RECEIVED HIS MARK UPON THEIR FOREHEADS, OR IN THEIR HANDS; AND THEY LIVED AND REIGNED WITH CHRIST A THOUSAND YEARS. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

“And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which

were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. AND WHOSOEVER WAS NOT FOUND WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF LIFE WAS CAST INTO THE LAKE OF FIRE. ” – Revelation 20:4–6,11–15 KJV

“...it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment”

– Hebrews 9:27 KJV

“And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, THAN HAVING TWO FEET TO BE CAST INTO HELL, INTO THE FIRE THAT NEVER SHALL BE QUENCHED: WHERE THEIR WORM DIETH NOT, AND THE FIRE IS NOT QUENCHED. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. ” – Mark 9:43–48 KJV

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

“He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God.” – John 3:16–21

Week 6 Questions

1. What are the 3 forms of eternal judgment?
2. How does predestination and free will choices work together?
3. What are the implications of eternal judgment concerning moral absolutes?
4. How should we then live in light of eternal judgment?

Scripture References

Ephesians 1:4–5, 9–11; Romans 8:29–30; 2 Peter 3:8–9

Joshua 24:15; Ecclesiastes 12:1–2, 13–14; Romans 2:2–16; Revelation 20:4–6, 11–15; Hebrews 9:27; Mark 9:43–48 ;

John 3:16–21

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Answer Key for Basic Doctrine Book

Week 1 Questions

1. **What is sin?**

Sin is anything contrary to God's law or God's revealed character. It could be law breaking, or it could be activity outwardly lawful but born of a self-centered nature that denies the foundational role of God to rule in the heart.

2. **What is repentance?**

Repentance is simply changing one's mind. In the context of this study and in the Bible, it means to change one's mind concerning the both the self-centered sin nature and the law-breaking it produces.

3. **Why is it necessary to repent?**

God, as absolute truth and pure holiness cannot co-exist with sin. If we want a relationship with God we must repent.

4. **What aspect of God's Character makes sin such a barrier?**

God, as absolute truth and pure holiness cannot co-exist with sin.

5. **Why is the self-centered nature a bad thing?**

God created the universe so that He would be the foundation and context of everything. The self-centered nature introduced both contradictions to God and dysfunction to the natural universe. The self-centered nature brought both moral evil and natural disaster to the universe.

Week 2 Questions

1. **What are dead works?**

Dead works are works born from the self-centered nature rather than from the influence of the life of God working in the saint who has a relationship with God. Dead works can be good deeds born from self-centered motions or they can be misdeeds that violate God's law.

2. **What was the cause of dead works?**

The self-centered nature is the cause of dead works.

3. **Why do good works motivated by the self-centered nature lead to death?**

They do not have the life or truth of God in them. They are part of a nature that denied God is the foundation of all of creation—including your heart.

Week 3 Questions

1. **What is the relationship between faith and repentance?** Repentance involves changing one's mind away from an old pattern or view. Faith completes repentance, pointing the mind towards a new pattern or view.
2. **Who initiates faith? Why?** God must initiate faith because if the human ego in a person with the self-centered nature initiates faith, then that resulting faith merely reinforces the self-centered nature. In order to escape the self-centered nature God must be initiator/author of our faith.
3. **How does righteousness come by faith?** God credits our faith as righteousness if he sees the seeds of good works in our faith. God rewards such faith by working through that faith in the Christian life to produce the good work God wants us to do.
4. **What is the relationship between faith and works?** Saving faith has the seeds of the good works, and will, given the chance to grow, result in good works.
5. **What kind of faith saves?**

The faith that saves is a faith that trusts God to work in and through a Christian's life to produce good works. Saving faith contains the seeds of the good works to follow.

Weeks 4 Questions

1. What six things does baptism accomplish?

Baptism involves being united in Christ's death, so it produces the benefits that Christ death gave us. These would be the cleansing from sin, the destruction of the self-centered sin nature, inclusion into the covenant with God's people, confirmation of repentance, and confirmation of faith, and access to the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer.

2. What are the symbols for baptism into Christ? Noah's Ark, Circumcision, baptism into Moses, John baptism, believers water baptism.

3. How does baptism help you in your understanding of salvation?

Symbolic baptism is a picture of the old man being crucified with Christ and then raised with Him to new life.

Week 5 Questions

1. Why did the saints engage in the laying on of hands?

Laying on of hands was used as a point of contact for the exercise of faith which was generally used to transmit something. Laying on of hands dates from the days of Moses.

2. Why does God use physical points of contact?

He uses them to provide a concrete focal point for faith in that which is invisible.

3. Why are physical elements or sacraments useless in themselves to save?

Salvation is by God's grace alone through faith alone. Sacraments and ritual are useful as visual aids for our faith, but it is faith alone that is the essential part of our positive response to God's call. Sacraments and rituals have no power to save apart from faith.

4. How can faith in sacraments become dangerous? Faith in sacraments and rituals as having salvational power can lead one to adopt a view that as long as one takes the sacraments and affirms the creeds that one is free to live life anyway he wants, based upon the ideology of his choice. In a sacramental view of salvation walking day by day in the steps of the Christian faith is not required. One can adhere to an ungodly world-view that routinely advocates things contrary to the purposes of God in his day-to-day life, but as long as he took the sacraments and affirmed the creeds, he was in the kingdom of God. However, anyone who actually lives this way will find themselves thrown into the Lake of Fire on Judgment Day.

Week 6 Questions

1. How did the apostles know Jesus rose from the dead?

The apostles were all eyewitnesses of the resurrected Christ. In Acts 1 we read that eyewitness testimony of the resurrected Christ was an essential qualification for the Apostolic office.

2. How are we united with the resurrection of Christ? Because we are united or joined with Christ in His death, we are also joined with Christ in His resurrection.

3. By what means or by whom do we have access to the resurrection power of Christ now?

If we are joined to the body of Christ in His death then we are part of the body of Christ. If we are part of His body, we have access to His Spirit. When Christ was raised from the dead this open the way for His Spirit to work in not only His personal but His extended body which includes all believers in Christ.

More Week 6 Questions

1. 1. In what ways did the church demonstrate the resurrection of Christ? In 1 Corinthians 15 Paul shows that if Christ is not raised from the dead, then a number of demonstrably false conclusions follow; They would have has a useless faith and message and–

because they claimed to be eyewitnesses– would have been either liars or certifiable, mental cases. The fact that the church gave the world an enduring faith, message and legacy that not only survived but eventually displaced the predominant pagan culture demonstrates the resurrection power.

2. 2. Could the early church have succeeded without the resurrection of Christ?

The early church began in a hostile environment. If Christ were not raised from the dead, then the early Christians would likely have been too dysfunctional to survive on their own. They would certainly have been too dysfunctional to successfully promote a movement as counter-cultural and revolutionary as the gospel in the environment that the early church found herself. The gospel, because it contradicted New Age and Pagan spirituality, eliminates New Age and Pagan explanations for the power of the gospel.

- 3. 3. Why do Christians have the hope of future resurrection?** Because Christ has risen we are already united with Christ in His Resurrection, then on the Day that the Lord chooses, He will speak that Word and the dead in Christ shall rise to eternal life.

More Week 6 Questions

1. **What are the 3 forms of eternal judgment?** God foreordains things from the eternal past, We make free choices that have eternal consequences, and God executes a final judgment that decides eternal destiny of each person.
2. **How does predestination and free will choices work together?** God's foreknowledge: God everything we will do and might do. He knows our thought processes and decision-making processes. He knows what factors will influence our decisions. When God chooses the elect, He does not interfere with the freely constructed decision-making processes. He simply supplies the factors that the elect person interprets as grounds for a decision to put faith in Christ.
3. **What are the implications of eternal judgment concerning moral absolutes?**

Eternal judgment implies moral absolutes; a final judgment involves a final determination of whether a deed is good or evil. There is no relativism, lies or spin that can prevail against this judgment which we will all face someday.

4. **How should we then live in light of eternal judgment?** We will all face judgment someday which will decide where each of us will spend eternity. Each individual will spend eternity in either the Presence of God or the Lake of Fire. None of us can hope to escape

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the Lake of Fire and enter the Presence of God through good works, because they are based on the corrupt self-centered nature. The only way to the Presence of God is to put faith in Jesus Christ—the power of His death and resurrection – to save us.

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Week 1: We Have Been Given Immutable Promises.

The Great hope of the Christian life is that our faith is truly built upon a rock. Everything built upon the things in the natural world are perishable. These will pass away. The Christian faith is built on the rock of the Supernatural God. Absolute Truth is an infinite–personal God who gives immutable promises that we can take refuge in.

The Futility of the Natural Realm. Death and futility are the stuff of the natural realm. Nature is full of situational change, death , and contradictions. Nothing built upon that as the final foundation is going to endure. Not only do people die. But nations also die. If this natural world is all that is we are most miserable.

“Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever, because All flesh is as grass, And all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. THE GRASS WITHERS, AND ITS FLOWER FALLS AWAY, BUT THE WORD OF THE LORD ENDURES FOREVER.” Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.”

“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. AND THE WORLD IS PASSING AWAY, AND THE LUST OF IT; BUT HE WHO DOES THE WILL OF GOD ABIDES FOREVER.”

–1 John 2:15–17

“The glory of the LORD shall be revealed, And all flesh shall see it together; For the mouth of the LORD has spoken. The voice said, ‘Cry out!’ And he said, ‘What shall I cry?’” ‘ All flesh is grass, And all its loveliness is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, Because the breath of the LORD blows upon it; Surely the people are grass. The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever.’ ” – Isaiah 40:5–8

We Have Been Given Immutable Promises.

In 2 Peter 1 we have been given immutable promises. Through these promises we can have access to the things of God. We are told that the Word of God is powerful. The same Word that created the universe and currently hold it together is available to help us in the Christian life. The God who cannot lie has given us immutable promises.

“Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR GOD TO LIE, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us.”

– Hebrews 6:17–18

(read also John 10:35)

“The Scripture cannot be broken.”

“Simon Peter, a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, BY WHICH HAVE BEEN GIVEN TO US EXCEEDINGLY GREAT AND PRECIOUS PROMISES, THAT THROUGH THESE YOU MAY BE PARTAKERS OF THE DIVINE NATURE, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.” – 2 Peter 1:1–4

This passage was written to those who have come to faith in Jesus Christ. Peter tells that ‘...*Grace and peace be multiplied to you ...*’ This was more than just a greeting; this text contains **principle** on how the grace of God, which has already been administered, can be multiplied in the Christian life. Heeding these instructions will result in multiplied effectiveness.

Week 1 Questions

- 1 Why are natural means useless for bringing about God's righteousness?
- 2 What practical means do we have to access the power of God?
- 3 Why are God's Promises so powerful?

Scripture Passages

1 Peter 1:22–25; 1 John 2:15–17; Isaiah 40:5–8
Hebrews 6:17–18 ; John 10:35; 2 Peter 1:1–4

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Week 2: The Outworking of God's Grace.

Second Peter 1 was written to those who have come to faith in Jesus Christ. Peter tells in vs 2 that '*...Grace and peace be multiplied to you ...*' This was more than just a greeting; this text contains principle on how the grace of God, which has already been administered, can be multiplied in the Christian life. Heeding these instructions will result in multiplied effectiveness.

"Simon Peter, a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ: 2 Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, 3 as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, 4 BY WHICH HAVE BEEN GIVEN TO US EXCEEDINGLY GREAT AND PRECIOUS PROMISES, THAT THROUGH THESE YOU MAY BE PARTAKERS OF THE DIVINE NATURE, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." - 2 Peter 1:1-4

The Christian Life is the outworking that which was given to us When we were Born Again.

We are told that God has already given us everything we need for life and Godliness. Just as faith contains the seeds of righteousness, so it contains the seed of everything pertaining to life or godliness. Just as

physical development is an outworking of the potential that God put in the physical DNA, so the Christian life is the outworking of the spiritual DNA of the Word of God.

“Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, HAVING BEEN BORN AGAIN, NOT OF CORRUPTIBLE SEED BUT INCORRUPTIBLE, THROUGH THE WORD OF GOD which lives and abides forever, because ‘ All flesh is as grass, And all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, And its flower falls away, But the word of the LORD endures forever.’ Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.”

– 1 Peter 1:22–25

“Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, WORK OUT your own salvation with fear and trembling; 13 for IT IS GOD WHO WORKS IN YOU BOTH TO WILL AND TO DO for His good pleasure. ” – Philippians 2:12–13

Confessions from the heart manifest righteousness God has embedded in our faith.

We are to ‘ **WORK OUT** ’ our salvation—not work to get saved, but bear outward fruit of the seed of God’s Word that has already been planted in

us. How do we manifest the fruits of the Christian life? We must meditate on the Word, confess the Word.

“For every tree is known by its own fruit. For men do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they gather grapes from a bramble bush. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. FOR OUT OF THE ABUNDANCE OF THE HEART HIS MOUTH SPEAKS.”

–Luke 6:44–46

“6 But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way, ‘Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’ (that is, to bring Christ down from above) 7 or, ‘Who will descend into the abyss?’ (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). 8 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 preach): 9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 FOR WITH THE HEART ONE BELIEVES UNTO RIGHTEOUSNESS, AND WITH THE MOUTH CONFESSION IS MADE UNTO SALVATION.” – Romans 10:6–10

It is in confession, that righteousness is manifested. Faith has the seed of righteousness. Confession both manifests what is in the heart and reinforces the belief that is there. The phrase ‘***...IS MADE UNTO SALVATION ...***’ means that confession manifests into the visible world

the essence of righteousness that exists in faith. We must daily confess our faith, we must confess what the Word of God teaches.

Our sanctification is through confession of the Word of God. We are not left without a guide on what to or how to confess. The rest of the section in 2 Peter gives us an outline on confession. These confession must be heart-felt and not something rote or mechanical. Under each section there are several passages that can be interchanged to keep these confessions fresh and not mechanical.

The key to the supernatural power of confession is the power inherent in God's Word. There is little power, though possibly great psychological influence, in confessing our own opinions. Attempting to use confession to wield supernatural power outside of standing on the promises of God's Word is foolish. **WARNING:** The act of confessing one's own imagination as if it were God's Word amount to involvement in the occult. Our confessions must be rooted in the promises God has revealed to us.

Scripture References

2 Peter 1:1–4; 1 Peter 1:22–25 Philippians 2:12–13

Luke 6:44–46; Romans 10:6–10

Week 2 Questions

- 1 Why is the Christian life an outworking of what we were given when we were born again?
- 2 What is embedded /invested into the Christian life?
- 3 What is the container of these blessings?
- 4 By what method do we outwardly manifest these blessings?
- 5 Why is confession so powerful?
- 6 What are the limits to the power of confession?
- 7 Why is it foolish to practice confession apart from reliance on God's promises?

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Week 3: The Development of Faith Requires Diligence

The Christian life requires hard work. I am meaning this as a doctrine of salvation by works. We are saved by faith alone. What I mean is that the faith that saves undergoes development. This development involves work and diligence. God rewards those who diligently seek Him.

“But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.” – Hebrews 11:6

A Lesson in Diligence: the Dangers of Laziness

In Matthew 25 we read of the parables of the Talents. The Master of a household went on a journey and entrusted the management of his resources to his servants. One was given ten talents, another two talents, and a third, one talent.

“For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. 15 And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey.”

– Matthew 25:14–15

Two of these three use due diligence in their management of their masters resources. The practice of diligence results in the multiplications of their master's resources. The master of the house richly rewards them, giving them control of entire cities!

“Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. And likewise he who had received two gained two more also.”

–Matthew 25:16–17

“So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, ‘Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.’ 21 His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’ 22 He also who had received two talents came and said, ‘Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.’ 23 His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’ “ – Matthew 25:20–23

The third servant, however, does not manage the resources given to him. He simply throws into a hole in the ground. This was extremely lazy and wicked because that servant could at least have put the money in the

bank and let the bank produce interest income through its management of those resources. He gets an extremely harsh rebuke from his lord.

“Then he who had received the one talent came and said, ‘Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.’ But his lord answered and said to him, ‘YOU WICKED AND LAZY SERVANT, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents.’ For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth” – Matthew 25:24–30

The rebuke from the master was extremely harsh. He literally fired that servant. This parable is about how the Lord Jesus Christ has made us managers of God’s grace that is given to us. If we make good use of His grace then the benefit of that grace will be multiplied. If we do not go to the effort to use it is no benefit to us.

The consequences of failure to exercise due diligence are extreme. Being thrown into “ *the outer darkness*” is another of saying that those too lazy to act on God’s grace will be cast into hell. Jesus, by saying these things, is not denying salvation by faith. **He is not saying that works are the basis of our salvation, but that walking by faith requires effort and discipline.** It takes effort and discipline. It takes effort and discipline to understand what the promises that God gave to us say. It takes effort and discipline to understand how to apply these promises to daily life. It takes effort and discipline to regularly verbalize these promises in confessions that re-reinforce our faith. It takes effort and discipline to regularly verbalize these promises in confession until that confession of faith results in manifestation of supernatural power.

The remainder of this section is confession of God’s promises to cumulative attributes of faith. Faith becomes more mature and more productive as attributes are added to it. These are both cumulative and **sequential**. One must add virtue to faith before adding knowledge to virtue. By understanding God’s promises and confessing them as they apply to specific attribute, we can build those attributes and embed them into our faith.

Week 3 Questions

1 What are the danger of laziness?

2 Why must a Christian be diligent in exercising the faith?

Equipping the Saints

3 What is the difference between the diligent exercise of faith and salvation by works?

Scripture passages

Hebrews 11:6; Matthew 25:14–30.

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Week 4: The Basic Confessions of Faith.

The basic confessions of faith form the starting point of our good confession. When we practice confession as a means of focusing and exercising our faith, these basic confessions concerning the power of Jesus blood are the starting point.

The blood of Jesus...

The blood of Jesus takes away Satan's accusations

It is the blood of Jesus that destroys Satan's power and works of Satan. We read in Col 2:11–15 how Christ overcame Satan at the cross.

In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. – Colossians 2:11–15

The phrase **handwriting of ordinances that was against us** is another of referring to criminal charges. Christ dismissed all charges against us by means of His blood. This passage could just as easily read “***And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; dismissing any and all CRIMINAL CHARGES that have been filed against us and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;***” The blood of Christ Jesus took away all of Satan’s accusations as well as the sin nature and sins.

Principalities and powers is referring to Satan and his kingdom (see Eph 6:10–18). Satan has been defeated by the blood of Jesus Christ. Christ through the shedding of His blood on the cross takes away Satan’s position and right to prosecute.

The blood of Jesus takes away sinful desires (be specific to your case). There is power in confession. We are told three times in the Bible to confess our sins to God. When we confess our sins, God takes them away.

Twice in the Old Testament God used confession to transfer sins away from His people. In Leviticus 16 the High Priest, on the Day of Atonement, was to confess all of the sins of Israel over a goat. The goat, laden with the sins of Israel, would be taken to a distant land and set

loose. David, in Psalm 32, says that God was against him until he confessed his sins, but after he acknowledged his sin God was with him again.

“And when he has made an end of atoning for the Holy Place, the tabernacle of meeting, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat. 21 Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, confess over it all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions, concerning all their sins, putting them on the head of the goat, and shall send it away into the wilderness by the hand of a suitable man. 22 The goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities to an uninhabited land; and he shall release the goat in the wilderness. ” – Leviticus 16:20–22

“ Blessed is the man to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no deceit. When I kept silent, my bones grew old through my groaning all the day long. For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; My vitality was turned into the drought of summer. Selah I acknowledged my sin to You, And my iniquity I have not hidden. I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,” And You forgave the iniquity of my sin. Selah ”

–Psalm 32:2–5

In the New Testament we have the promise that upon the confession of sins the blood of Jesus cleanses us from our sins. In 1 John we are

commanded to confess our sins with the promise that the blood of Jesus will cleanse us from all sin. Confession of our sins is presented here as the key to walking in the light of God. If we confess our sins then the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all unrighteousness and we can walk in the light of the Lord.

“If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” – 1 John 1:6–9

The blood of Jesus has destroyed Satan’s power, authority and access to God.

Satan comes in like a prosecuting attorney. He is called the accuser of the brothers and sisters. Satan seeks to use God’s law as a weapon to oppress His people. This doesn’t mean that Satan cares about God’s law. Satan hates God’s law and loves lawlessness. He only cares about how he can use God’s law to gain an advantage and cares ONLY about the parts that he can use. Satan is a master on how to use the law to promote lawlessness.

Satan is the Father of corrupt prosecutors. Satan will accuse you of lust or hate or whatever sin has overtaken you and ask God to execute judgment against you and act as your adversary. There are several passages that say plainly that God sometimes, even in the New Testament will deliver chastisement to His people (Heb 12:5–11; 1 Corinthians 10:1–12).

Good news is that the blood of Jesus destroys Satan's power and authority! Satan will be cast out of heaven. Rev 12 gives us critical information that can be used in our warfare against Satan. The word 'they' in verse 11 refers to believers in Christ. We overcome Satan “ *by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony*”. The word of our testimony is our confession that the blood of Jesus has stripped Satan of his position.

“And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they

loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.”

- Revelation 12:7-12

When Jesus shed His blood upon the cross, he not only took away our sins, but ransacked Satan. When the text says that Christ “ **...AND HAVING SPOILED PRINCIPALITIES AND POWERS, HE MADE A SHEW OF THEM OPENLY...**” it is saying that Satan was captured, stripped of everything, and displayed on parade as the spoils of war.

*“In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;**AND HAVING SPOILED PRINCIPALITIES AND POWERS, HE MADE A SHEW OF THEM OPENLY, triumphing over them in it.**”*

- Colossians 2:11-15

The blood of Jesus destroys the sin nature, making the way for us to draw close to God.

The blood of Jesus not only takes away particular sins but cleanses the conscience from the self-centered sin nature. We can be cleansed from the self-centered nature so that a living way was made for us to draw near to God. With the barrier to God removed, the Lord now can work in us and through us.

“But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. 12 Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. 13 For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, 14 how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, CLEANSE YOUR CONSCIENCE FROM DEAD WORKS to serve the living God?” - Hebrews 9:11-14

“Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, 20 by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, 21 and having a High Priest over the house of God, 22 LET US DRAW NEAR with a true heart in full assurance of faith, HAVING OUR HEARTS SPRINKLED FROM AN EVIL CONSCIENCE and our bodies washed with pure water. 23 LET US HOLD FAST THE

CONFESSION OF OUR HOPE WITHOUT WAVERING, FOR HE WHO PROMISED IS FAITHFUL. – Hebrews 10:19–23

The Blood of Jesus has Redeemed me from the World System.

We have been purchased from the world–system by the blood of Jesus. The world with its pride, lust, and games no longer has any authority or claim on us. We are free through the blood of Jesus.

“Therefore, IF YOU DIED WITH CHRIST FROM THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF THE WORLD, WHY, AS THOUGH LIVING IN THE WORLD, DO YOU SUBJECT YOURSELVES TO REGULATIONS— ‘Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle,’ which all concern things which perish with the using—according to the commandments and doctrines of men? These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self–imposed religion, false humility, and neglect of the body, but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh. If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.”

– Colossians 2:20–3:4

“If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. 19 If you were of the world, the world would love its own. YET BECAUSE

YOU ARE NOT OF THE WORLD, BUT I CHOSE YOU OUT OF THE WORLD, therefore the world hates you.” – John 15:18–19

“Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty–four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song, saying: ‘ You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have REDEEMED US TO GOD BY YOUR BLOOD OUT OF EVERY TRIBE AND TONGUE AND PEOPLE AND NATION, 10 And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth.’ ” – Revelation 5:8–10

Week 4 Questions

- 1 What liberates us from Satan’s power?
- 2 What is Satan’s primary method of attacking believers?
- 3 What is the relation between God’s Judgment and spiritual warfare
- 4 How do we apply the blood of Jesus as a weapon?
- 5 What is the significance of being redeemed from the world system?

Scripture Passages

Leviticus 16:20–22 ; Psalm 32:2–5 ; John 15:18–19

Equipping the Saints

1 Corinthians 10:1–12; Colossians 2:11–15 ; Colossians 2:20–3:4;

Ephesians 6:10–18; Hebrews 9:11–14 ; Hebrews 12:5–11;

Hebrews 10:19–23 ; 1 John 1:6–9

Revelation 5:8–10 ; Revelation 12:7–12 ;

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Week 5: Add Inner Virtues to your Faith.

In addition to the fundamental confessions of the faith, We are to add attributes to our faith through good confessions. There are seven attributes of confessions listed in 2 Peter 1. These categories will be grouped into three broad categories because it will take three weeks to cover them. This week will cover the category of attributes that relate to the inner life and next week will cover issues relating to our devotion and worship of God.

Add to your Faith Virtue/excellence

Christian life is like any other pursuit. If you play around and treat it like a game, you will not likely accomplish much. If, however, you pursue moral and technical excellence you can accomplish great things.

“But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may

lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. ” – Phillipians 3:7–14

Add to your Virtue Knowledge

The pursuit of excellence requires knowledge of the most effective ways to accomplish this. If we are going to confess God’s promises in the hope that the hidden reality of these promises materializes in the visible universe, we must understand these promises in context. The more knowledge of the promises of God we attain, the more skilled we can become in applying those promises to current situations.

“But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

– 2 Timothy 3:14–17

Add to your Knowledge Self-Control.

Equipping the Saints

Knowledge is of limited use if we cannot control its use. Self-control allows us to focus our energies in the proper application of this knowledge. Self-control is the fruit of the Spirit. By confessing that the blood of Jesus takes away the self-centered nature and then confessing that the Holy Spirit is producing this fruit, we will bear this fruit.

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, SELF-CONTROL. Against such there is no law” – Galations 5:22–23

Week 5 Questions

- 1 What is virtue?
- 2 Why is the pursuit of excellence important?
- 3 Why is it important to know the scripture?
- 4 How do we attain self-control?

Scripture Passages

Philippians 3:7–14 2 Tim 3:14–17 Gal 5:22–23

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Week 6: Add Perseverance to your Faith.

Add to your Self-control Patience/Perseverance.

Self-control is most useful when exercised over a prolonged period of time. Self-control over a long time through trials and tribulation produces perseverance. We must through perseverance and tribulations enter the Kingdom of God. Enduring trials produces hope. Our assurance that hope is justified is that God loves us and has put His love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit. Because God loves and has enabled us to love, we can hope for God to manifest deliverance with an expectation that God will come through for us.

“Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance, and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.” – Romans 5:1–5

“My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.”

– James 1:2–4

The reason that tribulations produce hope is that God pours His love into our hearts. Our assurance that God has poured His love into our heart is that He is treating us like the great saints. When one studies the lives of the saints in the scriptures, a clear pattern commonly emerges as they walk towards victory. There are three stages as they fight the good fight of faith. There is the initial move of faith followed by a season of trials in the wilderness. At the end of this season the child of God reaches the turning point where God brings the victory.

The Initial Call.

The walk of faith begins when God reveals his vision to His child. sometimes this call goes out in the midst of pre-existing trials. Other times it is immediately followed by trials. Usually there is a ‘honeymoon ‘ period where there are initial steps of faith towards the goal before the storm hits. Those “*whom the Lord foreknew, He called* (Romans 8:29–30)”.

The Trial Season.

The initial call is followed by trials, tribulations, opposition and Satanic attacks. Sometimes this can last for years. Much of the history of the saints involves God’s people waiting while enduring tribulations. These tribulations serve both a corrective purpose as well as the context

through which God's power is demonstrated. It is through much tribulation that we enter the kingdom of God (Acts 14:22).

The Victory.

After the season of tribulation there comes a turning point where God brings the victory. Below are several saints whose lives followed this pattern. These saints persevered until their faith overcame. As the Bible teaches, our faith is the victory that overcomes the world (1 John 5:4-5).

The following table clearly shows the three stages.

Person	Call	Tribulation	Victory Point
Joseph	God gave Joseph dreams	Joseph was sold by his brothers into slavery and for 13 years became slave and prisoner in Egypt. His leadership experiences as a slave and prisoner prepared him to become Prime Minister of Egypt	Joseph became Prime when he both interpreted Pharoahs Dreams and gave wise counsel to Pharoah

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Moses	Moses saved from death in order to be Israel's deliverer	Moses fled into the wilderness and lived as a shepherd for 40 years	God called him back to Egypt to deliver the Israelites
Ruth	Determined to follow Naomi—makes profession of faith in the God of Naomi	She left her home land and heritage to live as a beggar in In a strange land	She married Boaz and become mother to both the Royal House of David and the Messiah
David	Was anointed as God's choice for king. He began his career by killing Goliath and performed exemplary duty as a warrior	Saul pursued David and sought to kill him. David lived for a number of years as a fugitive. during this time he softened his enemies and acquired skills that would benefit him as king	When Saul died the House of David became stronger while the House of Saul became weaker. Finally the elders of Israel crowned David King of Israel`

Jesus Christ	Jesus Christ was chosen by God to be savior of the world	Left the glory of heaven to be clothed in human flesh. suffered fierce opposition as He did mighty works of God. He eventually suffered an agonizing death on the cross.	His death on the cross conquered sin and Satan's power. He conquered death by Resurrection from the dead
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God utilizes what I call the Elijah Principle with those He loves. In 1 Kings 18 Elijah has a contest with the false prophets at Mt Carmel. Elijah would call upon God and the false prophets would call upon Baal. The God who answers by fire is the true God of Israel.

The deck is horrendously stacked against Elijah. He is outnumbered 850 to 1. The false prophets are given most of the day to do their thing. When it is Elijah's turn, God tells Elijah to further stack the deck against himself. Elijah drowns the sacrifice with water. There is no possible way for Elijah to win this contest unless his God is God. God then answers powerfully.

What happened to Elijah is the pattern for the saints. The Lord will stack the deck against His own people, so that He may be glorified through

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the victory of the saints. God uses the suffering and triumph of the saints to prove His mighty power to an unbelieving world. If you feel like the deck is royally stacked against you, then it may be that God is bestowing upon you the same love He has given the great saints of old.

Week 6 Questions

- 1 Why must we suffer tribulation?
- 2 How do tribulation strengthen our faith?
- 3 Why does God sometimes temporarily stack the deck against us?
- 4 What is a common pattern of suffering of the saints. Why is that?

Scripture Passages

Romans 5:1–5; 1 Kings 18; James 1;

Romans 8:29–30; Acts 14:22; John 5:4–5

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Week 7: Add Praise and Worship to your Perseverance

The word for godliness in 2 Peter 1 literally means good devotion. How do we express our devotion to God, through prayer, praise and worship. The Scriptures clearly teach that prayer praise, and worship is both a conduit through which God's power is displayed and a means by which we experience the Presence of God in our lives.

“Make a joyful shout to the LORD, all you lands! Serve the LORD with gladness; Come before His presence with singing. Know that the LORD, He is God; It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; We are His people and the sheep of His pasture. ENTER INTO HIS GATES WITH THANKSGIVING, AND INTO HIS COURTS WITH PRAISE. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name. For the LORD is good; His mercy is everlasting, And His truth endures to all generations.”

– Psalm 100

“But You are holy, ENTHRONED IN THE PRAISES OF ISRAEL. Our fathers trusted in You; They trusted, and You delivered them. They cried to You, and were delivered; They trusted in You, and were not ashamed. ” –Psalm 22:3–5

“And it came to pass when the priests came out of the Most Holy Place (for all the priests who were present had sanctified themselves, without keeping to their divisions), and the Levites who were the singers, all

those of Asaph and Heman and Jeduthun, with their sons and their brethren, stood at the east end of the altar, clothed in white linen, having cymbals, stringed instruments and harps, and with them one hundred and twenty priests sounding with trumpets— indeed it came to pass, when the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD, and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the LORD, saying: ‘For He is good, For His mercy endures forever, ‘ that the house, the house of the LORD, was filled with a cloud, so that the priests could not continue ministering because of the cloud; for the glory of the LORD filled the house of God.”

-2 Chronicles 5:11-14

“David, together with the commanders of the army, set apart some of the sons of Asaph, Heman and Jeduthun FOR THE MINISTRY OF PROPHECYING, ACCOMPANIED BY HARPS, LYRES AND CYMBALS. Here is the list of the men who performed this service:” - 1 Chronicles 25:1

“And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed those who should sing to the LORD, and who should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army and were saying: ‘Praise the LORD, For His mercy endures forever.’ NOW WHEN THEY BEGAN TO SING AND TO PRAISE, THE LORD SET AMBUSHES against the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah; and they were defeated”

-2 Chronicles 20:21-22

“Having received such a charge, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks. BUT AT MIDNIGHT PAUL AND SILAS WERE PRAYING AND SINGING HYMNS TO GOD, AND THE PRISONERS WERE LISTENING TO THEM. SUDDENLY THERE WAS A GREAT EARTHQUAKE, SO THAT THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE PRISON WERE SHAKEN; AND IMMEDIATELY ALL THE DOORS WERE OPENED AND EVERYONE’S CHAINS WERE LOOSED” – Acts 16:24–26

“And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; BUT BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT, SPEAKING TO ONE ANOTHER IN PSALMS AND HYMNS AND SPIRITUAL SONGS, SINGING AND MAKING MELODY IN YOUR HEART TO THE LORD, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another in the fear of God.” – Ephesians 5:18–21

There is power in praise and worship. Worshiping God is connected to being filled with the Holy Spirit with the prophecy, power, and presence of God. This power multiplies even further when sacrificial praise is offered. Praise is sacrificial when offered in the midst of suffering.

“For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion; In the secret place of His tabernacle He shall hide me; He shall set me high upon a rock. And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around

me; Therefore I will offer SACRIFICES OF JOY IN HIS TABERNACLE; I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the LORD.” – Psalm 27:5–6

“And it shall be, if you heed Me carefully,” says the LORD, “to bring no burden through the gates of this city on the Sabbath day, but hallow the Sabbath day, to do no work in it, then shall enter the gates of this city kings and princes sitting on the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, they and their princes, accompanied by the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and this city shall remain forever. And they shall come from the cities of Judah and from the places around Jerusalem, from the land of Benjamin and from the lowland, from the mountains and from the South, bringing burnt offerings and sacrifices, grain offerings and incense, BRINGING SACRIFICES OF PRAISE TO THE HOUSE OF THE LORD. But if you will not heed Me to hallow the Sabbath day, such as not carrying a burden when entering the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day, then I will kindle a fire in its gates, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched.”

– Jeremiah 17:24–27

“Thus says the LORD: „Again there shall be heard in this place—of which you say, ‘It is desolate, without man and without beast’—in the cities of Judah, in the streets of Jerusalem that are desolate, without man and without inhabitant and without beast, the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the voice of those who will say: “Praise the LORD of hosts, For the LORD is

good, For His mercy endures forever”— and of those who will bring the SACRIFICE OF PRAISE into the house of the LORD. For I will cause the captives of the land to return as at the first, says the LORD.’ ”

- Jeremiah 33:10-11

“Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, BEARING HIS REPROACH. For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come. Therefore by Him let us continually OFFER THE SACRIFICE OF PRAISE TO GOD, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. ” - Hebrews 13:13-16

Hebrews 13:3-6 tells us to go outside the camp to where Christ suffered to offer the sacrifice of praise. The sacrifice of praise, in every place taught in Scripture, was in the context of trial and suffering. In each case the offering of the sacrifice of praise on the part of the believer resulted in God offering deliverance of one type or another. In Psalms 27:5-6 it was in the context of David’s trials: God delivered David In Jeremiah 17:24-27;33:10-11 it was in the context of the Jews being separated from their homeland: God promises restorations of the Promised Land to the Jews. In Hebrews 13:13-16 it is in the context of Christians suffering for Christ: God promises the city to come—implying resurrection.

What does offering sacrifices of praise have to do with the resurrection? The Scriptures teach that when we suffer for Christ we are partaking in

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the sufferings of Christ. If we partake in His sufferings, we will experience both Holy Spirit and Resurrection power.

“Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; BUT REJOICE TO THE EXTENT THAT YOU PARTAKE OF CHRIST’S SUFFERINGS, THAT WHEN HIS GLORY IS REVEALED, YOU MAY ALSO BE GLAD WITH EXCEEDING JOY. If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified.”

-1 Peter 4:12-14

Week 7 Questions

- 1 What happens when we worship God?
- 2 What is a sacrifice of Praise?
- 3 What is the relationship between praise and the resurrection?

Scripture Passages

- 1 Chronicles 25:1
- 2 Chronicles 5:11-14; 20:21-22; Psalm 22:3-5; 27:5-6

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Psalm 100; Jeremiah 17:24–27; 33:10–11; Acts 16:24–26;

Ephesians 5:18–21; Hebrews 13:13–16 ; 1 Peter 4:12–14

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Week 8: Add Prayer to Your Perseverance.

The disciples, like the rest of us, struggled with prayer. One day they asked the Lord Jesus, “Lord, teach us to Pray”. The response of our Lord was to say what is called the Lord’s Prayer. (Luke 11:1–4) The Lord Jesus gave an outline of six headings to guide our prayer life.

This prayer was not intended to be recited by rote, but as an outline for how we are to pray. I have put the six headings in bold, and underneath each one I have put suggestions of content that can be placed there, including any relevant Scripture passages or studies. I intentionally left generous space so that you can use a printed copy of this page to guide your prayer life, filling in that space with your prayer needs.

Philippians 4:6–7 gives us two practical instructions on prayer. We are told to pray over everything in our lives. That is what the text means by the phrase “**BUT IN EVERYTHING.**” This implies being specific in each request.

“Be anxious for nothing, BUT IN EVERYTHING BY PRAYER AND SUPPLICATION, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; 7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” – Philippians 4:6–7

Here is the outline:

Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name.

Praise and worship songs and spoken praises here.

Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as *it is* in heaven. Seek God's intervention in human affairs. Ask God to unify and empower the church.

Give us this day our daily bread.

God provision for us and all types of needs: physical, emotional, and spiritual.

And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors.

Confession of sin and prayer for God to give us a loving heart.

And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. Spiritual Warfare confessions. Prayers against apostasy.

For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Acknowledge it is about the Lord's Kingdom, not ours.

Scriptures

Luke 11:1–4; Philippians 4:6–7

Week 8 Questions

1 How is the Lord's prayer in Luke 11:1–4 to be used?

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Answer Key for Basic Practices

Week 1 Questions

1 Why are natural means useless for bringing about God's righteousness?

It is based on self, presupposing self as the foundation. This stands in contradiction to God's proper role as the foundation of all.

2 What practical means do we have to access the power of God?

We can access these by confessing His promises, which were given so that we can have access His resources.

3 Why are God's Promises so powerful?

They represent the commitments of a God who cannot lie and cannot be falsified. This God is so powerful He holds the entire universe together by His word.

Week 2 Questions

1 Why is the Christian life an outworking of what we were given when we were born again?

God has already provided everything we need, albeit in seed form. We cannot live the Christian life on the basis of our own power and resources; we manifest what God has already provided as the base.

2 What is embedded /invested into the Christian life?

God has embedded His Word as spiritual DNA.

3 What is the container of these blessings?

Faith

4 By what method do we outwardly manifest these blessings?

Through the confession of faith in God's Word.

5 Why is confession so powerful?

Its power is based on the power of God's Word and who God is.

6 What are the limits to the power of confession?

It is limited by the parameters set by God's word and is to be used for God's purposes rather than self-fulfillment.

7 Why is it foolish to practice confession apart from reliance on God's promises?

Practice of confession to access supernatural powers apart from reliance on God is participation in the occult, which is forbidden by Scripture.

Week 3 Questions

1 What are the danger of laziness?. Because the exercise of faith requires diligence, failure to exercise diligence means failure to exercise faith.

2 Why must a Christian be diligent in exercising the faith?

Because the exercise of faith requires diligence, failure to exercise diligence means failure to exercise faith. In the most extreme cases, this can be fatal to salvation. Lack of diligence is certainly a hindrance to gaining the blessings that comes through faith.

3 What is the difference between the diligent exercise of faith and salvation by works?

Salvation by works means that God judges us on the basis of our works. The foundation of salvation attained through the diligent exercise of faith is the grace of God; works are not foundational.

Week 4 Questions

1 What liberates us from Satan's power?

The blood of Jesus

2 What is Satan's primary method of attacking believers?

He accuses them of committing crimes against God, in the hopes of bringing down God's judgment upon them.

3 What is the relation between God's Judgment and spiritual warfare?

Spiritual warfare is fought on God's courtroom, involving both defeating Satan attempt to stir God against us and petitioning God to execute judgment against Satan and his kingdom.

4 How do we apply the blood of Jesus as a weapon?

By confession. The word of our testimony is the confession of the blood of Jesus and the promises of God that declare victory for us.

5 What is the significance of being redeemed from the world system?

Redemption means that we are no longer under the world's authority or the authority of the powers of darkness.

Week 5 Questions

1 What is virtue?

It is the pursuit of moral and technical excellence.

2 Why is the pursuit of excellence important?

It is a necessary precondition to success at any pursuit. Success is unlikely in any endeavor unless the endeavor is taken seriously and pursued with excellence. playing around doesn't "cut it."

3 Why is it important to know the scripture?

In order to succeed in the Christian life, as in any other endeavor, it is necessary to have knowledge of what to do and how to do it. The Bible is our source of knowledge.

4 How do we attain self-control?

Confession that the blood of Jesus neutralizes the sinful nature and that the fruit of the Holy Spirit is self-control.

Week 6 Questions

1 Why must we suffer tribulation?

It produces hope based on God's love and is used to prove that the subsequent deliverance is indeed produced by God.

2 How do tribulation strengthen our faith?

Produces hope based on love and assures that we are loved by God because we are being treated like the great saints of old.

3 Why does God sometimes temporarily stack the deck against us?

To prove his power to deliver us. This is called the Elijah principle because its clearest demonstration is found in the conflict between Elijah and the prophets of Baal. There Elijah stacked the deck against himself at God's command. When God supernaturally ignited the sacrifice, the people knew it was God.

4 What is a common pattern of suffering of the saints. Why is that?

The Elijah principle is manifest in three phases. The first phase is the initial call when God makes a promise to someone. The second phase is the tribulations that make fulfillment of that promise seem impossible. The third phase is the victory phase where God acts to make the promise come to pass.

Week 7 Questions

1 What happens when we worship God?

It ushers us into the presence of God and releases His power into our lives.

2 What is a sacrifice of Praise?

Praise offered in the midst of suffering.

3 What is the relationship between praise and the resurrection? Suffering for the cause of Christ is participating in the suffering of Christ, and participating in the suffering of Christ involves a release of resurrection power. Praises offered during these sufferings facilitates the release of resurrection that follow suffering for Christ.

Week 8 Questions

1 How is the Lord's prayer in Luke 11:1–4 to be used?

This prayer was not intended to be recited by rote, but as an outline for how we are to pray.

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Book 3: Walking in Love

[Week 1: Introduction to Brotherly Kindness and Love](#)

[Week 2: Trust God to Place People into Our Lives](#)

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Week 1: Introduction to Brotherly Kindness and Love

The following section is a continuation of the previous section, Basic Practices. The following section discusses adding brotherly kindness to good devotion and love to our brotherly kindness. The amount of material here is simply too vast to cover in one week/chapter.

Following the Laws of Love

The point of God's grace in the abolition of legalism is not that we be lawless, but that we follow the Two Laws of Love rather than the Law of Sin and Death. The Law of Sin and Death is what prevailed before Christ, and is still prevalent in immature Christians. The Law of Sin and Death asserts that the consequences and penalty of sin is death. Those who are under this law are motivated by lust, pride of life, or fear of death to tow the line. People subject to the law of sin and death seek to obey God out of selfish ambition. OT obedience was primarily a selfish impulse.

“There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the

flesh, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His” – Romans 8 1–9

Those who strive to obey God out of fear of punishment or lust after reward are thinking of their own hide. They are carnally minded. The person who is carnally minded cannot please God because his or her thinking is fundamentally about the self. When we came to Christ we were set free from fleshly thinking and freed to engage in spiritual thinking. However, it takes a maturing process to walk in that freedom.

The first few steps in the development of our faith that is explained in 2 Peter can be done while a person thinks of obedience in terms of fear or other selfish ambition. However, such obedience can only go so far before its self-centered foundation brings us back again into bondage to sin.

“For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice. Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. BUT I SEE ANOTHER LAW IN MY MEMBERS, WARRING AGAINST THE LAW OF MY MIND, AND BRINGING ME INTO CAPTIVITY TO THE LAW OF SIN WHICH IS IN MY MEMBERS.”

- Romans 7:18-23

It is the last two attributes of the development of our faith described in 1 Peter 2 that take us past these limitations. Obedience to the laws of love is spiritual thinking. Obedience to these laws is walking according to the Spirit. Jesus speaks of these two laws when He asked which is the greatest commandment.

“ ‘Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?’ Jesus replied: ‘ “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.” This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments. ‘ ”

- Matthew 22:36-40

These two laws are to love your neighbor as yourself and to love the Lord with all of your heart, soul, mind, and strength. Jesus puts them in the order of importance in Matthew, but Peter puts them in reverse order because that is the order in which we mature. We learn to love our neighbor as ourselves by loving the brothers and sisters. We then move on to maturity by loving God with everything we have.

Brotherly Love: Loving your neighbor as yourself.

The New Testament, in its emphasis on Biblical unity in the Church, instructs us to develop intimate relationships among the brothers and sisters. We are to develop relationships where we fall head over heels in brotherly love towards our brothers and sisters in Christ. There are four principles that govern how to safely and effectively achieve intimacy among members of the Body of Christ: Trust God to place into our lives those with whom we are to have relationships and trust Him to arrange them in the proper relations with us, Speak the truth in love, flee selfish desires, and allow brotherly love to produce holiness.

Week 1 Questions

1. What are the Two Laws of Love?
2. Why is following the laws of love so important?
3. How does following the laws of love help us escape from selfishness?

4. Why is it impossible to please God by walking in the flesh?

Scriptures

Romans 8 1–9; 7:18–23; Matthew 22:36–40

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Week 2: Trust God to Place People into Our Lives

It is written in 1 Corinthians 12 that God has arranged the members of the Body in the Christ in the relations that He wants them to be in. God will bring brothers and sisters, mothers and fathers in the Lord in the type of relations He wants. He will bring you in to their lives. We are to develop love relationships where we can be both blessed and a blessing.

“For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body.”

- 1 Cor 12:13-20 KJV

Each believer has a place in the Body of Christ. Each part needs the other parts to function properly. God has placed you exactly where He wants you. You exist not only in relation to Christ but also in relation to other members of the body.

“Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked: That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.”

-1 Corinthians 12:22-27 KJV

We are to deeply care for our brothers and sisters. God has placed the members so that there would be no schism in the body but the same love for one another might be distributed throughout the body. While in the flesh we have barriers to love and affection, the agape and brotherly love of Christ knows no such restriction. We are to be in love with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

It is, on a practical level, impossible for any one person to have such deep relations with every other individual believer. What the Lord does is to place into each of our lives certain individual brothers and sisters with which we will become affectionately bonded with brotherly love.

“Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you. Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour.”

– Ephesians 4:31–5:2 KJV

“A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.”

– John 13:34–35 KJV

“As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends;

for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.”

- John 15:9-15 KJV

“Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.”

- 1 John 3:16 KJV

“Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another; Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;” - Romans 12:9-11 KJV

“For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.”

- Galatians 5:13 KJV

“If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.”

- Philippians 2:1-4 KJV

“And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you: To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.”

- 1 Thessalonians 3:12-13 KJV

“Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto UNFEIGNED LOVE OF THE BRETHREN, SEE THAT YE LOVE ONE ANOTHER WITH A PURE HEART FERVENTLY: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.” - 1 Peter 1:22-25 KJV

We are to deeply love our brothers and sisters in Christ that God has placed into our lives. In different places we are told to prefer one another, have kind affection toward one another, serve one another. We are instructed even to lay down our lives for one another. Brotherly love is contrasted in many of these passages with fornication and selfish desires. 1 Thessalonians 3:12-13 and 1 Peter 1:22-25 even connect the increase of brotherly love with attaining holiness. In the next installment,

I will write on the contrast between brotherly love and selfish desires and the need to flee fornication and other selfish desires.

Scripture References

1 Corinthians 12:13–27 KJV ; Ephesians 4:31–5:2 KJV

John 13:34–35 KJV; 15:9–15 KJV; 1 John 3:16 KJV

Romans 12:9–11 KJV; Galatians 5:13 KJV; Philippians 2:1–4 KJV ;

1 Thessalonians 3:12–13 KJV; 1 Peter 1:22–25 KJV

Week 16 Questions

2 Why should we trust God to place the right people in our lives?

2 Why are we commanded to be “kindly affectioned” to one another rather than all?

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Week 3: Flee Selfish Desires

The New Testament, in its emphasis on Biblical unity in the Church, instructs us to develop intimate relationships among the brothers and sisters. We are to develop relationships where we fall head over heels in brotherly love towards our brothers and sisters in Christ. There are three principles that govern how to safely and effectively achieve intimacy among members of the Body of Christ: Trust God to place into our lives those with whom we are to have relationships and trust Him to arrange them in the proper relations with us, Speak the truth in love, and flee selfish desires. In this installment I am writing on the contrast between brotherly love and selfish ambitions and the need to flee fornication and other selfish ambitions.

We are to avoid injecting selfish ambitions into our relationships with the brothers and sisters in the family of God. We are to avoid anything that might stir up carnal desires. The introduction of carnal motivations and desires can spoil and even destroy relationships. The pursuit of brotherly love and the pursuit of selfish, carnal ambitions are frequently contrasted. The following passages make this clear.

“Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you. Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us

an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour. But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.”

–Ephesians 4:31–5:6 KJV

“Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which things’ sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them. But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.

“Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;

Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”

–Colossians 3:5–16 KJV

“If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. (3) Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.” – Philippians 2:1–4 KJV

“For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

“Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.”

–Galatians 5:14–26 KJV

We are to avoid injecting selfish ambitions into our relations with the brothers and sisters in the family of God. We are instructed to avoid lies and deceptive schemes and games. We are to avoid jealousy, greed and all kinds of selfish strife described in the passages above. Selfish ambition and strife can even occur in the ministry. People fight over position in the church, Christian business and ministry. People have fits of anger and fear because they seek to get as much of their private kingdom as they can. Christian fight over power, position, and privilege. They fight over money and wealth. They burn in lust towards sisters and brothers.

Power

Christians fighting over power, position and privilege goes back to the disciples. The mother of Zebedee's sons, James and John (Matt 4:21), sought to insure that her sons would be the greatest in kingdom of God. This was Jesus reply.

“Then came to him the mother of Zebedee’s children with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him. And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom. But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able. And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.

“ And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren. But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister;

And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.”

– Matthew 20:20–28 KJV

Those of the brothers and sisters who desire leadership must be prepared to serve other brothers and sisters. It is wrong if we seek leadership in order to dominate others and get some advantage. We should serve others.

Money

We must not let love of money destroy brotherly love either. As brothers and sisters come together in the church or in business dealings, there must no hint of cutthroat business practices or hardball games. These kinds of thing can wreak havoc not only in business but can spoil the life of the Church. We are warned in Scripture not to harbor a love of money.

“If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute

of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.

“But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.” – 1 Timothy 6:3–11 KJV

“From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts. Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy? But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”

–James 4:1–7 KJV

The love of money can drown not only the greedy but the victims of the greedy in hurtful lusts. Greed motivates people to steal, defraud and kill. The greedy will often set other up for a fall, hoping to profit from the catastrophe. We must resist the devil when he tempts us to be greedy and selfish and humble ourselves before God. God gives grace to the humble.

Flee Fornication

Must resist the temptation to allow selfish desires to motivate us in our relations with the brothers and sisters, whether those desires be desires be for power, or desires for money and the things money buys, or desires to have a brother or sister in sexual lust. We must especially be careful in dealing in sexual matters in relationships with members of the opposite sex in the family of God.

The brothers must avoid telling the dirty jokes (foolish jesting), the footsies, and various episodes of flirtation that are common in the world. Christian men, when you do these things to your sister in Christ you are tempting her, stirring up her flesh. These things can endanger her chastity and sexual purity. Even a woman of extraordinary virtue can fall under sufficient temptation. If a brother is truly in brotherly love with a sister in Christ he will not subject her to such risk. He will instead

choose to protect her chastity. He will save these carnal things for marriage.

“Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you. Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour. But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.”

– Ephesians 4:31–5:6 KJV

The sisters must avoid dressing in a sexually provocative way or flirt with men. Christian women, when you do these things to your brother in Christ you are inflaming his lust and endangering his sexual purity. Even the strongest man can fall under sufficient temptation. If a sister is in love with her brother in Christ then she will protect his purity. She will reserve those carnal things for marriage.

“In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good.” works.

-1 Timothy 2:9-10 KJV

“Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all. Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.” - Proverbs 31:29-31 KJV

The introduction of carnal things into relations between brothers and sisters can lead to disastrous consequences. It can break the bond of brotherly love and morph into an ugly selfish thing. Instead of loving each other carnal people are obsessed with ‘...getting their needs met...’ Those controlled with selfishness ambition will hurt, use, and abuse others to get what self wants. True brotherly love seeks the good of the other, sometimes even at your expense.

Scripture Readings

Ephesians 4:31-5:6; Colossians 3:5-16; Philippians 2:1-4;

Galatians 5:14-26; Matthew 20:20-28; James 4:1-7

Equipping the Saints

Ephesians 4:31–5:6; 1 Timothy 2:9–10; Proverbs 31:29–31

Week 3 Questions

1. Why are we to flee selfish ambition?
2. Name three classes of selfish ambition?
3. What are the dangers of power?
4. What are the dangers of the love of money?
5. What are the dangers of sexual immorality?

Week 4: Speaking the Truth in Love

The New Testament, in its emphasis on Biblical unity in the Church, instructs us to develop intimate relationships among the brothers and sisters. We are to develop relationships where we fall head over heels in brotherly love towards our brothers and sisters in Christ. There are three principles that govern how to safely and effectively achieve intimacy among members of the Body of Christ: Trust God to place into our lives those with whom we are to have relationships and trust Him to arrange them in the proper relations with us, Speak the truth in love, and flee selfish desires. In this installment I am writing on the need to speak the truth in love to our brothers and sisters

Speaking the Truth in Love.

In the course of brotherly relation in the family of God conflicts and issues involving selfish ambitions are inevitable. The flesh is tempted to indulge greed, sexual immorality, and the pursuit of power. Because of this brother and sisters sometimes misuse each other or relate to each other in ways that hinder their walk with God. The genuine pursuit of brotherly love then involves speaking the Truth in love to bring accountability into relationships. This accountability helps to insure that we continue on the path that leads us to unity in the faith and results in attaining maturity in Christ

“And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of

Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.”

-Ephesians 4:11-16 KJV

According to Scripture each of us has an important part to play in the lives of others. There are three insights that emerge from the following texts that we need to do in speaking the truth in love. We are to speak the Word of God into each other's lives and into the situations we face. The second thing is that we must be open to allow others to speak into our lives. The third is that when we see someone in a fault we must act to restore while guarding ourselves from temptation.

We are to speak the Word of God into each others' lives.

The Word of God is powerful and intimate love relationships are powerful. God wants us to speak His Word to to build up those we love. this combination allows for effective ministry that build up the church

much faster than the most brilliant sermons ever constructed. People are more open to persuasion from those whom they care about.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. – Colossians 3:16 KJV

We must be open to allow others to speak into our lives.

If we seek to speak the Word of God into the lives of others, we must, in turn, be open to allow others to speak into our lives. This is what it means to submit each one to another. We submit to one another by having a willingness to listen to godly counsel from one another. The submission in view here is not a hierarchical or pyramid style: leaders are to be open to godly counsel from those they lead.

“See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; SUBMITTING YOURSELVES ONE TO ANOTHER IN THE FEAR OF GOD.”

– Ephesians 5:15–21 KJV

We must seek to restore the fallen brother.

When we know that a brother or sister has fallen into sin, we are to restore him or her. When we do that we must be careful not to fall into sin ourselves. We must be aware of our own vulnerabilities as we do this. We need to be aware of the forces of sin and temptation in both ourselves and others so that we may expose sin to the light and eradicate it.

“Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.”

–Galatians 6:1 KJV

“For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;) Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret. But all things that are reprovèd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light. Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.”

–Ephesians 5:8–16 KJV

This accountability is usually one on one or in small groups. Most of the time it is informal. In hard cases the protocols of Matthew 18 must be followed. By speaking the truth in love we can insure that we all continue on a correct course to attain godliness and grow in Christ, until we become conformed to the image of God's Son and enter into the fullness of Christ.

The Scriptures are the standard for accountability.

What are we to use to speak into the lives of our brothers and sisters? What are we to use to weigh what is spoken to us? The Bible. The Scriptures are given for instruction, correction and reproof, so that the saints may be equipped.

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

- 2 Tim 3:16-17

Scripture Readings

Ephesians 4:11-16; Colossians 3:16; Ephesians 5:8-21

Galatians 6:1; 2 Tim 3:16-17

Week 4 Questions

Equipping the Saints

1. Why is conflict in brotherly love relationships inevitable?
2. What is the purpose of speaking the truth in love?
3. Name three things we must do to speak the truth in love?
4. What words are we to use to speak the truth in Love?

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Week 4: From Brotherly Love to Holiness

The New Testament, in its emphasis on Biblical unity in the Church, instructs us to develop intimate relationships among the brothers and sisters. We are to develop relationships where we fall head over heels in brotherly love towards our brothers and sisters in Christ. There are three principles that govern how to safely and effectively achieve intimacy among members of the Body of Christ: In this installment I am writing on how brotherly love produces holiness.

“And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you: To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.” 1 Thessalonians 3:12–13 KJV “Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.”

–1 Peter 1:22–25 KJV

Why or how does brotherly love produce holiness. The key is **identification**. We are instructed to count ourselves dead to sin but alive to God. Both how we view ourselves and each other in relation to God's grace and how we see God's grace at work in our lives is critical to attaining holiness. The following passages instruct us to identify ourselves with God's work.

“Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.”

– Romans 6:6–13 KJV

“Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass²⁷³⁴ the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

– 2 Corinthians 3:17–18 KJV

We are to count ourselves dead to sin and alive to Christ. We do this by beholding the glory of the Lord as if we were looking in a mirror. when we see ourselves as conformed to the image of God's Son then we become transformed to that very image. How then, do we visualize ourselves as conformed to the image of God's Son.

Visualizing ourselves as holy through brotherly love

We visualize ourselves as conformed to the image of God's Son by conforming ourselves to the image of God's Son as seen in the brothers and sisters.

"But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter? Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh."

- James 3:8-12 KJV

"Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we

might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. We love him, because he first loved us. If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.”

-1 John 4:7-12;19-21 KJV

By relating to our brothers and sisters through obedience to His commands we enter into holiness. By relating to our brothers and sisters who are in the image of God in a God honoring way we are honoring God and in identifying ourselves with His work. We read repeatedly that it is impossible to love God without loving the people of God. This is because the people of God are created in the image of God and have the presence of God in their lives. This means that although our brothers and sisters in Christ are mere men the image of God living in them makes a visible focal point from which to exercise our faith in and love for God. We learn to enjoy love and loath selfish ambition with God by doing these things with His people. We learn self-denial with God by denying ourselves concerning our brothers and sisters. Properly relating to our brothers and sisters helps us to know how to properly relate to God.

Scriptures

1 Thessalonians 3:12–13; 1 Peter 1:22–25; Romans 6:6–13

2 Corinthians 3:17–18; James 3:8–12; 1 John 4:7–21

Week 4 Questions

1. What is Identification?
2. What does it mean to be conformed to the image of His Son?
3. How does brotherly love help us visualize being conformed to the image of His Son

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Week 5: Agape Love: Loving God with Everything you have

We are to add to our brotherly love, agape love. The agape love relationship God designed for us to best understood by understanding the marriage relationship in light of Christ's love relationship to the church and applying that to our love for God.

The Bible defines love as obedience to His commands. Love is more than just a feeling. Genuine love motivates us to act upon it. Love produces actions consistent with the feelings. Love is ultimately defines in terms of Christ's ultimate obedience to the commands of God the Father: Death on the cross.

“Jesus answered and said to him, ‘If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father’s who sent Me.’ ”

– John 14:23–24

Add to your Brotherly Kindness Agape Love

Adding agape love to brotherly love involves loving God with everything you got. How do we add agape love to our brotherly kindness. Adding agape love is short on theology, but long on practice. That is we must

practice this love before we can know what it is. Agape love surpasses knowledge.

“For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height— TO KNOW THE LOVE OF CHRIST WHICH PASSES KNOWLEDGE; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.”

– Ephesians 3:14–19

“LOVE NEVER FAILS. BUT WHETHER THERE ARE PROPHECIES, THEY WILL FAIL; WHETHER THERE ARE TONGUES, THEY WILL CEASE; WHETHER THERE IS KNOWLEDGE, IT WILL VANISH AWAY. FOR WE KNOW IN PART AND WE PROPHECY IN PART. But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away. When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. FOR NOW WE SEE IN A MIRROR, DIMLY, BUT THEN FACE TO FACE. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known. And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love ”

–1 Corinthians 13:8–13

Through the working of the Holy Spirit, God has given us the ability to grasp the length, width, depth, and height of knowledge. In other words, we can grasp the big picture of what God is doing. We are not promised every detail, but we are given the dimensions. We are told in 1 Corinthians 13 says that we “see through a glass darkly” The word for mirror here was, in that ancient culture, a reference to polished brass. People could see the outline of their face clearly, but detail were often blurry. We can get the basic picture of what God is doing.

At the tail end of Ephesians 3 and also in 1 Corinthians 13, we learn that love surpasses knowledge. Love is ultimately known through a supernatural experience. As we practice love we come to know it more deeply.

Love Defined.

God has defined His love in a very concrete way. In 1 John we read that love is defined in Christ dying for us. Christ’s death is the template for how we are to love.

“Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we

might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.” – 1 John 4:7–11

The essence of love is that God loves us so much that He sent Christ to die for us. His death is our example for how to live. We should love our brothers and sister enough to die for them and love the faith passionately enough to die for faith in Christ. As we love we complete the process of know who He is. He loves us unconditionally, and we can more fully know Him only by loving others unconditionally.

The Attributes of Love.

First Corinthians 13, commonly called the love chapter, gives us the attributes of love. As the Christian grows in love, these attributes should increase. Here are the attributes

- 1.Loves provides meaning for everything else.
- 2.Remains kind while suffering
- 3.Does not envy others
- 4.Love does not exalt itself
- 5.Love cannot be provoked
- 6.Love does seek self advantage
- 7.Love is not rude.
- 8.Love does not rejoice in iniquity but rejoices in the truth.
- 9.Love is optimistic in faith, hope, and endurance.

10. Love endures forever.

Scripture Readings

John 14:23–24; Ephesians 3:14–19 ;

1 Corinthians 13; 1 John 4:7–11

Week 5 Questions

1. What does God promise to do to those who love Him enough to obey His commands?
2. How is the love of God fully known?
3. What must we do to more fully know the Love of God?
4. What has been given as the template or as an example upon which we base our love?

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Answer Key for Walking in Love

Week 1 Questions

1. What are the two laws of love?

“Love the Lord your God with everything you got” and “Love your neighbor as yourself”

2. Why is following the laws of love so important?

The laws of love are both foundational to all other laws of God and the key to escaping selfish ambitions.

3. How does following the laws of love help us escape from selfishness?

It is impossible to fully follow the laws of love if the fundamental motivation is selfish desires. In fulfilling the laws of love one must think of others and be willing to sacrifice the wants of self for others.

4 Why is it impossible to please God by walking in the flesh?

The flesh is based on the wants of self. The natural tendency of the flesh is to think in terms of the words revolving around the self. This stands contrary to the real world and God order. It is for God glory and not our glory that the universe was created.

Week 2 Questions

1. **Why should we trust God to place the right people in our lives?**

Because God has precisely placed each of us in the body (1 Cor 12:13–27) so that both each part of the body and the body as a whole may grow, develop, and function in the way God has intended for the body to grow.

2. **Why are we commanded to be “kindly affectioned” to one another rather than all?**

It is, on a practical level, impossible for any one person to have such deep relations with every other individual believer in this earthly life. What the Lord does is to place certain into each of our lives certain individual brothers and sisters with which we will become affectionately bonded with brotherly love.

Week 3 Questions

1. **Why are we to flee selfish ambition?**

Because it is the enemy to developing close brotherly love relationships. Lusting to fulfill selfish desires for sex, money, and power can be destructive to relationships.

2. **Name three classes of selfish ambition? Sex, money, and power**

3. What are the dangers of power?

Power has a way of corrupting a person morals and destroying their compassion. People will act like “dog eat dog” in their quest to gain or maintain power. Such a mindset is destructive to love.

4. What are the dangers of the love of money?

The danger is similar to that of power. Similar because money is a form of power that is used to acquire power, sex and other material wants.

5. What are the dangers of sexual immorality?

Sex lust is a powerful force that can bond people in love or become a selfish addiction. Sexual sin can introduce selfish impulses into a relationship, destroying brotherly love in the process.

Week 4 Questions

1. Why is conflict in brotherly love relationships inevitable?

As a result of the fall, people are self-centered by nature. The cross overcomes that, but we must continuously walk in the spirit of love or

the flesh will do it's self-centered thing. The collision of selfish impulses leads to conflict.

2. What is the purpose of speaking the truth in love?

We speak the truth in love as a means of accountability and correction so that we may make positive changes that lead to spiritual maturity.

3. Name three things we must do to speak the truth in love?

We must be willing to speak into the lives of others, be willing to let others speak into our lives, and be willing to restore the fallen brother.

4. What word are we to use to speak the truth in Love?

The Scriptures are the basis for doctrine, correction, and reproof (2 Tim 3:16-17).

Week 5 Questions

1. What is Identification?

Identification is where one sees himself/herself as so similar to something or someone else that one sees himself/herself conformed to the attributes of the one they are identifying with.

2. **What does it mean to be conformed to the image of His Son?** Model one's lifestyle and action to be consistent with Christ's character. We do this by visualizing ourselves like Christ **as we see Christ.**
3. **How does brotherly love help us visualize being conformed to the image of His Son**

By identifying with our brothers and sisters we can be conformed to the social or relational attributes of His Son. While we can be conformed to the individual attributes of Christ by ourselves, it is only in relationships that we can model the relational attributes of Christ.

More Week 5 Questions

1. **What does God promise to do to those who love Him enough to obey His commands?**

He will love us and make His home with us (John 14:23).

2. **How is the love of God fully known?**

It is known through supernatural encounter.

3. **What must we do to more fully know the Love of God?**

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By practicing the love of God towards others. Knowing Love cannot be fully mastered using only academics, but through through practical, hands-on experience.

- 4. What has been given as the template or as an example upon which we base our love?**

The death of Christ upon the cross is the template on how to love.

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Book 4: Spiritual Warfare.

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Week 1: Satan's Origins

According to Scripture Satan was once Lucifer. Lucifer was an Archangel of God along with Michael. Lucifer was the worship leader in heaven and the most beautiful and most glorified of God's creatures. The beauty of Lucifer became the occasion of pride. This pride motivated Lucifer to seek God's rank. Lucifer became an adversary or a satan. The name Satan means adversary. Ezekiel 28 tells the story of Satan's origins and fall and of the first war in heaven. I have highlighted critical parts of the passage in bold type for easy reference:

And the Word of Jehovah was to me, saying, Son of man, lift up a lament over the king of Tyre, and say to him, So says the Lord Jehovah: You seal the measure, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You have been in Eden, the garden of God. Every precious stone was your covering; the ruby, the topaz, and the jasper, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the turquoise, and the carbuncle, and gold; the workmanship of your tambourines and of your flutes in you. In the day you were created, they were prepared. You were the anointed cherub that covers, and I had put you in the holy heights of God, where you were. You walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire.

You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, until iniquity was found in you. By the multitude of your trade, they filled your midst with violence, and you sinned. So I cast you defiled from the

height of God, and I destroyed you, O covering cherub, from among the stones of fire. YOUR HEART WAS LIFTED UP BECAUSE OF YOUR BEAUTY; YOU CORRUPTED YOUR WISDOM BECAUSE OF YOUR SPLENDOR. I have cast you to the ground. I will put you before kings, that they may see you. By the host of your iniquities, by the iniquity of your trade, you have defiled your holy places. So I brought a fire from your midst and it shall devour you, and I will give you for ashes on the earth in the sight of all who see you. All who know you among the peoples shall be appalled at you. You shall be terrors, and you will not be forever. –Ezekiel 28:11–19

While sometimes men are called angels in Scripture never is ‘cherub’ used to refer to a human being, only to angels. Satan was once an angel of God but he lost his place. The text clearly paints a picture of a scene in heaven before Lucifer–Satan rebels in a futile attempt to take over heaven.

Prior to the rebellion, Lucifer was the worship leader. The text in Ezekiel 28 describes his body as that of a living musical instrument, having tambourine and flutes embedded as part of his own body.

It was pride in his ‘beauty’ and ‘splendor’ that prompted Satan to try to raise his throne above the stars (angels) of God. Isaiah 14:13 It was this pride that started the war in heaven between Satan’s angels and the angels loyal to God (Rev 12:7–11).

That thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! the golden city ceased! The LORD hath broken the staff of the wicked, and the sceptre of the rulers. He who smote the people in wrath with a continual stroke, he that ruled the nations in anger, is persecuted, and none hindereth. The whole earth is at rest, and is quiet: they break forth into singing. Yea, the fir trees rejoice at thee, and the cedars of Lebanon, saying, 'Since thou art laid down, no feller is come up against us.'

Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations. All they shall speak and say unto thee,

Art thou also become weak as we? Art thou become like unto us? Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, and the noise of thy viols: the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee. How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!

FOR THOU HAST SAID IN THINE HEART, I WILL ASCEND INTO HEAVEN, I WILL EXALT MY THRONE ABOVE THE STARS OF GOD: I WILL SIT ALSO UPON THE MOUNT OF THE CONGREGATION, IN THE SIDES OF THE

NORTH: I WILL ASCEND ABOVE THE HEIGHTS OF THE CLOUDS; I WILL BE LIKE THE MOST HIGH. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; That made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners?

- Isaiah 14:4-17

“And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

“I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore rejoice ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.” - Revelation 12:7-12

Satan is at war with God and mankind is caught in the middle of this war. In the Garden of Eden he successfully tempted mankind into joining the rebellion against God, creating many problems for mankind (Gen 3).

Scripture references

Ezekiel 28:11–19; Isaiah 14:4–17; Revelation 12:7–12

Week 1 Questions

1. Where did Satan come from?
2. What was Satan's original name?
3. What was Lucifer's original purpose?
4. How did Lucifer become Satan?

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Week 2: The First War in Heaven

And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! For the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

– Revelation 12:7–12

There are actually two wars fought between Satan and God. The first war in heaven resulted in Satan losing his residence in heaven but he still had visitation rights. He then abused those in order to gear up for another war.

The first war probably occurred between Gen 1:1 and Gen 1:2 The Hebrew word for was– hayah (haw–yaw) was not intended as a copula or

mere connector between earth and void but literally meant that the earth became void. While it beyond the scope of this article to discuss in detail the gap between Gen 1:1 and Gen 1:2 the text indicates here that the heavens and the earth were created and then subjected to catastrophic situation and then the recreation began in Gen 1:2. This situation was caused by the first war between Satan and God holy angels.

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth WASH1961 without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.” – Genesis 1:1-2

H1961

haw-yaw'

A primitive root (compare H1933); to exist, that is, be or become, come to pass

(always emphatic, and not a mere copula or auxiliary): – beacon, X altogether,

be (-come, accomplished, committed, like), break, cause, come (to pass), continue,

do, faint, fall, + follow, happen, X have, last, pertain, quit (one-) self, require, X

use.

Strong's Hebrew and Greek Dictionaries

This first war in heaven ended quite early with Satan getting thrown down to the earth. It was this event that the Lord Jesus was referring to when he said He saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.

And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. AND HE SAID UNTO THEM, I BEHELD SATAN AS LIGHTNING FALL FROM HEAVEN. Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you. -Luke 10:17-19

However we read several passages that clearly show Satan or his underlings appearing before the throne of God. While there is no detailed explanation given as to why or how Satan could reappear in heaven after he was booted, but these passages clearly imply that Satan was indeed allowed to visit after he lost his residence in heaven. He would visit Heaven to make accusations against God's people.

“Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them. And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant

Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?

“Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, „Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.” And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD.”

- Job 1:6-12

“And he said, Hear thou therefore the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right and on his left. And the LORD said, Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramothgilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner. And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the LORD, and said, I will persuade him. And the LORD said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said, Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also: go forth, and do so. Now therefore, behold, the LORD hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the LORD hath spoken evil concerning thee.” -1 Kings 22:19-23

“AND HE SHEWED ME JOSHUA THE HIGH PRIEST STANDING BEFORE THE ANGEL OF THE LORD, AND SATAN STANDING AT HIS RIGHT HAND TO RESIST HIM. And the LORD said unto Satan, The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan; even the LORD that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.

– Zechariah 3:1–4

All three of these passages refer to appearances by Satan or his underlings after his first fall in the gap between Gen 1:1 and Gen 1:2. Satan’s appearance in Job 1 is plainly stated. The lying spirit in 1 Kings 22 is a minion of Satan. All liars have their place in the Lake of fire so this is not a holy angel but an unholy angel or devil that becomes a lying spirit in the mouths of Ahab’s prophets. The passage in Zechariah 3 may refer to an end-times scenario where Israel begins to embrace Jesus as the Messiah.

This passage in Zechariah is beautiful picture of how the believer overcomes Satan. Joshua the high priest stands before the angel of the Lord–this is an Old Testament way of referring to Jesus Christ. Satan

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resists him –and The Lord essentially tells him to SHUT UP. Notice this though: At the time that the Lord rebukes Satan, Joshua still has on the dirty, stinky clothes. God doesn't wait for the believers to clean up their act before telling Satan to shut up. My fellow believers do not wait to get your act together before you come to God and resist the Devil. As we shall see in the chapter 5, Satan Permanently Cast Out, All you need is the blood of Jesus, which our Lord shed at Calvary, your testimony to the power of that blood, and your supreme allegiance to Christ Jesus–allegiance even to death.

In the next two chapters we shall see that Satan once again escalates conflict into a second war in heaven. From his capital city of Pergamos he goes to war again. This war will last 2300 years when believers in Christ, along with Michael and the angels of God, permanently evict Satan from Heaven.

Scripture Passages

Revelation 12:7–12; Genesis 1:1–2; Luke 10:17–19; Job 1:6–12;

1 Kings 22:19–23; Zechariah 3:1–4

Week 2 Questions

1. When was the first war fought?
2. What was the outcome of the First War in Heaven?
3. What was Satan still able to do in Heaven after he lost his home?

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Week 3: Satan's War on Your Soul

When Satan was cast out of Heaven the first time he developed an insidious strategy. He realized he could not beat God directly by brute force. Satan sought to fight God by attacking God's most prized creation – man. Man was created in the image of God and that made the human race a prime target for Satan's attacks.

“Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”

– Genesis 1:26–27

Satan's strategy was two-fold. He would turn man against God using lies and seduction, and then accuse man of rebellion before God, destroying man and bringing grief to God. We see this strategy played first in the Garden of Eden. Satan both lies to Eve about the death that results from eating the forbidden fruit and uses its pleasure to seduce her. Satan lied when he said Eve would not die upon eating the forbidden fruit. Once Satan put his spin on God's command, Eve ceased to think about the will of God. All she could think about was how desirable the fruit was. She ate bitter poison, thinking it was delicious. It tasted good at the

moment, but brought the bitter fruit of both spiritual and physical death to the human race.

“Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, ‘Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?’ And the woman said to the serpent, ‘We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, “You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die’

THEN THE SERPENT SAID TO THE WOMAN, „YOU WILL NOT SURELY DIE. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.“ SO WHEN THE WOMAN SAW THAT THE TREE WAS GOOD FOR FOOD, THAT IT WAS PLEASANT TO THE EYES, AND A TREE DESIRABLE TO MAKE ONE WISE, SHE TOOK OF ITS FRUIT AND ATE. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate”

– Genesis 3:1–6

In James, we are told the anatomy of temptation. We are tempted on the basis of our desires. These desires often have a legitimate place, but Satan seeks to subvert them away from their proper place in God’s plan in order to turn us against God. For example, sex is ordained for marriage, but Satan will seek to stir up lust outside the marriage covenant. Once that desire has turned, it becomes sinful. If that sinful

desire is acted upon, it will result in degradation of life and eventually death.

“Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. Let no one say when he is tempted, „I am tempted by God“; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.”

– James 1:12–15

A lifestyle of sin will result in a shift in how one thinks. People are either seeking repentance or they end up rationalizing their sin. They will end up suppressing the truth.

“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and

their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things.

“THEREFORE GOD ALSO GAVE THEM UP TO UNCLEANNES, IN THE LUSTS OF THEIR HEARTS, TO DISHONOR THEIR BODIES AMONG THEMSELVES, WHO EXCHANGED THE TRUTH OF GOD FOR THE LIE, AND WORSHIPED AND SERVED THE CREATURE RATHER THAN THE CREATOR, WHO IS BLESSED FOREVER. Amen.

“For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.

“And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; who,

knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.” - Romans 1:18-32

Continual suppression of truth results in a three phase descent into apostasy (Rom 1:18- 32) There is a heterosexual revolution, then a homosexual revolution, then a God-hating revolution. As people suppress the truth, they exchange the truth of God for a lie. They establish pretensions and strongholds contrary to God.

The Temptation of Jesus provides for us a template on how to resist temptation. Jesus spent forty days in the wilderness. He was tempted by Satan three times. All three times Jesus answered ***‘IT IS WRITTEN’***. He leaned upon the Word of God. Study the word in context and become familiar with it. It is your sword and armor. Jesus confessed the word on the front side of temptation to stop Satan from building strongholds. We can do the same. We confess the Word of God both defensively to resist temptation to prevent strongholds from developing, and offensively to remove strongholds that already exist.

“Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry. Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, ‘If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.’ But He

answered and said, 'IT IS WRITTEN, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God."'

"Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, 'If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written: "He shall give His angels charge over you," and, "In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone."' Jesus said to him, 'IT IS WRITTEN again, "You shall not tempt the LORD your God."'

Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to Him, 'All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me.' Then Jesus said to him, „Away with you, Satan! For IT IS WRITTEN, "You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve." Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him." – Matthew 4:1–11

There is power in using confession to activate faith in God's Word. God has given a measure of faith to lead people to enter into Covenant and an increased measure of faith so that his people can exercise covenant rights. We can use confession of the Word of God to apply the Word of God with power:

“But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. – Romans 10:6–10

This text says that with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. The confession becomes the salvation. God uses our confession of his Word to apply His Word to our lives, both in defending our lives from temptation and in offensively advancing God’s kingdom. Resisting temptation is important because Satan tempts us so he can accuse us before God. Satan tries to set people up for God’s judgment by luring us into things that provoke God’s judgment. Successfully resisting temptation removes those opportunities. If we fall into temptation, we do not need to fear, as Our God has given us weapons to take away sins, as we shall see in the later chapters.

Scripture References

Genesis 1:26–27; Genesis 3:1–6; James 1:12–15;

Romans 1:18–32; Matthew 4:1–11; Romans 10:6–10

Week 3 Questions

1. What became part of Satan's strategy in opposing God after he was evicted from

Heaven?

2. Why does he tempt us?

3. How are we tempted?

4. What can happen if one consistently fails to resist temptation?

5. How did Jesus resist temptation?

6. What are we to do to resist temptation?

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Week 4: The Authority of Satan

If we are to succeed in spiritual warfare, we must understand the nature of the enemy and fight. Satan is portrayed as one having power and authority. This authority was given to him before the Rebellion and lingered for some time after he lost his home in heaven. Satan would use his authority as a prosecuting attorney when he would visit heaven's court. Several Scriptures give us a glimpse of the workings of God's Court. In the days of Ahab, The prophet Micaiah gives one such account of an unclean spirit appearing in God's court:

“Then Micaiah said, ‘Therefore hear the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on His throne, and all the host of heaven standing by, on His right hand and on His left. And the LORD said, “Who will persuade Ahab to go up, that he may fall at Ramoth Gilead?” So one spoke in this manner, and another spoke in that manner. Then a spirit came forward and stood before the LORD, and said, “I will persuade him.” The LORD said to him, “In what way?” So he said, “I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.” And the LORD said, “You shall persuade him, and also prevail. Go out and do so.” Therefore look! The LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these prophets of yours, and the LORD has declared disaster against you.’

- Kings 22:19-23

God has convened court. Angels have legal standing to attend His court and participate in the proceedings. The Lord asks for those attending to give their views on how Ahab can be overthrown. A spirit comes forward and says he will be a lying spirit in the mouths of Ahab's prophets. The Lord then proceeds to decree that as the sentence against Ahab. Because Ahab refuses to receive God's truth, God granted this demon (a lying spirit could not be one of the holy angels) what he wanted. Day and night Satan and his minions approach God's court accusing us and asking God to deliver us into their hand.(Rev 12:7-11) Jesus told Peter that Satan has asked to sift him "as wheat" (Luke 22:31-34). But what gives Satan the right to approach the throne of God for the purpose of accusing us?

The Bible portrays Satan as having a kingdom and possessing authority in that kingdom. It is this position of authority that gives Satan standing to appear before God's court. authority gives him standing to come into God's court to petition God. He uses this as an opportunity to accuse God's people day and night. Satan has been intervening in personal and world affairs for thousands of years. We see a glimpse of the organization and tactics of Satan's kingdom in the book of Daniel.

"Then he said to me, 'Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and

behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia. Now I have come to make you understand what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision refers to many days yet to come.’ ...

“...Then he said, ‘Do you know why I have come to you? And now I must return to fight with the prince of Persia; and when I have gone forth, indeed the prince of Greece will come.’ ‘ - Daniel 10:12-14,20

No human being can restrain angelic beings by human power. The ‘kings of Persia’ that the angel speaks about to Daniel are not humans, but demonic forces. Satan’s and his minions are not an unorganized mob, but a highly organized kingdom with a hierarchy of powers and distribution of principalities (see Ephesians 6:10-18). In the gospels, Jesus gives some insights into the nature of Satan’s kingdom that imply that it is a unified and organized kingdom.

“Then one was brought to Him who was demon–possessed, blind and mute; and He healed him, so that the blind and mute man both spoke and saw. And all the multitudes were amazed and said, ‘Could this be the Son of David?’ Now when the Pharisees heard it they said, ‘This fellow does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons.’ But Jesus knew their thoughts, and said to them: ‘Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or

house divided against itself will not stand. If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his KINGDOM stand?’ ”

- Matthew 12:22-26

Here are a few more passages that speak of Satan as having authority.

“As Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. Likewise also these dreamers defile the flesh, reject authority, and speak evil of dignitaries. Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, “The Lord rebuke you!”

- Jude 1:7-9

“We know that we are of God, AND THE WHOLE WORLD LIES UNDER THE SWAY OF THE WICKED ONE. And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life. - 1 John 5:19-20

We shall see in the next week (chapter) that the believer in Christ has greater authority. Satan’s kingdom is going to fall as believers enter

successfully into the battle. The next week (chapter) will show the basic plan for Satan's defeat, resulting in Satan being permanently cast out of Heaven – unable to visit anymore.

Scripture References

1 Kings 22:19–23; Revelation 12:7–11; Luke 22:31–34; Daniel 10:12–14,20;

Ephesians 6:10–18; Matthew 12:22–26; Jude 1:7–9; 1 John 5:19–20

Week 4 Questions

1. What is one of Satan's favorite modes of operation?
2. What is the basis of Satan's authority?
3. What is the purpose of Satan filing accusations against us?

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Week 5: The Authority of Believers

Although Satan has authority, believers in Jesus also have authority which gives them standing to approach God's throne to petition Him. This means we can counter Satan's accusations that are lodged against us. Just as Satan has standing to enter God's courts, believers in Christ have standing.

We are told in several places in Scripture that God redeemed us to be kings, priests and witnesses. The significance of this is that these positions is that they give us legal standing to approach the throne of God. We can enter into His Courts while Court is in session and petition God.

Authority as Kings and Priests

Jesus death on the cross open the way for us to enter into God's Courts. The legal basis for our rights in God's Courts is our standing in the covenants. God has entered into covenants or legal contracts with His people whereby they are given certain legal rights. One such covenant is the Mosaic covenant, which was instituted through Moses. There is a provision in that covenant that opens the way for us to be Kings and Priests. Christ's obedience to the covenant has resulted in making Christ, all who belong to Him, a kingdom of kings and priests.

” ‘Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. And you shall be to ME A KINGDOM OF PRIESTS AND A HOLY NATION.’ These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel.”

- Exodus 19:5-6

“But you are a chosen generation, A ROYAL PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy. ” - 1 Peter 2:9-10

“And they sang a new song, saying: ‘ You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, AND HAVE MADE US KINGS AND PRIESTS TO OUR GOD; AND WE SHALL REIGN ON THE EARTH.’ Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, ” - Revelation 5:9-11

Witnesses and Petitioners in God’s Courts

Equipping the Saints

We have been given access to the throne-room of God, and with that access legal standing to speak the word of our testimony before the throne of God. In Ephesians 3:8–13, we are called to be witnesses in God’s Courts.

“To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; TO THE INTENT THAT NOW THE MANIFOLD WISDOM OF GOD MIGHT BE MADE KNOWN BY THE CHURCH TO THE PRINCIPALITIES AND POWERS IN THE HEAVENLY PLACES, according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him. Therefore I ask that you do not lose heart at my tribulations for you, which is your glory. ” – Ephesian 3:8–13

In Hebrews 10:15–23, we learn that Christ’s blood creates for us access to God’s throne. He can approach God’s throne, giving our testimony with confidence.

“But the Holy Spirit also witnesses to us; for after He had said before, ‘This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will

Equipping the Saints

write them,' then He adds, 'Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.' Now where there is remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin. **THEREFORE, BRETHREN, HAVING BOLDNESS TO ENTER THE HOLIEST BY THE BLOOD OF JESUS, BY A NEW AND LIVING WAY WHICH HE CONSECRATED FOR US, THROUGH THE VEIL, THAT IS, HIS FLESH, AND HAVING A HIGH PRIEST OVER THE HOUSE OF GOD, LET US DRAW NEAR WITH A TRUE HEART IN FULL ASSURANCE OF FAITH, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. LET US HOLD FAST THE CONFESSION of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. "** – Hebrews 10:15–23

In 1 John, we learn that God has given us the assurance that, through, faith, we overcome the world.

"And His commandments are not burdensome. 4 For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?" – 1 John 5:3–5

Among the rights we have as kings under the sovereignty of the King of Kings is that we have Liberty of free people who have been given rights to approach the throne of God to petition God to defend our rights under the covenant.

“Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law? For it is written that Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and he of the freewoman through promise, which things are symbolic. For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar— for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children— but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written: ‘Rejoice, O barren, You who do not bear! Break forth and shout, You who are not in labor! For the desolate has many more children than she who has a husband.’

“Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise. But, as he who was born according to the flesh then persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless what does the Scripture say? ‘Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman.’ SO THEN, BRETHREN, WE ARE NOT CHILDREN OF THE BONDWOMAN BUT OF THE FREE. STAND FAST THEREFORE IN THE LIBERTY BY WHICH CHRIST HAS MADE US FREE, AND DO NOT BE ENTANGLED AGAIN WITH A YOKE OF BONDAGE.”

- Galatians 4:21–5:1

“Since you died with Christ to the elemental spiritual forces of this world, why, as though you still belonged to the world, do you submit to its rules: „Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!“? These rules, which have to do with things that are all destined to perish with use, ARE BASED ON MERELY HUMAN COMMANDS AND TEACHINGS.”

– Colossians 2:20–22 NIV

Scripture References

Exodus 19:5–6; 1 Peter 2:9–10; Revelation 5:9–11;

Ephesians 3:8–13; Hebrews 10:15–23; 1 John 5:3–5;

Galatians 4:21–5:1; Colossians 2:20–22 NIV

Week 5 Questions

1. What is the basis of our standing before God?
2. What did Jesus do to provide us with legal standing to approach God?
3. What types of legal rights do we have as citizens of God's kingdom?
4. How do we use these rights?

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Week 6: Satan Permanently Cast Out

Although Satan is no longer able to live in heaven, he is currently able to visit heaven. During these visits, he accuses God's people of every sin they commit and demands that God pour out His wrath upon His own people. The book of Job begins with the story of one of Satan's visits to Heaven. God was convening court, and when holy angels made an appearance in court Satan was found among them.

“Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. And the LORD said to Satan, ‘From where do you come?’ So Satan answered the LORD and said, ‘From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it.’ Then the LORD said to Satan, ‘Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?’

“So Satan answered the LORD and said, ‘Does Job fear God for nothing? Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face!’ And the LORD said to Satan, ‘Behold, all that he has is in your power; only do not lay a hand on his person.’ So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD. “ – Job 1:6–12

Satan's visit to God where he accused Job of following God only for selfish gain was not the only time Satan or his minions visited Heaven: In the days of Ahab, a demon, specifically a lying spirit, volunteered for a mission to deceive Ahab's false prophets. Just as in Job, when God's court convened, evil spirits accompanied the holy angels in attendance at court.

“Then Micaiah said, ‘Therefore hear the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on His throne, and all the host of heaven standing by, on His right hand and on His left. And the LORD said, “Who will persuade Ahab to go up, that he may fall at Ramoth Gilead?” So one spoke in this manner, and another spoke in that manner. Then a spirit came forward and stood before the LORD, and said, “I will persuade him.” The LORD said to him, “In what way?” So he said, “I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.” And the LORD said, “You shall persuade him, and also prevail. Go out and do so.” Therefore look! The LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these prophets of yours, and the LORD has declared disaster against you.’ ”

- 1 Kings 22:19–23

While Satan currently makes visits into the Divine courtroom, the good news is that Satan will not be able to visit heaven indefinitely. The day will come when he is cast permanently.

“And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: FOR THE ACCUSER OF OUR BRETHREN IS CAST DOWN, WHICH ACCUSED THEM BEFORE OUR GOD DAY AND NIGHT. AND THEY OVERCAME HIM BY THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB, AND BY THE WORD OF THEIR TESTIMONY; AND THEY LOVED NOT THEIR LIVES UNTO THE DEATH. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.”

-Revelation 12:7-12

Good news! Rev 12 gives us critical information that can be used in our warfare against Satan. The word ‘they’ in verse 11 refers to believers in Christ. We fight together with the holy angels of God to cast Satan out of heaven and we hold the balance of power. There are four critical pieces of info that will help us.

How Satan Attacks

Satan comes in like a prosecuting attorney. He is called the accuser of the brothers and sisters. Satan seeks to use God's law as a weapon to oppress His people. This doesn't mean that Satan cares about God's law. Satan hates God's law and loves lawlessness. He only cares about how he can use God's law to gain an advantage and cares ONLY about the parts that he can use. Satan is a master on how to use the law to promote lawlessness. Satan is the Father of corrupt prosecutors. Satan will accuse you of lust or hate or whatever sin has overtaken you and ask God to execute judgment against you and act as your adversary. There are several passages that say plainly that God sometimes, even in the New Testament will deliver chastisement to His people.

“And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?

“But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much

rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.

“Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.”

– Hebrews 12:5–11

“Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; And did all eat the same spiritual meat; And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ. But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness.

“Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of

serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.

“Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.”

- 1 Corinthians 10:1-12

“For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. - 1 Corinthians 11:26-32

But Satan is defeated...

...by the Blood of the Lamb

It is the blood of Jesus that destroys Satan's power and works of Satan. We read in Colossians 2:11–15 how Christ overcame Satan at the cross.

“In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.” – Colossians 2:11–15

The phrase handwriting of ordinances that was against us is another of referring to criminal charges. Christ dismissed all charges against us by means of His blood. This passage could just as easily read ‘And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; dismissing any and all CRIMINAL CHARGES and CIVIL SUITS that have been filed against us and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; ‘The blood of Christ Jesus took away all of Satan's accusations as well as the sin nature and sins. Principalities and powers is referring to Satan and his kingdom (see Eph 6:10–18). Satan has been defeated by the

blood of Jesus Christ. Christ through the shedding of His blood on the cross takes away Satan's position and right to prosecute.

By the Word of Their Testimony

Our testimony is the means by which the blood of Jesus is applied in the ministry of destroying Satan's kingdom on earth and Satan's access to the Throne of Heaven. Our testimony is our confession of the blood of Jesus. This confession has great power. We are to use our covenant rights to testify that the blood of Jesus destroys the power and guilt of our sins. It not only destroys sin, but Satan's legal standing to appear in God's courts. But we must make our own appearance and use our covenant rights to testify to the finished work done by the shedding of the blood of Jesus accomplished through the cross.

In addition to the legal force of confession, there is power in using confession to activate faith in God's Word. God has given a measure of faith to lead people to enter into Covenant and an increased measure of faith so that his people can exercise covenant rights. We can use confession of the Word of God to apply the Word of God with power:

"But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee,

even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” – Romans 10:6–10

This text says that with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. The confession becomes the salvation. God uses our confession of his Word to apply His Word to our lives. In the war against Satan we are to confess what the blood of Jesus has done and does. Our confession should be done both individually and in groups and should include the following:

The blood of Jesus takes away Satan’s accusations

The blood of Jesus takes away sinful desires (be specific to your case)

The blood of Jesus has destroyed Satan’s authority.

The blood of Jesus destroys Satan’s power.

The blood of Jesus destroys the sin nature.

The blood of Jesus draws me near to God.

The blood of Jesus has redeemed me from the world system.

The blood of Jesus takes away Satan's access to God.

Repeated confession of the power of the blood meditation of Scriptures concerning the power of the blood, and singing and listening to songs about the blood unleashes the power of the blood. My personal favorite is the song by Carman *This Blood*.

They Loved not their lives unto death

We must be prepared to fight to the death. God does not want willy nilly warfare. The reason our (America's) so-called war on terror is a mess is that we are fighting a willy-nilly war rather than to win. Overkill on non-essential tasks and shrinking back from essentials will not win this war. Spiritual war is the same way We must be focused on doing those things that will put an end to Satan's assault.

Scripture References

Equipping the Saints

Job 1:6–12; 1 Kings 22:19–23; Revelation 12:7–12;

Hebrews 12:5–11; 1 Corinthians 10:1–12; 11:26–32;

Colossians 2:11–15; Romans 10:6–10

Week 6 Questions

1. How does Satan use his access to Heaven to attack us?
2. Is God's judgment alive and well in the New Testament?
3. How is Satan defeated?

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Week 7: Weapons of our Warfare

In every war that has ever been fought and in every military force that has ever been assembled, there have been weapons of various types that have been developed to multiply the lethal effectiveness of the warriors. There has been an almost unlimited diversity of weapons developed over the centuries, but weapons can be either classified into two categories: Long range and short range.

Both the overall strategies and particular tactics will depend of the type of weapons deployed. Long range weapons are effective over a wide area. They are used to soften the enemy, but are incapable of securing territory by them-selves. Sound warfare strategy over the centuries has involved first striking with long range weapons to weaken an enemy's ability to fight, and then sending warriors in with short range weapons to conquer the territory, kill combatants still resisting, and take others captive. In the spiritual war between Christ and Satan, all of the long range weapons are wielded by angels and demons. These long range weapons cover a wide territory and exert general influence in a culture. These are not our direct responsibility, but it is useful information in forming strategies and tactics for winning the war.

The believers in Christ are also armed to the hilt for war. According to Ephesians 6:10-18, none of the weapons we have are used directly as long range weapons. Four of them are primarily defensive weapons, one

of them, the shoes of the gospel of peace, can indirectly used as both an offensive and long range weapons. We have only one weapon that is primarily offensive. The sword of the Spirit is our offensive weapon. The Greek word for 'sword' here was a reference to a short range Roman long dagger that was used in close range fighting.

Below is a description of our arsenal of weapons and the purpose for them and how they were used:

The Helmet of Salvation

The Helmet protects the head. The protection of the brain– hence the mind – from spiritual death through false doctrines. A Christian puts on this helmet by becoming rooted and grounded in scripturally based thinking. When we immerse ourselves in the Bible and reconstruct our thought patterns, our minds are renewed and think in terms of a Biblical Christian world–view.

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. AND DO NOT BE CONFORMED TO THIS WORLD, BUT BE TRANSFORMED BY THE RENEWING OF YOUR MIND, THAT YOU MAY PROVE WHAT IS THAT GOOD AND ACCEPTABLE AND PERFECT WILL OF GOD”

“Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; BUT HIS DELIGHT IS IN THE LAW OF THE LORD, AND IN HIS LAW HE MEDITATES DAY AND NIGHT. He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper.” – Psalm 1:1–3

The Breastplate of Righteousness

The Breastplate protects our chest– particularly our heart. The heart is protected. The heart is symbolically the seat of emotions and affections. The purpose of the Breastplate of righteousness is to protect the wearer from any attack that subvert our emotions and passions toward immorality. We develop righteousness by developing faith and love. The essence of righteousness is faith acting through love.

“For we through the Spirit eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, BUT FAITH WORKING THROUGH LOVE.” – Galatians 5:5–6

The Belt of Truth

The Christian Life is built on Truth. God is absolute truth. The Christian message is presented as infallible truth, and whether someone will be

open to the message of Christ or not is based on whether that person loves or hates the truth. Below are just a few passages that show the critical importance of truth in the Christian life.

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

“He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. FOR EVERYONE PRACTICING EVIL HATES THE LIGHT AND DOES NOT COME TO THE LIGHT, LEST HIS DEEDS SHOULD BE EXPOSED. BUT HE WHO DOES THE TRUTH COMES TO THE LIGHT, THAT HIS DEEDS MAY BE CLEARLY SEEN, THAT THEY HAVE BEEN DONE IN GOD.”

– John 3:16–21

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

“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.” – Romans 1:18–21

The Shield of Faith

The shield of faith protects us from the devil's fiery arrows. These arrows are accusations that the devil hurls at the believers. So as the breastplate protects us from the slander and lies of the devil, so our faith in the goodness of God—that we are children of the King of Kings shall protect us when the devil lies and says that we are nothing.

“Hear my voice, O God, in my meditation; Preserve my life from fear of the enemy. Hide me from the secret plots of the wicked, From the rebellion of the workers of iniquity, WHO SHARPEN THEIR TONGUE LIKE A SWORD, AND BEND THEIR BOWS TO SHOOT THEIR ARROWS—BITTER WORDS, That they may shoot in secret at the blameless; Suddenly they shoot at him and do not fear. ” – Psalm 64:1–4

The Shoes of the Gospel of Peace

Shoes protect the feet and aid in foot travel. Our feet are our point of contact with a solid foundation. Knowing we are built on a strong foundation from which we can move gives us peace when things seem hopeless.

“For this is what the Sovereign LORD says: ‘At first my people went down to Egypt to live; lately, Assyria has oppressed them. And now what do I have here?’ declares the LORD. For my people have been taken away for nothing, and those who rule them mock,’ declares the LORD. ‘And all day long my name is constantly blasphemed. Therefore my people will know my name; therefore in that day they will know that it is I who foretold it. Yes, it is I.’

“HOW BEAUTIFUL ON THE MOUNTAINS ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO BRING GOOD NEWS, WHO PROCLAIM PEACE, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, ‘Your God reigns!’ Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices; together they shout for joy. When the LORD returns to Zion, they will see it with their own eyes. Burst into songs of joy together, you ruins of Jerusalem, for the LORD has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem. The LORD will lay bare his holy arm in the sight of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God.”

The Sword of the Spirit

The sword of the Spirit is the Word of God. The Greek word used here is Rhema which means “utterance”. The Spirit of God will provide to the believer that particular utterance from the Logos or counsel of God that is pertinent. You can receive the Holy Ghost “sound- byte” that defeats the devil’s spin every time.

“By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, And all the host of them by the breath of His mouth. He gathers the waters of the sea together as a heap; He lays up the deep in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the LORD; Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast. ”

– Psalm 33:6–9

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind” – John 1:1–4

“The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had

provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven”

- Hebrews 1:3

“Because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised, he confirmed it with an oath. God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope set before us may be greatly encouraged.” - Hebrews 6:17-18

Pray without Ceasing

Praying without ceasing is essential in warfare. Satan and his minions war 24/7 and so must we. While no individual can pray 24/7, the church can do this as a community. In Revelation 4-5, we see a vision of four living creatures and 24 elders worshipping 24/7. In Revelation 5:8-10, these are identified as believers redeemed by Christ's blood. This is confirmed in Ephesians 2:4-7. The vision of the elders is a figure of our current position on Christ. We are, as a community, to pray 24/7 as part of our spiritual warfare.

“Now when He had taken the scroll, THE FOUR LIVING CREATURES AND THE TWENTY-FOUR ELDERS FELL down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song, saying: ‘You are worthy to take the

scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, AND HAVE REDEEMED US TO GOD BY YOUR BLOOD Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth. ‘ ”

–Revelation 5:8–10

“But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), AND RAISED US UP TOGETHER, AND MADE US SIT TOGETHER IN THE HEAVENLY PLACES IN CHRIST JESUS, 7 that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.”

– Ephesians 2:4–7

Scripture References

Ephesians 6:10–18; Romans 12:1–2; Psalm 1:1–3;

Galations 5:5–6; John 3:16–21; 14:6;

Romans 1:18–21; Psalm 64:1–4; Isaiah 52:4–10;

Psalm 33:6–9; John 1:1–4; Hebrews 1:3

Hebrews 6:17–18; Revelation 4–5 (esp Revelation 5:8–10); Ephesians 2:4–7

Week 7 Questions

1. Who wields the long range weapons?
2. What is the purpose of short range weapons?
3. Describe our weapons and what each is used for?
4. Why is Prayer without ceasing so important?

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Week 8: Strategies in the War

In addition to God proving weapons to win the war, He reveals in Scripture strategies for winning the war. Strategies are general methods for fighting. There are four basic strategies in spiritual warfare: Praying for a Hedge of Protection, Praying for God to deploy angelic support, confessing the word of God, and deploying counter-arguments against the enemy as a profession of faith.

Hedge of Protection

The most basic defense in spiritual warfare is God as our shield – our hedge of protection. The Bible tells us over and over that the Lord is our shield and hedge. There are many passages on this. Let's consider three of them, Psalm 18:1–3, Psalm 91:1–2, and Job 1:8–11.

“I will love You, O LORD, my strength. The LORD is my rock and MY FORTRESS and my deliverer; My God, my strength, in whom I will trust; My SHIELD and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. I WILL CALL UPON THE LORD, WHO IS WORTHY TO BE PRAISED; SO SHALL I BE SAVED from my enemies. ” – Psalm 18:1–3

“HE WHO DWELLS IN THE SECRET PLACE of the Most High Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, ‘HE IS MY REFUGE AND MY FORTRESS; My God, in Him I will trust.’ ” – Psalm 91:1–2

“Then the LORD said to Satan, ‘Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?’ So Satan answered the LORD and said, ‘Does Job fear God for nothing? HAVE YOU NOT MADE A HEDGE AROUND HIM, AROUND HIS HOUSEHOLD, AND AROUND ALL THAT HE HAS ON EVERY SIDE? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face!’ ”

- Job 1:8-11

Praying for God to form a hedge or shield of protection is basic defense. Psalm 91:1 tells us that if we stay in the “secret place of the Most High” We are under God’s protection. According to Psalm 18:1-3, it is as easy as calling upon the Lord.

Prayers for Angelic involvement (air support)

In Psalm 91, we read that God stations angels around us to protect us. They are placed there to protect us and provide support when we go on the offensive against Satan’s kingdom. If we seek God’s protection, then He will station warrior angels around us.

“Because you have made the LORD, who is my refuge, Even the Most High, your dwelling place, No evil shall befall you, Nor shall any plague come near your dwelling; FOR HE SHALL GIVE HIS ANGELS CHARGE OVER YOU, To keep you in all your ways. In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone. You shall tread upon the lion and the cobra, The young lion and the serpent you shall trample underfoot. ” – Psalm 91:9–13

Confessions

The basic confessions of the faith are the bedrock through which Satan is defeated. As we confess the blood of Jesus, we get the victory. We must confess the blood of Jesus in accordance to Revelation 12:7–12 and Colossians 2:11–15 to get victory. (See ch 6)

Professions (counter-arguments)

This is straightforward, and it is explained in further detail in the next chapter. God gives us wisdom to deliver counter-arguments superior to Satan’s lies. God has given us the ability to expose the lies and spin Satan puts out.

Scripture References

Psalm 18:1–3; Psalm 91; Job 1:8–11;

Revelation 12:7–12; Colossians 2:11–15

Week 8 Questions

1. What are the four main strategies in the spiritual war?

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Week 9: Tactics of Our Warfare

Tactics of spiritual warfare are specific methods of fighting. These tactics are designed to take down strongholds. Strongholds are thought-fortresses composed of arguments and vanities or high things that exalt themselves against the Lord Jesus Christ. In order to succeed in spiritual warfare, we need to understand the dynamics of strongholds and then tailor specific methods that will bring these strongholds down.

The Dynamics of Strongholds

Second Corinthians 10 gives us insights concerning the dynamics of strongholds. The chapter begins with the assurance that the weapons we have are powerful enough to pull down strongholds. In verse 5, the two types of strongholds are identified. Strongholds can be arguments or high things. Understanding the nature of these type of stronghold will help us to understand how they can be taken down.

“For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, 5 casting down ARGUMENTS and every HIGH THING that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, 6 and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled. ”

- 1 Corinthians 10:4-6

Arguments are philosophical or logical constructions that attempt to support an idea or practice. An argument will attempt to line up facts or reasons in support of a conclusion. Arguments can be made informally or through formal processes. There are three dynamics of arguments that are relevant to spiritual warfare.

Arguments can be found in religious, philosophical, social, and political ideologies. As such, satanic arguments can often be readily identified.

Arguments, by virtue of their logical construction and evidence-dependence, can be addressed through apologetics.

Arguments correspond to principalities in Eph 6:10–18 description of the enemy.

High things are not constructed as arguments, but simply exalt themselves. They can be thought of as pretensions. Anything that exalts itself as having more authority, truth or majesty than the Lord. There are four things about “High Things” relevant to spiritual warfare.

A high thing can be a mere vanity. Much of modern pop culture falls into this category.

A high thing can also involve rival claims to authority. Political and religious ideologies often have elements of high things mixed with their arguments.

High things correspond to authorities, wickedness in high places, and to some extent, powers, in Ephesians 6:10–18 description of the enemy.

High Things, when mixed with arguments, form a special type of strongholds– called powers (*exousia*¹) in Eph 6:18. These strongholds are organized around political boundaries. In Daniel 10, we read of the angel Gabriel being restrained by the “kings of Persia.” for 21 days. These were not mortal human kings, but demonic powers (see Week 27 for more info). Destroying strongholds on regional and global scales will necessarily using discernment about how these strongholds are organized along religious, geographic, political, ethnic, national and cultural lines.

To summarize, strongholds are thought–fortresses composed of both arguments and vanities that exalt themselves against the truth and authority of the Lord.

Taking down strongholds

We can take what we know about strongholds and use that information to develop specific tactics to pull them down. There are four specific tactics in pulling them down: demolishing stronghold by asking God to initiate angelic air support, demolishing strongholds through apologetics/polemics, demolishing strongholds through exercising spiritual authority, and demolishing strongholds through Deliverance.

Demolishing strongholds through angelic air support

The spiritual warfare that we fight involves two types of armed forces. The army of God is composed of believers in Jesus Christ who resist the power of the enemy. The air force of God is, however, composed of angelic armed forces. The description of spiritual war in Revelation 12:7–11 involves both angelic and human fighters. The passage leads off with the archangel Michael and the angels under his command fighting Satan and his evil angels. The narrative shifts from the angel to the human fighters. We read that Satan is “overcome ***“by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death*** (vs 11).” The description in verse 11 does not fit angels. Angels are incapable of “***loving not their lives unto the death.***” As angels cannot die, but were created to be immortal spirits.

Psalm 91 instructs us that God, as Commander-in-Chief, commissions angels to various places of battle to protect His people. If we trust in the Lord, then He will station angels all around us. While we cannot command angels, it is a small thing in the Lord’s eyes to ask Him to

station angels to protect us and soften up the enemy. The Lord will command these angels to protect us and go out ahead of us to the battle to weaken the strongholds of the enemy

“ Because thou hast made the LORD, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation; There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.”

– Psalm 91:9–12

The important thing here is to seek to make the Lord ” ***thy habitation.***” spiritual warfare is never separated from worshipping the one true God and enjoying His presence. We must, first and foremost, seek God.

Demolishing strongholds through apologetics/polemics.

Strongholds that are arguments can be defeated through counter-arguments. In numerous ideologies, there are arguments that advance Satan’s kingdom. For every ideology that is well known, there are counter-arguments that have been launched against it. When believers participate in the various conversations that are ongoing in the world, some of these counter-arguments may be useful in countering Satanic arguments. Apologetics is employed throughout the Bible. Below are just a few examples

In 1 Corinthians 15, Paul used a hypothetical deductive argument akin to the scientific method² to prove the resurrection of Christ. Using what today is called Feynman's three steps of science, He sets up the hypothesis 'there is no resurrection from the dead.' It deductively follows that, if there is no resurrection from the dead, then Christ is not risen from the dead. He then daisy chains this conclusion into another hypothesis - "Christ is not risen." He then calculates through deductive reasoning the consequences of this hypothesis. He leaves it to his readers to perform step three of this scientific method. The consequences that Paul calculated, when tested, are found to be demonstrably false. His two hypotheses, 'there is no resurrection from the dead,' and 'Christ has not risen from the dead' are falsified. Paul's application of the scientific method to the question of Christ's resurrection amounts to a proof of the resurrection of Christ

In Acts 17, Paul used an apologetic method when speaking to Athenian leaders at the Areopagus³. Here he makes an evidential appeal to the knowledge base of his Athenian audience. Paul makes argument for God and Christ in language and thought forms familiar to the Athenians

In Romans 1:18-20, Paul argues that the attributes of God are known to people through what has been made, so that men are without excuse. God has given general revelation to man concerning Himself. Therefore, on the basis of this knowledge, we can have dialogue with unbelievers.

The main thrust of the narrative of Romans 1:18–32, however, is that much of mankind is suppressing the truth. While some of these suppressions involve fallacies in logic and facts that can be addressed through apologetics, other forms of this suppression involve naked hostility towards God and his righteousness. People will flaunt high things or pretensions that are not based on any facts or logic. Apologetics cannot address these acts of willful rebellion. It will take supplementing apologetic with the exercise of spiritual authority.

Demolishing strongholds through exercising spiritual authority

Apologetics alone is NOT sufficient to win all battles. There are vanities and pretensions that do not rely on arguments but simply defy the truth and authority of the Lord. There are many who are enough under demonic influence that no amount of facts or reasoning will have any effect on them. Often people are simply drunk in a stupor. Jeremiah 25 describes this stupor that falls upon the nations.

“For thus says the LORD God of Israel to me: ‘Take this wine cup of fury from My hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send you, to drink it. AND THEY WILL DRINK AND STAGGER AND GO MAD because of the sword that I will send among them.’ ” – Jeremiah 25:15–16

“After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated with his glory. And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, ‘Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird! For all the nations have DRUNK OF THE WINE of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury.’ ”

–Revelation 18:1–3

In Jeremiah 25, it was God’s judgment. In Rev 18, it is the global harlot. Drunkenness in these passages is not referring to physical intoxication with alcoholic beverages but spiritual intoxication caused by embracing pretension and vanities. According to Romans 1, as people reject truth, God gives them over to a reprobate mind in a three phase process of apostasy: There is first a heterosexual revolution that results in people being given over to “*uncleanness*.” If there is no repentance, then there is a homosexual revolution that results in people being given over to “*vile passions*.” If there is still no repentance, then there is an anti-God revolution in which people do “*not like to retain God in their knowledge*.” This revolution results in people being given over to *a debased mind*.

“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, WHO SUPPRESS THE TRUTH IN

UNRIGHTEOUSNESS, because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, BUT BECAME FUTILE IN THEIR THOUGHTS, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things.

“THEREFORE GOD ALSO GAVE THEM UP TO UNCLEANNES, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

“FOR THIS REASON GOD GAVE THEM UP TO VILE PASSIONS. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.

“AND EVEN AS THEY DID NOT LIKE TO RETAIN GOD IN THEIR KNOWLEDGE, GOD GAVE THEM OVER TO A DEBASED MIND, to do those

things which are not fitting; being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them. ”

-Romans 1:18-32

During the first two phases and during the first part of the third phase, repentance is possible. Once God gives someone over to a debased mind, repentance is no longer possible. In neither case will apologetics alone overcome these strongholds. Overcoming these requires the exercise of spiritual authority. There are three things to keep in mind when using spiritual authority to cast out pretensions and vanities.

Confronting those drunk in apostasy by reason of pretensions are delivered from the stronghold, thereby casting them down.

Confronting those drunk in apostasy by reason of pretensions refuse to be delivered from the stronghold, thereby accelerating judgment upon them.

Equipping the Saints

In cases where people become permanently debased, casting down strongholds means bringing down God's judgments upon them.

Therefore, the exercise of spiritual authority to cast down stronghold will involve both prayers for deliverance and prayers for judgment (imprecatory prayers)

Scripture References

1 Corinthians 10:4–6; Ephesians 6:10–18; Jeremiah 25:15–16

Revelation 18:1–3; Romans 1:18–32

Other References

1 “Exousia”, Strong's Concordance, Blue Letter Bible

<http://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?page=2&strongs=G1849&t=KJV#lexResults>

2 Richard Feynman and the Scientific Method



Chapter 1

3 Introducing the Athenians to God

<http://www.gostandspeak.com/Introducing%20the%20Athenians%20to%20God.pdf>

Week 9 Questions

1. What two types of structure through which Satan opposes God?
2. What is a difference between a stronghold and a pretension?
3. What are the two ways to take down strongholds?
4. Why is apologetics/counter-arguments ineffective against pretensions?
5. When pretensions become apostasy, what are the two possible consequences of casting them down?
6. Why does casting down pretensions result in deliverance for some and judgment

for others?

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Answer Key for Spiritual Warfare

Week 1 Questions

1. **Where did Satan come from?**

Satan was created as one of the angel. He was one of two archangels. Along with Michael, he was the highest ranking angels.

2. **What was Satan's original name?**

He was originally called Lucifer.

3. **What was Lucifer's original purpose?**

Lucifer was ordained to be the worship leader in Heaven. According to Ezekiel 28, his body was fashioned to be a living musical instrument.

4. **How did Lucifer become Satan?**

Lucifer was filled with pride. He wanted to "*be like the Most High.*" Pride caused him to rebel and fall.

Week 2 Questions

1. **When was the first war fought?**

Near the beginning of creation, occurring between Gen 1:1 and Gen 1:2. The Hebrew word that translated „was” in the phrase “without form, and

void” implies coming into existence, as in the early creation becoming without form through catastrophic destruction that would be caused by Satan’s war with the holy angels of God.

2. What was the outcome of the First War in Heaven?

Satan lost his residence.

3. What was Satan still able to do in Heaven after he lost his home?

He was able to visit Heaven. He also retained legal standing to enter God’s Court to make accusations against people.

Week 23 Questions

1. What became part of Satan’s strategy in opposing God after he was evicted from Heaven?

Satan seeks to turn us, God prize creation, against Him, and then provoke Him to execute judgment upon us for our sins, destroying us and grieving God.

2. Why does Satan tempt us?

Satan tempts us so he can set us up to receive God’s wrath.

3. How are we tempted?

We are tempted when legitimate desires are subverted into desires hostile to God.

4. What can happen if one consistently fails to resist temptation?

People begin to rationalize their sin, and their heart becomes darkened. Strongholds and pretensions hostile to God are established.

5. How did Jesus resist temptation?

He first studied the Word of God, then, at the point of temptation, He confessed the Word of God as His defense.

6. What are we to do to resist temptation?

The same way Jesus did.

Week 4 Questions

1. What is one of Satan's favorite modes of operation?

Satan loves to enter into God's Courts to act as a prosecuting attorney in order to accuse us.

2. What is the basis of Satan's authority?

The angels of God have legal standing to enter into his Courts and testify in Divine proceedings. When Satan launched his first war against God, he lost his home in heaven but not his legal standing to approach the throne of God.

3. What is the purpose of Satan filing accusations against us?

Satan seeks to accuse us by filing charges in order to draw down upon us the judgment of God for our crimes against God's Law.

Week 5 Questions

1. What is the basis of our standing before God?

The basis for our legal rights is our standing in the covenants. God has entered into covenants with His people whereby they are given certain legal rights.

2. What did Jesus do to provide us with legal standing to approach God?

Jesus perfect obedience to the Mosaic covenant resulted in Christ, and all who belong to Him becoming a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

3. What types of legal rights do we have as citizens of God's kingdom?

We have standing as kings, priests, and witnesses.

4. How do we use these rights?

By entering into God's Courts and petitioning his throne. We do this through prayer, praise and worship, and proclamation of God's word.

Week 6 Questions

1. How does Satan use his access to Heaven to attack us?

Satan uses his access to heaven to accuse us formally before God's Court. He does this to provoke God's judgment against us.

2. Is God's judgment alive and well in the New Testament?

Yes

3. How is Satan defeated?

The blood of Jesus takes away all of the criminal charges Satan filed against us. Our testimony of the blood of Jesus not only dismisses those charges, but eventually takes away Satan's legal standing to appear in Court.

Week 7 Questions

1. Who wields the long range weapons?

Angels and demons wield these weapons which have general effect. Such weapons, like modern air power, weaken strongholds, but require ground troops with short range weapons in order to cast them down.

2. What is the purpose of short range weapons?

Short range weapons are used in close range combat to take down strongholds.

3. Describe our weapons and what each is used for?

Our weapons are used as short range weapons in close range combat to take down strongholds.

1. Breastplate of righteousness – Righteousness gained by faith in Christ's righteousness working through love.
2. Shield of Faith – Faith that quenches lies and slanders of Satan.
3. Helmet of Salvation – Protects the mind from Satan's assaults
4. Shoes of Peace – peace provided by being firmly rooted and grounded.
5. Belt of Truth – Truth hold everything together.
6. Sword of the Spirit – Word of God which offensive power to kill and destroy the enemy.

4. Why is prayer without ceasing so important?

Equipping the Saints

Satan and his minions war 24/7, so we must pray 24/7 as part of the spiritual war. Since no individual can do this 24/7, we do this as a community.

Week 8 Questions

1. **What are the four main strategies in the spiritual war?**
2. Prayers for Hedge/shield of protection.
3. Prayers for angels to perform long-range actions to support our warfare
4. Confession – Proclaiming God’s Word and our faith/repentance.
5. Counter-arguments

Week 9 Questions

1. **What two types of structures or strongholds through which Satan opposes God?**

Arguments and Pretensions

2. **What is a difference between a argument and a pretention?**

An argument claims to be supported by logic, or facts; a pretension is a naked claim to authority or honor.

3. **What are the two ways to take down strongholds?**

The exercise of spiritual authority and counter-argument exposing errors in logic and facts alleged to support the stronghold.

4. Why is apologetics/counter-arguments ineffective against pretensions?

Pretension are not based on factual claims or logic claims, so they are immune to counter-appeals based on facts and logic.

5. When pretensions become apostasy, what are the two possible consequences of casting down pretensions?

The person in bondage can become delivered from the pretension or destroyed with the pretension?

6. Why does casting down pretensions result in deliverance for some and judgment for others?

People have a free choice to embrace deliverance or continue in the pretension, at least until their heart becomes too hardened to repent.

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Book 5:How do we Know

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Week 1: Postmodernism

We live in a time when many people do not believe that there is such a thing as truth. Others are not sure what to believe. One of man's basic questions is how can we know what we know? What is the basis of our certainty or can we be certain of anything? There is a branch of philosophy called epistemology that deals with these issues. The philosophy or movement called postmodernism asserts that there is no objective truth and no knowledge of truth. All we have are perspectives and opinions. This mindset is increasingly becoming the dominant mode of thought among non-Christians.

Since postmodernists do not believe in truth (in theory, at least) they do not regard language as communicating any predefined content. They reason that if there is no truth then one can read any meaning they want into a message. They call this deconstruction. This is commonly referred to as spinning or spin doctoring. Since postmodernist claim not to believe in any truth, they do not seek to gain a unified understanding of the particulars that they see by means of an appeal to objective truth or reality as a universal to provide a unified view of things. It like having a bunch of drawers with no dresser to put them in or worse a pile of clothes lying on the floor. A postmodernist looks to politics rather than truth to unite his or her private world. This is called political correctness.

How did we get to this place? Philosophy based on human wisdom and traditions rather than on Christ. The Bible says that God brings to

nothing the wisdom of the world. (Is 29:9–14; 1 Corinthians 1:18–24) A study of the history of philosophy bears this out. In the 1600's, a man who is considered by many as the Father of modern philosophy established a self based philosophy. He coined the phrase ‘ I think, therefore I am.’¹ He used the self-evident knowledge that we have thoughts to prove the existence of the self and then sought to prove everything else by the existence of the self. This created a problem. It does not follow that any perception I have of the outside world is true ‘out there’ simply because I perceive it in my mind. Descartes thinking created a divide between the inner world and the external world. If one only understands what is in his understanding, how can one go beyond the domain of thoughts to verify what is ‘out there?’

In the quest to know what is ‘out there’ a philosophy called empiricism developed. Empiricism is the belief that all knowledge comes from sense experience. The logical conclusion of empiricism is that all we can know are sensory perceptions. In a logically consistent empiricist epistemology or theory of knowledge, ” Trying to go *beyond* perceptions, as metaphysics must, inevitably involves going beyond anything that can have cognitive content.²” There are several problems with empiricism. If ALL knowledge comes from sense experience, how can we know this statement to be true? If it is a self-evident proposition, then not all knowledge comes from sense experience. If it is a sense experience then it is a circular argument which goes like this: A is true because of B; B is true because of A; A has not yet been proved – the argument collapses.

Empiricism cannot explain between valid sense experience and illusion, since both are sensory experiences. It is necessary that something distinct from the sensory impression exist to serve as a standard of measurement to judge our experience. It is not raw experience but processed experience that counts. A dog can see a barn, but we can also call it a barn and compare it with other barns.

Kant saw that experience had to be processed. He proposed that we have categories of hardwired knowledge that we bring into experience that interpret experience. He introduced several concepts that govern philosophy discussions to the present time. The world became divided into phenomenal realm (things as they appear to us) and the noumenal realm (things as they are).³ While Kant answered some problems unique to empiricism, he did not tell how we have this hardwired knowledge or how to bridge the gap between our subjective view and the way things really are. He seems to have widened that gap.

The next stage in the history of modern philosophy is called Logical Positivism⁴. Logical Positivism, sometimes called Logical Empiricism, asserts that philosophy– logic in particular– can say nothing about what is ‘out there’. Logic provided rules of inference to assist the scientific method. Experiments and observation provided ALL knowledge of the real world. Positivists still had hope of salvaging the idea of verification – that it is somehow possible to verify that our perception of what

happens “out there” is actually true “out there” Philosophy is valid for defining terms and constructing rules of valid reasoning for the scientific method but that knowledge about the outside world can be gained only by using the scientific method to parse empirical or experiential observation or experiment. In other words, philosophy was used to construct the scientific method, but it was the scientist, as practitioner of the scientific method, who gathered knowledge about the world

This, however, did not solve the subject–object problem. If philosophy knows nothing about the world ‘out there’ how is it possible for philosophers to develop rules of inference that apply ‘out there.’ Logical Positivism does not make any provision for people to know that the categories of our perception correspond to categories as they exist “out there” or external to us. The practice of drawing inferences from observations or experiments involved a leap of faith. Since we can’t exhaustively observe everything, we observe a sample with the belief that the results of a sufficiently large and representative sample will correspond to the result of the whole. This approach was flawed for two reasons. In order to know whether our sample is representative and sufficiently large, we would have to already know something about the whole before we can construct our experiment. How does man, beginning from the self as a frame of reference, do this?

A philosopher named Karl Popper comes along. In his book, *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*, destroys the idea that man can verify the world “out

there.” Popper argues that there is no logical demarcation for concluding that inferences are reasonable leaps of faith and other are unreasonable by using induction. This is because it is logically impossible to reduce universal statements to a finite set of particular statements.⁵ No matter how many observations one makes, the next observation could falsify the theory. Any such attempt to draw a universal statement out of a particular one is risky – it is a leap of faith.

In order to quantify the likelihood of an inference being true, we would need to know something of the whole prior to starting the experiment; if we need this knowledge before the experiment, we cannot rely on applying the scientific method to these experiments to gain the knowledge. Without knowing something about the whole in order to quantify the risk of the inference being incorrect, then the inference itself is no more than a blind guess. There is no logical demarcation between reasonable leaps of faith and mystical leaps of faith.

Popper proposed what he called the falsifiability criterion.⁶ Science could never verify anything but a scientist would test a hypothesis to see if it would be falsified. Hypotheses that were not falsified would be accepted. The falsification criterion avoids the issue of inductive inferences committing the informal fallacy of sampling bias⁷ or hasty generalization⁸. It also fits well with the deductive aspects of the

scientific method. Experiments and observations can test only the consequences, and falsification is the only valid inference,⁹

Falsification, however, suffers the same fundamental limitation as verification. Neither can actually reach the external world. No way to be certain that it is the external world and not a particular perception of it that falsifies the hypothesis. If rules of inference tell us nothing about the real world, then Popper's falsification criterion – as a rule of inference – cannot tell us anything about the external world.

Analytic Philosophy states that logic – rules of inference – says nothing about the real world but reflects only the relations of terms used in language.¹⁰ If logic does not apply in the real world, then the scientific method collapses. None of these philosophies answers how we can move beyond our perception of reality to verify what is out there. We don't see what is out there, but only our perception of what is there. How do we know that there is anything beyond our perception if we cannot see beyond our perception? This logically leads to Postmodernism, which sees logic and science as nothing more than linguistic and social constructs. Postmodernists have concluded that we cannot know anything beyond our perception.

In the next chapter we shall see God's answer to Postmodernism as well as the only answer to the question 'How can we know?'

Week 1 Questions

1. What is Postmodernism?
2. What fundamental idea did Des Cartes put forward that led to postmodernism?
3. Why is the self not adequate as a reference-frame?

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Week 2: Postmodernism Answered

In the previous chapter, I have shown that modern philosophy leads to postmodernism and skepticism. The basic problem is that the self is used as the frame of reference. The problem with this is that there is no way for a self-centered reference to move outside of the self and contact the external world. A self-centered reference frame has no means of validating whether the world outside of the perception really agrees with the perceptions of it.

Unless you are God, the universe does not revolve around you. however, it is not necessary that the self BE the reference frame, only that we have contact with the reference frame in our conscious. The Bible begins with the existence of thought as a reference frame. John 1;1 says that it is the Word of God that created the universe. God framed reality in His thoughts, His Language. We will see that the existence of thought is a better reference frame, and that in the midst of the weaknesses in our thoughts are thoughts that lead to God's superior thoughts.

Instead of '*I think therefore I am*,' Descartes should have said '*I think, therefore thoughts exist.*' There are three things so profoundly self evident that even the hardest skeptic acknowledges their existence: Language (logic), perception (consciousness), and intentionality.

Perception

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Language has real existence as language and perceptions have real existence as perceptions. Language and perceptions are something and not “nothing”. The philosophical problems occur when we take a perception as REPRESENTING something BEYOND the immediate perception or language as representing anything beyond the immediate perception (perceptions that are ‘ just your perceptions ‘). If and only if one makes the self the reference frame and puts content outside of self that a null value is obtained for perceptions and concepts. One must account for the existence of language and perception BEFORE setting up machinery for the subject–object relation.

We do however think of perceptions on two levels: one level can be described as ‘my perspective’. Every perception a person has real existence on this level. Some perception can exist only on this level. I can imagine that Saddam Hussein has paratroopers jumping off of flying pink elephants over Louisville, but my imagining that does not mean that there are real flying pink elephants.

However the perception that the sun is yellow is not limited to ‘just my perspective’ but describes something happened ‘out there.’ Some perceptions also exist beyond our imagination. I am about to show that the law of non–contradiction exists both in my perspective and beyond my perspective.

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The question is, are there any perceptions or concepts that exist beyond the immediate perception or concept that we have? If not then we have no means to critically analyze our perceptions or concepts. All we would have is imagination; there could be no knowledge of anything beyond what is in our heads. If we have in ‘ my perspective ‘ at least one perception whose existence transcends or goes beyond ‘ my perspective ‘ and have the ability to distinguish that perception from other perception that might be ‘ just my perspective ‘ Then we have the means to critically judge our perceptions and beliefs about reality.

The Law of non-contradiction exists both within and beyond our immediate perceptions. The law of non-contradiction asserts that no two things can be true where the truth of one makes the other false. This implies that not all perceptions and concepts have equal truth value. All perceptions equally exist as perceptions, so the only way possible to differentiate truth values among perceptions is if at least one of those perceptions also has a quality distinct from that quality that make it a perception. This quality can be called truth. If so we can have a framework for the subject-object relationship.

Language

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The Law of non-contradiction is related to the existence of language. Every language has a grammar or equivalent to grammar. Every language has categories of subject and predicate, and a copula that connects the subject with the predicate (a verb of being or action IE Jesus is Lord). Any language that can function in the world that is perceived also has categories that modify these basic two categories. This would include adverb, adjective, direct object, singular~ plural, diversity of tenses of time just to name a few. Without at least the two basic categories it would be impossible to construct the law of non-contradiction.

Philosophers have for years known the connection between the law of non-contradiction and language. There are those who would say that the law of non-contradiction asserts nothing about the ' real world ' but only the relations of terms used in language. This assumes that language doesn't really exist. Language does exist though. If Language has real existence as language, then any laws of language also exist in reality. The law of non-contradiction then asserts something about reality. The nature of the law of non-contradiction is absolute and universal. That means it cannot be applied to only part of reality. if it applies to reality with language then it must apply to all of reality in all of its forms.

The law of non-contradiction gives different truth values to various perceptions and concepts. Some perception are just my own, others are real beyond my perception. The law of non-contradiction frames both and draws a distinction between each category. One is called subjective

and the other objective truth. This implies that the law of non-contradiction has a quality of reality that transcends perceptions that are ‘ just my perspective ‘ and that some perceptions and some concepts also have this transcendent quality. We call this quality objective truth.

Since the law of non-contradiction has both real perceptibility and this real transcendent quality and the law of non-contradiction indicates the existence of language, then there are two levels of reality both of which involve the presence of language communication and verbal thought and that the law of non-contradiction is real on both levels.

Week 2 Questions

- 1.What is the answer to the problems posed by a self-centered reference frame?
- 2.How does a thought-centered reference frame allow us to have knowledge of the world outside of our perceptions?
- 3.What is the difference between having a truth value or reality as a perception and having a transcendent truth value?
- 4.What principle is self-demonstrated as having both truth in our perceptions and truth value beyond our perceptions?
- 5.What passage established the Biblical precedent for having a thought-centered reference frame?

Week 3: Absolute Truth is For Real

Pilate said to Jesus Christ ‘What is truth?’ in response to the testimony of Christ that He came ‘to bear witness to the truth’ Within the political context of this conversation it is reasonable to conclude that Pilate viewed as his own personal truth the political realities of Rome. Many people today view truth as subjective or relative to perspectives or situations. They do not believe there is such a thing as Absolute truth, or a universal reference point or eternal, infallible truths.

Logically speaking, the notion that there are no absolutes is self-refuting. Either there are absolutely no absolutes in which case the denial of absolutes is itself an absolute, or sometimes the denial of absolutes is false in which case there are absolutes. From a logical standpoint, absolute truth necessarily exists.

Now it is generally recognized that those who reject absolute truth also reject logic. They would have you believe that logic and particularly the law of non-contradiction are merely a construct of language and not a law of reality. They forget that language and perceptions themselves have real existence as language and perceptions. The laws of logic are therefore laws or constructs of reality as well as the constructs of language. A more complete defense on the validity of the law of the non-contradiction can be found in the previous chapter Postmodernism Answered.

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By Absolute truth we mean four things: universal, infallible, eternal, and reference point.

By universal that is truth that applies to everything. The law of non-contradiction is one example. If there is no universal truth then there is no objective truth. There would be only private, perspectival truths. If that is true then one would be god of his own universe. I could think worlds into existence, would no longer need food, water or outside air to live. I could will a harem of beautiful, voluptuous, naked women to service my every want and who would always be available whenever I wanted. I could fire my bosses at work. Fire the President. Why vote for someone else to be President when you are king of the world? This may sound ridiculous, but it logically follows if there is no truth outside my perspective.

On September 11, 2001, the first stage of postmodernism collapsed with the two towers of the World Trade Center. Impressed on the global psyche is the notion that no individual lives in just his world. There is a world outside of your own private world that interacts with your world. Truth cannot then be relative to your perspective but there is a truth that applies to every private world as well as every community. Where the gospel stands apart from the world is that much of the world will never bow before Christ until compelled to do so on Judgment Day. Instead of looking to real truth they will seek a counterfeit truth in a mere man or

manmade system like the UN. These will bow before the antichrist, and as a consequence, suffer eternally in the Lake of Fire.

The law of non-contradiction stated a different way asserts that nothing can be both true and false in the same context. This means that truth cannot be false. Absolute truth is infallible. This property of Absolute truth requires that there exist a Supernatural reality. The natural world is infected with corruption, conflict and contradictions. Absolute truth cannot suffer decay and contradiction. Therefore the truth of the natural world is relative. In order to make that statement as a true statement there must exist truth that is both universal enough to apply to the entire natural realm and also implies that there exist truth that serves as a reference point for all natural truths.

Absolute truth is a reference point. This means that it does need to be created or validated by reference to anything else. it is sufficient to stand on its own and is self-existent. All other truths depend on Absolute truth.

It is necessary to begin with something that is self-existent. If nothing is self-existent then everything that exists was caused and came into existence. If that is true go back far enough into the past and nothing exists and there nothing could ever come into existence. It is logically

impossible to anything to be drawn from its contradictory—it is therefore impossible for something coming from nothing.

Week 3 Questions

1. Why is absolute truth necessarily true?
2. What are four attributes of absolute truth?
3. How does the infallibility of absolute truth imply a supernatural universe?
4. Why is it impossible for absolute truth to suffer decay?
5. Why is it absurd to believe that there is not truth outside of the self?

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Week 4: Fundamental Knowledge of God

Self-existence and derived existence

Absolute Truth is self-existent. Absolute truth is necessarily and universally true. However, there are many particular truths that apply just sometimes and over a limited context. For example, America was once a colony of Great Britain (UK) but that is no longer true. What is the relation between absolute truth and particular truths?

Particular truths derive their reality from Absolute Truth. Since no two contradictories can both be true, they cannot be both the same thing. If they are not both the same, then things or perceptions with the same attributes have a common source. Particular truths come from truth.

If every perception that is objectively true derives this objective truth from Absolute Truth, then the primitive categories of perception and reason are derived from truth. These primitive categories form the operating system of the human mind. From these primitive categories are formed the complex language and thought processes that we think.

This also means that the other categories of imagination, morality, and free will are also derived from Absolute Truth. This means that a rational human person with imagination and free will (These categories still exist even if the content is illusory) can exist only if the Ground of all Being

(Absolute truth) is a Person with the same categories and He has anointed man with these categories.

There are three undeniable attributes that exist that are underivable in terms of any other attributes; rationality, consciousness, and intentionality. These are undeniable in that it is impossible not to avoid knowledge or experience of these, and underivable as they cannot be adequately explained as a product of other attributes.

Of these three, rationality can be expressed as a formal proof. rationality, or the laws of logic, must by their internal nature, be applicable to all of reality and not just a particular context; they cannot be limited to a particular context. The law of non-contradiction, for example, says it is impossible be true and false in the same context. This would, of necessity govern every context, otherwise there might exist some context in which something could be true and false in the same context. Furthermore, if the law of non-contradiction is true, it cannot be false. To falsify the law of non-contradiction, one must deny the possibility that it can be true in any context. In other words, one must use the law of non-contradiction to deny the law of non-contradiction. The law of non-contradiction is universally and necessarily true.

The necessary and universal application of the law of non-contradiction means that it cannot be reduced as the product of something else. Since it is necessarily true, it is eternally true and self-existent. It follows

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immediately from the law of non-contradiction that absolute, objective truth exists. The denial of absolutes is either an absolute truth; one can deny the existence of truths valid in all contexts only by making their denial true in every context. If something is absolute in one context, then by definition it is true in every context. Absolute truth (true in all contexts) necessarily exists.

Consciousness is the second thing that is undeniable and underivable. Each us knows that consciousness exists through the personal experience of consciousness. Even if all of our perceptions are delusional, these delusions could only exist in a real consciousness.

In worldviews other than Philosophic materialism, this is taken for granted. Philosophical materialism, consciousness is seen as a product of unconscious atoms and molecules acting in a random or predestined way. Philosophic materialists see consciousness as no more than electrical discharges in the brain.

Attempts to reduce consciousness to an unconscious or pre-conscious ground of being raises huge problems. If the fundamental reality or absolute truth is impersonal matter/energy, how can instances of consciousness containing delusions exist. If the fundamental reality or absolute truth is impersonal matter/energy, how can there exist any 'ought' categories or subjective experience as such simply does not exist

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in an impersonal object. Particularly, how can an unconscious absolute truth produce delusions or imaginations as an effect. Since absolute truth cannot be false, it cannot produce a falsehood as an effect. Delusions and imaginations cannot exist in any universe grounded upon an unconscious ground of being.

Intentionality is the third thing that is undeniable. From the personal experience, we make decisions are made with a sense of our own intentionality or purpose on a regular basis. While it can be hard to define precisely what intentionality is, it is not hard to know it when we see it.

If we live in a universe where there is ultimately no purpose, our capacity intentionality (free will) would be a cosmic accident and therefore make absolutely no sense; it would, in fact, be a colossal delusion. If the universe suffers from the opposite extreme, where every event is pre-determined from the eternal past, then our perception of free will and the ability to act with our own intention is a colossal delusion that cannot be accounted for by an unconscious ground of being.

Our conscious experience involves the perception of free will. We can conceive of alternate possibilities and also perceive of the freedom to select from multiple possibilities. This is undeniably a part of the human experience, and there is no way to reduce this to or derive this from an

effect of another; if the perception were a product of another, different type of cause that is absolute truth, then the choice is pre-determined.

The undeniability and underivability of free will is especially apparent in cases where the perception of intention involves perception of conflicts and contradictions. Absolute truth cannot produce contradictions.

If absolute truth cannot produce delusions and contradictions, then how do we account for our perception that these types of events occur. Delusions and imagination can only exist inside a consciousness, and distinct intentionality can only exist inside a consciousness. An impersonal absolute simply cannot produce these things.

A personal absolute can produce imaginations, but never without the knowledge that they are imaginations or the decision to define them as imaginations. A personal absolute, that is one that has rationality, consciousness and the capacity for intentionality, can define the existence of a created person ex nihilo who is able to use their capacity for intentionality to act in a way contrary to the absolute; This act of rebellion is the root of the existence of contradictions and delusions. (More on this in chapter 30).

These three things, rationality, consciousness, and intentionality, are not reducible to or derivable from other things. Only rationality can produce rationality, consciousness produce consciousness, and intentionality

produce intentionality. These three attributes together define personhood.

The law of con-contradiction says that nothing can be true and false in the same context. This does not prevent a thing or proposition from being true in one context and false in another. Thirty-five years ago, for example, I was the shortest one amongst my siblings. During my teenage years, I grew from being the shorter to the tallest of my siblings. The truth value of a given state can change over time. There are many other contexts where a given statement may be true or false. What the law of non-contradiction does restrict are in two areas: The law of non-contradiction itself is true in all contexts, and it **eliminates the possibility of anything being true and false in the same context**. In the example above, it is impossible for me to be both taller and shorter than a someone else at the same time.

If nothing can be true and false in the same context, then it is impossible for anything to be itself and also its contradictory, as that would involve something being true and false in the same context. If something cannot be its contradictory, then it is impossible to draw out or derive from anything its contradictory.

The impossibility of drawing out of something its contradictory does not prevent a cause from bringing forth results that are merely different. For

example, one might conclude on the surface that the law of non-contradiction prohibits prohibition of photons coming from “non-photons.” Photons, however, is a derivative of electromagnetic energy. Energy stored as potential energy in hydrogen atoms is released during nuclear fusion. Thus, what some might see as a violation of the law of non-contradiction but is really not. Instead on “non-photons” -> “photons,” it is energy (potential) -> energy (kinetic-photons). photonic and non-photonic energy are not contradictory to each other, but merely different derivatives of the same substance.

As I demonstrated at the beginning of this chapter, the three attributes of personhood, rationality, consciousness, and intentionality, cannot derived from anything different from them. Rationality can only be derived from rationality, consciousness can only be derived from consciousness, and intentionality can only be derived from intentionality. This means that non-rationality is actually contradictory to rationality, non-consciousness is actually contradictory to consciousness, and non-intentionality is actually contradictory to intentionality. These attributes of personality can only exist in a reality where the fundamental reality or absolute has these attributes. If the ground of all being, as absolute truth, does not have the attributes of personality, then it is impossible for any finite or created object to ever have these properties. To put it another way: If an Infinite-Personal God does not exist, then none of us can exist as finite, created persons; we would have no consciousness, rationality, or capacity for intentionality (will).

Week 4 Questions

1. Why does that law of non-contradiction require categories to give rise to only non-contradicting categories?
- 2 What three things are undeniable?
- 3 Why is rationality undeniable?
- 4 Why is it that the existence of delusions is incompatible requires that consciousness and intentionality as undeniable and underivable from other types of attributes?
- 5 Why do the attributes of personality, rationality, consciousness, and intentionality, require that currently existing persons can only come from a personal beginning?

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Week 5: Creation

God Creator of both Logic and Substance

God is the source of both the logic and substance of the universe. The logic is inherent in the nature of God. Every category of logic that exists, or has ever existed, is derived from God. This means that the categories of personality and morality that exist in humans must have pre-existed eternally in God as a category of Absolute Truth. These categories provide the framework for the universe's form and structure.

There are three basic accounts of the origins of the universe and humanity. These are emanationism, evolution, and creation ex nihilo. Of these, only creation ex nihilo is an adequate account.

Emanationism an inadequate account of Creation

A common view of creation in many pagan and Eastern culture is what is called emanationism. Out of the divine substance proceeds emanations of that substance. From these emanations emerge the universe in its present form. In Neo-Platonism, for example, the perfect abstract forms of various objects brought emanations that resulted in the concrete instances of these in the universe. The ideal chair emanated into actual chairs.

Since absolute truth necessarily exists, and absolute truth cannot be false; the process of emanation cannot result in truth decay. The resulting emanations are themselves absolute truth and therefore eternal truth. Accounts of emanations in various Pagan and Eastern religions are inconsistent in that they describe emanations that are inferior to the substances they emanated; these emanations have suffered truth decay.

If emanations cannot suffer truth decay, then emanationist philosophy cannot explain the delusions, contradiction and decadence that mark our world. Emanation cannot explain the passage of time as it would logically result in a universe where everything is eternal and self-existent. While emanation can explain some things, like the relationship of the Son and the Holy Spirit to the Heavenly Father, it is not an adequate explanation for creation.

Macro-evolutionary Theory not an adequate account of Creation

A popular view of origins in modern times is the theory of evolution. The use of evolutionary theory as a meta-narrative implies that the material universe is gaining increased information and complexity by means of random, undirected processes. This theory runs up against at least two difficulties: The weaknesses of philosophic materialism, and the untestability of many of its hypothesis.

The weaknesses of philosophic materialism are many. While it is beyond the scope of this book to fully document the case against materialism. A growing body of scientific knowledge is creating growing difficulties for a logically necessary result of the materialistic view – that the material universe is a closed system. In a closed system everything is determined exhaustively from only things that are inside the system. The discoveries that the density of dark energy is constant while the universe is expanding at a growing rate suggest that energy is, in fact, being created. Black hole singularities are places where there is infinite gravity, creating a discontinuity in space and infinite density. The Heisenberg Uncertainty principle implies asserts that it is impossible to precisely ascertain both the energy level and location of an electron. This destroys determinism – and by implication a closed system.

Many of the working hypothesis of evolutionary theory are simply not testable in any scientific sense. We cannot go back in time to observe what really happened; these hypothesis are based on inferences based on current scientific knowledge. We do not know if the portion of the material universe we are observing is representative of all time and space; if the observed universe is not representative of the entire material universe, then such inferences commit a sampling bias. Mere correlation amongst genomes and amongst fossils that have been observed do not establish a causal connection; we have not observed mechanism establishing such a connection on a sufficient scale to

establish strong inference; to assert that such an inference is established commits the fallacy of assuming that correlation proves causation.

The creation, and man in particular, are more than the collection of atoms and molecules. Man has rationality, consciousness, and intentionality that are underivable from material processes. While evolutionary theory may explain some physical processes, it is not an adequate explanation for creation.

Creation ex nihilo

When God created the universe generally, and man in particular, He used information that already existed that was derived from information eternally existing. Hebrews 1:3 instructs us that Christ is the one “***Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.***” Colossians 1:16–17 echoes this same thought, instructing us that “***For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or***

principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.”

The finite and material substance of the universe, however, was created ex nihilo. Augustine used this Latin term, which means “out of nothing”, to describe the creation of matter. It is this substance which gives objects that “other” attribute. It is this substance that distinguishes the finite universe from the eternal reality of God. Objects created ex nihilo have distinct existence because God, as a Person who is absolute truth, says so.

In God’s acts of creation, He brings the eternally existent logical categories from His own substance and uses these to organize the finite objects that He speaks into existence ex nihilo or out of nothing. The rest of the chapter further explains this process.

God is the Source of all categories of Being.

Truth is absolute; Truth cannot fail. Yet our common experience reveals that most aspects of life are subject to falsification or corruption. In other words there are many things which can be true one moment and false the next. If something can be true one moment and false the next, then that something is not itself the truth but a “dependent thing” that depends on the presence of Truth to be real.

If a dependent thing is dependent on the Truth for its reality then its reality is either an overlap or duplication of a substance that exists in Truth. Every “positive essence” that exists must also exist as a substance or category of Absolute Truth.

God– The Source of Personhood and Morality

If a dependent category is drawn from the Truth it cannot be of a positive contrary to the Truth. To attempt to draw a contradictory category from the Truth would imply that there existed or exists an impossible union between the Truth and the contrary essence. Therefore every positive category that exists in the created exists in the Truth. This does not include sin. Sin deprives objects of their reality. This also does include so-called negative essences. Negative essences are not essences at all but a description of the absence of an essence. Non-personality is not an essence but a description of an attribute of an object that does not possess personality.

Two important examples of this are the categories of personality and morality. IF true personality exists in man, it must exist in the Truth. Now there are those who say that personality is an illusion, but either the illusion is real, requiring a real person to be deceived, or the illusion is false which means that personality exists. If personality exists then it must exist in Truth. Absolute Truth is a Person. I know Him as the Triune God: The Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit.

The Creation of Finite Substance Ex Nihilo explained

While Absolute Truth is infallibly real and eternal, the created universe is temporal. The traditional notion of cause and effect is not sufficient to explain how an eternal reality through infinite motion through an infinite period of time can produce finite. It is impossible to create from eternity: an object cannot be eternal and temporal.

Time is defined by actions, whether the action is the earth rotation, revolution around the sun; or the number of vibrations per sec. of a Rubidium atom, Time is measured by action: Eternal by infinite action, Temporal by finite action.

The actions of God cannot be defined in terms of time unless He chooses to define them in terms of time. God is infinite and infinity cannot be numbered—it is beyond measurement. One way to show how God created is by means of a line. It is impossible to define a line by means of connected segments. No matter how many segments one connects the line always exceeds the total length of the connected segments. Rather, one begins with the line and picks a point, then picks another point: the distance between those points is a segment. God picks a point on what we call a timeline and calls it the Beginning, then picks another point and calls it the End (Rev 1:17;21:6). The distance between the Beginning and the End is called space–time history.

When God created temporal things He defined them as beginning, moving, and ending in space-time history. Every finite attribute can be measured mathematically. Every finite quantity can be numbered or measured, and each number can exist in terms of another number: 10 is ten 1's, 1 is ten $1/10$, $1/10$ is ten $1/100$ and on and on. Each successive number can be reduced or based on a smaller, more basic number, resulting in smaller and smaller numbers. As a finite quantity continues to get smaller it will reach zero.

If zero is the ultimate basis of finite existence then nothing finite can exist. It is absurd to conclude that anything can be drawn from 0+nothing. If zero cannot be a ground of being, then the ground of being cannot be finite either.

Therefore the ground of all being must be infinite. But is this an impersonal infinite or a Person? The impersonal relates with only "what is." What is the finite in relation to the infinite? This can be mathematically calculated. The simplified version: Finite quantity/infinity. Whenever numbers are being divided, the more divisions the smaller the resulting quotient. For example $1/4$ is smaller than $1/2$ because 4 divisions creates smaller pieces than 2. What piece of infinity is any finite thing? Because infinity is beyond the biggest number that can exist, there is no limit to the number of divisions that exist. Since there is no limit to the number of divisions and each division

results in a smaller number the final result is 0. What piece of infinity is anything finite? It is 0. If the created finite is zero in relation to the infinite and can only exist in relation to the infinite; that which is finite cannot exist in an impersonal universe. It also cannot exist in any universe where finite reality emanates from uncreated reality.

What about a Personal Infinite. If the ground of all being– the Absolute Truth– is a Person, then it is possible that with His Mind He can ‘speak’ finite and temporal things into existence. Both being and action can be spoken into existence. This is what the Bible says (John 1:1–14; Gen1) finite things have a distinct existence because God defined it so. The Word of God defines finite objects with their classes, attributes, and properties.

A similar argument can be made concerning the nature of the existence of action. This speaking into existence finite reality that would otherwise be zero or null in relation to the infinite necessarily involves creation ex nihilo – **existence out of nothing that is sustained only by the fiat of One who is absolute truth.**

Genesis 1 describes God’s work of speaking the creation. First, He defines the beginning –the existence of space and time (v1). Then He defines the existence of matter and energy (v2). Then God made

statements that organize space, time, matter and energy into a complex and living creation.

We must, of course, recognize that these few statements recorded are not the only statements given to organize the complex universe. These statements represent broad principles within all particular principles operate. These principles are too numerous for mortal man to count completely but are partially enumerated in what we call “the laws of science.”

There exists a uniformity of causes and effects in an open system over a limited time span. This means that the laws of science generally apply evenly to all situations they describe, subject however, to outside intervention(hence open).

God created this universe with His Word. The Existence of His Word implies the existence of His Mind. God’s Mind organized the universe and spoke it into being (Gen 1; Proverbs 3:18–20;8:22–31,29,30;John1:1) The Word frames the categories of the universe and of the mind. While the finite substance is created ex nihilo, that substance is organized by eternally existing categories that are derived from the Mind of God.

The Creation of Impersonal Objects by the Word of God

When God created finite objects, He spoke them into existence. He used language to define things. Impersonal objects are merely defined by language that assigns methods and attributes, having no capabilities to use language. Persons, however, are created with the ability to use language. People have the ability to use language to process information about intellectual, moral, and emotional categories because they are created in God's image.

Scripture References

Hebrews 1:3; Colossians 1:16–17; Revelation 1:17;21:6

Genesis 1; Proverbs 3:18–20; 8:22–31,29,30; John1:1

Week 5 Questions

1. Why is it impossible for a category to be derived from its contradictory or from nothing?
2. What does the logical necessity of categories produce like categories mean for the origins of the universe?
3. Why must the reference–frame for finite creations be infinite?
4. Why is it that only a Personal–Infinite can be a reference–frame for finite creations?
- 5 Why is emanation an insufficient explanation for creation?
- 6 Why is evolution an insufficient explanation for creation?

Week 6: Created in God's Image

The Scriptures tell us that man is created in the image of God. The state of being created in the image of God mean that man is created in the form of, but lacking the substance, of God. Another to understand this is to understand that God created human ex nihilo and fashioned the human substance into conformity with his image – man is a copy of the image of God.

The results in several consequences: One is a direct correspondence between the categories of man's mind and the mind of God. While man in the current state cannot have exhaustive or total knowledge of God in every detail we can have some knowledge of God. We can have fundamental knowledge of God. The categories of reason and intelligent design tell us that God acts with reason and intelligent design. This knowledge that has been hardwired into us as the image of God in us is the key to knowledge.

The other is that, as a copy of the image of God, man has capability to use language. Man uses language to encode knowledge in symbols and syntax.

Created with Moral and intellectual categories.

Man has been created with a Mind with numerous logical, moral, and emotional categories. These categories allow man to function as a copy

of the image of God. These categories include the structures necessary for language to develop.

Because Man is created in the image of God, there is a correspondence between the categories that exist in the human mind and the Mind of the Creator. In the last chapter, I wrote about how the universe was framed – defined – in terms of the logical categories in the Mind of God. This is how the mind of man can discover truth in theology and science. Theology depends on a correspondence between the minds of people and the Mind of God in order to understand anything about God. Science depends on the existence of a correspondence between the categories of the human mind and the categories of the external world.

It is not only improbable that a brain structure could ever evolve that could produce a logical structure that corresponds with the logic of the universe, but logically impossible for chance to produce logic. Chance and logic are incompatible with each other. Chance, by definition, denies any logical or causal connection. Logic, by its nature, is eternal and necessary. It cannot exist, even in the mind, in a chance universe. The nature of logic is such that either it always and necessarily exists or it cannot ever exist. Atheistic, evolutionary theories have no adequate explanation for logic or its categories.

The Biblical teaching that humanity is created in the image of God explains this correspondence between the human mind and the external world. This understanding that there is indeed a correspondence between the human mind and the categories in the external world because humans were created in the image of God was foundational to the development of modern science.

The Ability to Use Language

The human mind, because it has been created in the image of God, can use language. Language involves a logical structure for encoding information in symbols. This process creates one or more layers of abstraction. The alphabet, for example, is an abstraction. There is no necessary relationship between the letters G-O-D and the reality we call God. We could have used the letters E-L-O-H-I-M or A-L-L-A-H or O-D-G to represent God. The human mind is free to create conventions or language rules that are compatible the logical structure that is hardwired into the mind. The human mind abstracts or translates the logic of the mind into the logic of one or more languages.

There is a necessity of a logical mind with real existence that is not merely a product of material forces. It's possible to construct different types of symbols because there is a many-to-many correspondence

between bio-electrical impulses in the brain and stimuli from the physical world. A logical mind is necessary to connect these two in a logical way, converting many-to-many to several one-to-many relationships, which are more amenable for logical inference. It is these many-to-many relationships in the physical that allows freedom of thought*.

There is freedom to abstract the logical categories of the mind into different languages. Just as different computer operating systems involve abstracting the same machine code through multiple layers into distinct user interfaces, so the human mind can abstract the firing of neurons through multiple layers.

Because the human mind can create several alternative abstractions of the same hardwired logic, it is possible for humans to create virtual realities. Because man (except Jesus) is created only with the image of God rather than the fullness of His reality, he cannot create an alternate real universe and speak it into existence. God created the real universe porous enough so that man can create virtual worlds and use his limited power to bring forth part of that into the real universe.

The positive aspect of this can be found in all sorts of creativity and innovation that exists. Whether it is art or technology, man has made

changes to the real world be conceiving an alternate state of affairs and working to bring it forth into the physical universe.

The negative side happens when the process of abstraction results in errors. Errors occur when man conceives and brings forth changes contrary to God's order. The Bible tells us one such serious error. The first humans rebelled against God's order and brought evil and chaos into the universe.

Created for a Love Relationship with God

Language also involves abstraction of relational categories. Humans have categories of love and of relationship with God. Why would God give man such categories? God would do this because He desires a free-will love relationship with humans. The Sovereign Creator wants personal relationships with his prize creatures.

Because god used His image to fashion humanity ex nihilo, this allows for a freedom that comes with the possibility that it may be used in contradiction to God. Human can use freedom to create language abstraction to glorify God and draw close to God, or humans can use that power to create a virtual universe that seeks to violate and supplant God's order.

Week 6 Questions

1. What are two implications of man being created in the image of God?
2. What is the significance of man's ability to engage in logical abstraction?
3. Why did God create man in His image?
4. Why are material explanations not adequate to explain the process of logical abstraction.
5. What are the implications of God creating humanity ex nihilo and fashioning humanity as a copy of His image?

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Week 7: The Fall of Man and the Corruption of Creation

In the last section I mentioned that God created man in order to have a love relationship with Him. I also said that love must be freely given or it is not love. This implies that man has free will. Because man is an image of God created ex nihilo, that means that this freedom carries with it the possibility of contradicting God, as it is capable of suffering truth decay. The existence of this kind of free will means that man has a choice of whether to embrace or reject God.

God created the first man with the initial state of being in harmony with Him. This story can be found in Genesis. According to the Genesis account God declares after completing the creation of the universe and man that it was 'very good". A perfect God must do a flawless job in creating the universe. What happened, then? It is obvious that the universe is not presently flawless. In fact, there is much evil and suffering in at least our corner of the universe.

The fact that man has free will means that there are at least two different possibilities for explaining the dysfunction. Either God goofed or man messed it up. Genesis 3 tells us the story of man's rebellion. When man was placed in the Garden of Eden they were in a daily relationship with God. There were very few rules. It was obedience to these rules that the continuance of the relationship they enjoyed hung. One of the rules was that there was one tree in the middle of the garden whose fruit was off limits. God warned them that if they will eat of the forbidden fruit they

would die that day. Adam and Eve could eat of all of the other trees in this garden except the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

There were two trees that stood side by side in the middle of the garden that are mentioned by name here: The Tree of Life and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. The tragedy of the fall of man is that the good being sought by eating the forbidden fruit were available in the permissible fruit of the Tree of Life. Adam and Eve were faced with a choice to continue the relationship with God within the terms God had set or to pursue the selfish way.

Adam and Eve both ate of the forbidden fruit. They decided to do it their own way rather than God's. Satan tempted Eve by appealing to her fleshly desires. He told her that this fruit would make her wise and that she would become like God. Both of these things were available from the Tree of Life. The difference is that the Tree of Life is God's way and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil was contrary to God's way. The command from God was clear: Do NOT eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

Adam and Eve could have acquired this knowledge from God and through God. Instead, they chose to acquire this knowledge apart from God. Prior to this event, everything they did was within the reality of God. Every action until then was commanded or otherwise authorized by

God by His gift of freedom. The reality of God was the foundation of man's life. Because God is Absolute Truth, whatever contradicts God is devoid of Truth and therefore missing reality. To contradict God is to bring something into existence that is lacking or weakened in its reality. In created things that depend on the reality of God this result in the decay of the real substance they possess.

When Adam sinned the God of Truth was no longer the foundation of Adam's decision. When Adam sinned he introduced into both the human race and the physical universe that which is contrary to God. In doing so, real things were brought into contradiction against God. As real things were brought into contradiction those things lost some of the reality they possessed when those things were formerly in harmony with God. Reality in the created universe began to decay. This was the death that God spoke of when He warned Adam, '*...in the day that you eat thereof you shall surely die...*'. This decay is felt in two distinct areas that of importance in this study: Human nature and the nature of nature.

Human Nature

Adam tainted human nature when He sinned (rebelled) against God. This tainting was hereditary. Everyone born of Adam's line was conceived with this defect. When Adam and Eve sinned human nature turned selfish instead of God-centered selfhood. Everything was rooted in 'me, myself, and I' rather than God and His Word. All of Adam's descendants were born with a self orientation rather than a God orientation. The Bible calls

this the sin nature or fleshly nature. It is this tainted nature that is responsible for all of the dirty deeds that people do. This nature also taints good deeds by giving bad motives for them. (Psalm 51:1–19; Rom 3:9–23; Rom 5:10–21; Rom 8:1–8).

Physical Nature

When Adam sinned it was accompanied by a physical action. In doing so Adam brought the physical universe into contradiction against God. This brought decay into the physical universe. It is this decay that brought sickness, disease, and natural disasters into nature. The contradictions and decay of nature prove that nature cannot be God. Mankind has affected nature in profound ways. Through rebellion man brought death into the natural world. (Rom 8:18–23).

Conclusions

The Law of Sin and Death is this: sin exists wherever there is tainted human nature, and as long as sin exists death and decay in the created universe will continue (Rom 8:1–8,18–23).

Week 7 Questions

1. Why is there evil and suffering in the world?
2. Why does this separate man from God?
3. Why does sin cause natural evil?

4. Why did God give mankind freedom of will that carried the possibility of evil?

Scripture References

Psalm 51:1–19; Romans 3:9–23;

Romans 5:10–21; Romans 8: 1–8, 18–23

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Week 8: The God of Ethics

Is God ethical or amoral? How do we know? This query can be simplified by first understanding that there are only two possible answers. Either God has moral categories or He does not.

God is the ground of all categories. This means that every categories that exists in the universe is ultimately derived from God. If God does not have moral categories then nothing in the creation could have moral categories. It is entirely possible to begin with a God that has moral categories and end with a creation that does not have moral categories but it is impossible to begin with a God who does not have moral categories and end with even one created being who possesses even one moral categories or a single moral notion.

We have a means of testing whether God has moral categories. If we know even a single example of such categories existing anywhere in the universe then it follows that God has moral categories. While there are certain deranged people who are described in the Bible as having “...***a conscience seared with a hot iron...***” But are called in modern jargon sociopaths, everyone else has moral notions. When I say that people have moral notions I am not saying that they are ‘living right’ or that the moral notions they have are necessarily right but only that they are aware that thoughts and actions have moral implications. For example most people, regardless of their religious background or lack thereof, believe that murder is not merely inconvenient for society but WRONG

Equipping the Saints

They believe that there exists a moral code which outlaws murder–EVEN IF THEIR WORLDVIEW SAYS THAT SUCH A CODE DOES NOT EXIST.

If people have moral notions then they have moral categories. If people have moral categories then they derived these categories from God. Therefore God has moral categories. The conclusion that God has moral categories is reached in much the same way as the conclusion that God is a Person. It is undeniable that my personhood exists. Even if everything I conceive and perceive as a person is an illusion I must exist as a real person in order to experience the illusion.

If I exist as a real person then my personhood is derived from God. That is possible only if God is a Person. God is a Person with moral notions. It has been established elsewhere that God is Absolute Truth. This means that His moral notions are always true. This is the only sure foundation for morals.

If God is Absolute Truth, then God is infallible. If God has moral notions and those moral notions are in fallible then God cannot endorse moral notions that are false. This also means that God cannot contradict Himself in regard to morals. God must oppose sin and evil.

When the Bible speaks of God being necessarily opposed to evil it uses Greek and Hebrew word that translate as the word HOLY or HOLINESS.

Holiness means not merely being right but also SEPARATED from sin and wrong.

Week 8 Questions

1. What is the explanation for the existence of moral notions and moral categories in mankind regardless of religious background?
2. What are the implications of God having moral categories?
3. Why is morality impossible without God?

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Week 9: God's Dilemma

Man was created by default in harmony with God in regard to both holiness and love. Because God of necessity always keeps His Word Man was given freedom to either remain in harmony or rebel. When man rebelled God was presented with a dilemma. God's nature demands that He always be consistent with Himself. He cannot contradict Himself or go back on His Word.

As seen previously God has committed Himself to several things which came into tension when man rebelled. God committed Himself into creating a race of beings who would enter into relationship with Him freely on the basis of mutual love. God also committed Himself to uphold Absolute Holiness.

The Holiness of God is portrayed throughout the Bible from cover to cover. God demonstrated His holiness when He evicted Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden after they sinned. In Revelation 22 we read everything that sins or is sinful is barred from the New Jerusalem and consigned to the Lake of Fire. God's Holiness means that He cannot have a relationship with sinful man until the sin nature and sins are dealt with.

When man rebelled a dilemma was created which sets up this tension. God is obligated by justice to destroy evil. He has also obligated himself by His love to continue with man. If God wipes out the human race, then

He has contradicted His purpose and therefore contradicted Himself. If God's purpose in creating man is a freely expressed love relationship, then this purpose requires that God's answer preserve free will; if God fails to preserve, then He has repudiated His purpose. If God is love then He must uphold His love. If His creation of beings of love fails then God stands condemned. Nothing is at stake if only certain members of this race fail, but if all fail then God condemns himself by contradicting His purpose—contradicting Himself. If God contradicts Himself, He falsifies himself.

As God is absolute truth, it is impossible for Him to falsify or contradict himself. Because it is impossible for God to be falsified (condemned) there must exist an answer that exonerates God's love and His purpose in creating a race of beings of love, and yet—uphold His standards of Absolute Holiness.

The next section reveals the answer. The only answer to the problem of evil is the Cross and Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Week 9 Questions

1. What is God's Dilemma?
2. Which two attributes of God need reconciling?

Week 10: Jesus is the Answer

Jesus Christ's death on the Cross and Resurrection from the dead provide the only answer to the problem of evil. His death takes away sin and His resurrection gives new life.

Attempts to come to God directly meet with failure because these attempts are ultimately based on self. Self based actions are ultimately contrary to God based reality. The only solution is the death of that self. Alone that means DOOM, However; if the self becomes bundled with another then there is the possibility that the self can be restored to the original condition or even better.

The sinful human nature cannot be rehabilitated. Sinful human nature is necessarily self based and naturally oriented which puts it in direct opposition to God as a supernatural and self existent foundation of all reality.

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For

they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. – Romans 8:1–8

What makes man evil is not that the self is evil but that the self exists within a nature that makes the self the foundation for everything. In reality the universe does not revolve around self but God. The self was created in the image of God but became separated from God by the tainted human nature.

Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden underfoot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? – Hebrews 10:29

Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats:

– Exodus 12:5

The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. – John 1:29

But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: – 1 Peter 1:19

The only way for the self to be saved is to become bundled with an untainted human nature. Jesus has an untainted human nature. His humanity is connected to God. Through Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ alone we can have access to the life of God.

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.

– Matthew 1:18

But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.

– Matthew 1:20

And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased. – Luke 3:22

And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

– 1 Corinthians 15:45–50

Jesus is the source of life because His breath of life is not the tainted puff of the breath of life that came from Adam; the breath of life that is in Jesus is the Holy Spirit Himself.

Roman 6 describes what happens when we are saved. We become united with the body of Christ. When Christ died we died—and the sin nature died with us. When Christ was raised we also was raised—free from sin.

What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. – Romans 6:1–10 KJV

When this gospel is preached we have a choice to accept or reject; after all, the preservation of God's love implies that humanity still be able to **FREELY** enter the love relationship. otherwise it would not be love. If we begin to accept and then continue to accept this gospel God places us into the body of Christ and keeps us in Christ.

“Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but

yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? – Romans 6:11–16 KJV

The necessity of a decision to repent means that we must hear the gospel. Salvation that is based on God means that we must hear the Word of God. Hearing the Word implies that we have access to the Word of God. The Word of God has been revealed and preserved in the Bible.

Week 10 Questions

1. Why is it impossible to rehabilitate the sin nature?
2. How does Jesus death on the cross and resurrection from the dead reconcile the attributes of love of justice?
3. What happens when one is saved?

Bible Passages

Matthew 1:18–20; Luke 3:22

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Answer Key for How do We Know

Week 1 Questions

1. What is Postmodernism? Explain whether it is rational view.

Postmodernism is the idea that there is no absolute, objective truth. Postmodernists believe that all truth is relative to perspectives and situations (except postmodernism). Postmodernist also reject the validity of any metanarrative (big story).

2. What fundamental idea did Descartes put forward that led to postmodernism?

Descartes believed “I think, therefore I am”. This set up the self as reference frame. This resulted in the dilemma of how one can give an account of the external world (the world ‘out there’) based on perceptions existing in his internal world of personal thoughts.

3. Why is the self not adequate as a reference-frame?

The problem with a self-centered reference-frame is that there was no way to verify what is “out there.” This eventually led to skepticism to all truth claims.

Week 2 Questions

1. What is the answer to the problems posed by a self-centered reference frame?

“I think, therefore thoughts exist.” Beginning with the necessary existence of thought avoids the difficulties in establishing the reality of the objective world from a self-centered reference-frame. A thought-centered can bridge the gap between the subjective and the objective much easier than a self-centered reference frame.

2. How does a thought-centered reference frame allow us to have knowledge of the world outside of our perceptions?

All thoughts have reality as thoughts; some thoughts by their internal logic are also true independently of the self-centered reference frame (i.e. The Law of Non-Contradiction).

3. What is the difference between having a truth value or reality as a perception and having a transcendent truth value?

Having a transcendent truth value means that a truth is true independently of the perspective of the perceiver of truth.

4. What principle is self-demonstrated as having both truth in our perceptions and truth value beyond our perceptions?

The Law of Non-Contradiction.

5. What passage established the Biblical precedent for having a thought-centered reference frame?

John 1:1–14; The Word (Thought) of God is the reference-frame for creation. In Colossians 1:16–17, God’s Word is the reference-frame for maintenance of the universe.

Week 3 Questions

1. Why is absolute truth necessarily true?

Absolute truth is truth that cannot be falsified.

2. What are four attributes of absolute truth?

Absolute Truth is necessarily true, universally or categorically true, infallible truth, and capable of serving as a reference-frame/context-creator.

3. How does the infallibility of absolute truth imply a supernatural universe?

Infallibility of absolute truth implies a supernatural universe because the natural universe is composed of fallible objects that are context-defined. As an infallible context-creator, absolute truth is a supernatural reality that frames context for relative truths.

4. Why is it impossible for absolute truth to suffer decay?

Because absolute truth is infallible, it cannot suffer loss of truth value.

5 Why is it absurd to believe that there is not truth outside of the self?

” If there is no universal truth then there is no objective truth. There would be only private, perspectival truths. If that is true then one would be god of his own universe. I could think worlds into existence, would no longer need food, water or outside air to live. I could will a harem of beautiful, voluptuous, naked women to service my every want and who would always be available whenever I wanted. I could fire my bosses at work. Fire the President. Why vote for someone else to be President when you are king of the world? This may sound ridiculous, but it logically follows if there is no truth outside my perspective. ”

Week 4 Questions

1. Why does that law of non-contradiction require categories to give rise to only non-contradicting categories?

If no two contradictory or mutually exclusive things can both be true, then they cannot exist in the same context – they cannot be one and the same. If they cannot be one and the same, one cannot be derived from the other.

2 What three things are undeniable and underivable from other types of attributes?

Rationality, consciousness, and intentionality.

3 Why is rationality undeniable?

One must use rationality to deny rationality. In order to say that the law of non-contradiction is false, one must DENY that it is true on the basis of the law of non-contradiction. If the law of non-contradiction is true, then by its nature it cannot be false. Attempts to box in rationality as applicable to only part of reality are futile because it is necessary to use rationality to define the distinction between the rational and the mystical.

4 Why is it that the existence of delusions requires that consciousness and intentionality as undeniable and underivable from other types of attributes?

An unconscious fundamental reality or unconscious version absolute truth could not produce delusions because absolute truth cannot be false.

The existence of intentionality in a universe where the absolute truth is non-intentional would be non-sensical. It would also be logically impossible for an intentional absolute truth to produce a created being

with a perception of a free intentionality if that freedom were delusional because absolute truth cannot be false

5 Why do the attributes of personality, rationality, consciousness, and intentionality, require that currently existing persons can only come from a personal beginning?

The law of non-contradiction asserts that it is impossible to derive from anything its contradictory. Because rationality, consciousness, and intentionality cannot come from anything else, evidence of these attributes of personhood means that personhood necessarily exists, and therefore absolute truth is personal.

Week 5 Questions

1. Why is it impossible for a category to be derived from its opposite or from nothing? It is logically impossible for anything to be its contradictory, it is therefore impossible for a contradictory to be derived from it as it would involve something being itself and its contradictory.
2. What does the logical necessity of categories produce like categories mean for the origins of the universe?

If it is impossible for a being can bring forth a contradictory reality, then an effect cannot have attributes that do not exist in its cause or ground. An effect can have fewer, but not more than its cause or ground.

3. Why must the reference-frame for finite creations be infinite?

Anything that is finite can be expressed in terms of a smaller finite. 1 is $10/10$ which is $100/100$ and so on. This process would lead to 0 as a reference frame, which is absurd. Only an infinite reference frame avoids this absurdity.

4. Why is it that only a Personal-Infinite can be a reference-frame for finite creations?

Any finite is zero in relation to an infinite and that which finite must exist in relation to the infinite, if the reference-frame for reality is infinite. Therefore that which is finite cannot exist. This absurd conclusion is avoided only if the infinite reference-frame is also personal. That which is finite is defined by the Mind of the Infinite-Personal reference-frame rather than the magnitude of the finite in relation to the infinite.

5 Why is emanation an insufficient explanation for creation?

Absolute truth cannot be false or suffer truth decay, so its emanations must be incapable truth decay. This model of creation is not adequate to

explain the death, decadence, contradictions, and delusions present in the universe.

6 Why is evolution an insufficient explanation for creation?

There are three difficulties that are inherent in using evolutionary theory as a complete meta-narrative.

The use of evolutionary theory implies philosophic materialism and a closed system. Growing evidence including universe expansion, dark energy, black hole singularities, and the Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle has cast doubt on the idea that the physical universe is a closed system.

Evolutionary theory contains hypothesis that are simply not testable.

Evolutionary theory, at least as it is often taught, implies that information is created ex nihilo or out of nothing. This violates the law of non-contradiction.

Week 6 Questions

- 1. What are two implications of man being created in the image of God?**

Two implications of man's creation in the image of God is the possession of the logical categories of God (without having the full substance of God) and the ability to use logical abstraction.

2. What is the significance of man's ability to engage in logical abstraction?

The ability to engage in logical abstraction is at the core of all that makes us human; language, creative activity, and free will.

3. Why are material explanations not adequate to explain the process of logical abstraction?

Because there is a many-to-many correspondence between specific bio-electrical impulses in the human brain and specific stimuli in the external world, there is no purely material way to map a correspondence. A logical, non-material mind must be embedded in the brain to negotiate this correspondence.

4. Why did God create man in His image?

God created us in His image so that we would be able to have a love relationship with Him.

5 What are the implication of God creating humanity ex nihilo and fashioning humanity as a copy of His image?

Absolute truth and its emanations are incapable of contradicting God. Only object created ex nihilo are capable of c0ntradicting God. Because

humanity is fashioned in the image of God, man has attributes of rationality, consciousness, and intentionality. Because this image is fashioned in a substance created ex nihilo, humanity is capable of contradicting God.

Week 7 Questions

1. Why is there evil and suffering in the world?

There is evil and suffering in the world because man used free will to rebel against God. This contradiction caused imbalance and dysfunction in both the universe and human nature.

2. Why does this separate man from God?

Because God is infinitely and totally, He cannot co-exist with evil or anything tainted with evil, be it objects or human nature.

3. Why does sin cause natural evil?

When Adam sinned, it was an act of both moral falsehood and physical action. This marriage of moral falsehood and physical reality resulted in the decay of that physical reality which manifests as natural evil.

4. Why did God give mankind freedom of will that carried the possibility of evil?

It would really be freedom otherwise. If man did not enter into relationship with God freely, then it would not be a love relationship.

Week 8 Questions

1. What is the explanation for the existence of moral notions and moral categories in mankind regardless of religious background?

The state of being created in God's image means that we have been endowed with the moral categories that He has. These categories were corrupted, but not annihilated, by mankind's rebellion against God.

2. What are the implications of God having moral categories?

The existence of moral categories in the nature of God means that moral absolutes exist that can be a reference-frame for human morality.

3. Why is morality without God impossible?

If a Moral God does not exist, then the ultimate reality is amoral, it would therefore be a violation of the Law of Non-Contradiction to derive morality from its contradictory: a non-moral reality.

Week 9 Questions

1. What is God's Dilemma?

The Love of God demands that He save us, His justice that He destroy us in judgment.

2. Which two attributes of God need reconciling?

Love and Justice

Week 10 Questions

1. Why is it impossible to rehabilitate the sin nature?

The essence of the sin nature is that the self is the reference-frame for morals. Everything that the self could do to rehabilitate the sin nature would be self-centered, thus preserving and actually re-enforcing the sin nature

2. How does Jesus death on the cross and resurrection from the dead reconcile the attributes of love of justice?

The sin nature is destroyed by the death of the body of Christ, the redeemed are born-again by the resurrection of Christ's body. Thus God's justice destroys our sin and his Love saves us through one act.

3. What happens when one is saved?

The human nature, along with the sin-nature, is united in Christ's death, killing the sin nature. The human nature, but not the sin nature is united in Christ's resurrection. The redeemed human receives the Holy Spirit, enabling him/her to have a Christ-centered reference-frame rather than be stuck in a self-centered reference-frame.

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Book 6: Biblical Hermeneutics

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Week 1: God's Word in Human Language

Hermeneutics is the art and science of the interpretation of a text. This book focuses on the proper interpretations of the Bible. This chapter will begin with presuppositions or principles that one must adopt prior to approaching the text. There are five basic presuppositions. I will explain why these are valid first principles. They are

The Bible is God's infallible word.

The Bible was written in human language and in human thought forms.

The Bible was written in specific cultural contexts to document God's activity in history, but it was also written to communicate his message to all mankind.

The Bible was written to reveal God and point to Christ, providing to man the answer he needs to come to God.

The Bible was written to be a world-view foundation for renewing minds, enabling individuals to do every good work and providing the community of God's people with a moral compass.

The Bible is God's infallible word.

This must be the very first principle. If the Bible is revelation from an infallible God who is absolute truth, then one would expect that it is infallible. This means infallible, inerrant autographs (original documents). One should also expect a sufficient providential intervention in the subsequent history of the distribution to assure that there is continued access to God's message. This does not require miraculous transmission to assure that every copy is identical and every translation is perfect; it simply requires intervention to be at a level sufficient to allow access to God's intended message by means of a critical study of the texts.

God's Dilemma requires that God reconcile his love for man and His justice in such a way that it eliminates sin, preserve human life and preserves free will. The Passion of the Christ is the only sequence of events in all of human history that satisfies these parameters. The preservation of free will requires access to an account of this Passion. As it is written in Romans Rom 10:6-17

" But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) 7 Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) 8 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; 9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord

Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. 12 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. 13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. 14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? 15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! 16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? 17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” – Rom 10:6–17

What this means is that if man is saved by agreeing in faith with the Passion of the Christ, he must have access to this knowledge. One is unable to agree with that of which they do not know.

If man's basic problem is a corrupted human nature that contradicts the truth concerning God's sovereignty and His foundational position in reality, a nature that posits self as the foundation of all decisions; then any view of the Bible as anything other than the Word of God is altogether insufficient. These views ultimately and necessarily make man

the supreme judge over the Bible, denying that God is sovereign and denying his foundational position in the revelation of the plan of salvation. If the Bible merely “contains” the Word of God, or is merely “man’s interpretation” of the Word of God, then man is on the throne – deciding which parts are deemed the Word of God. The self would then **necessarily** remain the foundation in rebellion to God’s true role. We would be in bondage to the self-centered nature. Only if the Bible is indeed the Word of God is it possible for a God-based message to be spread that can be accompanied by man’s agreement in faith.

The Bible was written in ordinary human language and in human thought forms.

When one looks at the texts of the Bible, it becomes apparent that it was not written in a special or magical language. The Bible was written in ordinary human language and used human thought forms. In the Bible there are, in fact, three languages used: Aramaic, Hebrew, and Greek with Biblical writers often switching up. The Greek translation of the Old Testament, the Septuagint, was the text of choice for the apostles even though they all also knew Hebrew and Aramaic.

While many religions put the emphasis on the outward forms of the symbols that appear in their texts, and place special powers to the sounds that these symbols represent when spoken; God cared more about the rational content that was being communicated through the symbols used to convey Scripture. Because man was created in the

image of God, there are enough commonality between finite human rationality and infinite Divine rationality to make communication possible. God chose to use human language to communicate to humanity.

Because God chose human language as the vehicle to communicate knowledge of Himself, His wisdom, and His purposes; the interpretation of that language generally follows the same rules as would be applied to normal human language.

The Bible was written in specific cultural contexts to document God's activity in history, but it was also written to communicate his message to all mankind.

There are two extremes to avoid in interpretation. One rightfully recognizes that the Bible was written in specific cultural contexts, but focuses so much on this fact that interpretation is frozen in a specific context. For example, there is much about the Ancient Near Eastern (ANE) culture. Many commentators will limit interpretation to the local scope of the particular cultural form. The problem with this method is that the Bible was not intended only for those original recipients, but for all mankind. They focus only on the human authorship and forget that the Scripture is also divinely authored. The divine authorship via inspiration means that God has purposes that the human author may not even see. In the Scripture are principles that are unchanging; these ideas form a consistent thread that appears in all contexts: Themes such

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as justification by faith, the sanctity of human life, the Sovereignty of God, and the lawful character of God are seen consistently in multiple contexts throughout both the Old and New Testaments.

The opposite error is when the cultural contexts in which the Biblical narrative is played out are ignored. While cultural context does not rule interpretation, it cannot be ignored either. Understanding how the original recipients understood and applied the message in various contexts shows us how God work in history, showing historical patterns. Consider Moses. Some Atheists love to slander Moses, They say that Moses was a vile person because he permitted slavery. They are reading Moses through modern eyes. Moses, however, is not a modern man. He lived in an age where slavery was normative. Nobody on earth during the days of Moses thought that anything was amiss with the idea of someone owning someone else as property. Slaves were considered **mere** property. In this world Moses was actually a liberator. While he did not abolish slavery nor challenge the notion that slaves were property, he championed rights for slaves. Moses introduces an idea that was at that time revolutionary: slave were not **mere** property **but also** persons with rights.

Centuries later Paul preaches that there is no difference between slaves and masters and that Christ, out of love, laid down his life so that “whosoever will” can be reconciled to God. While Paul admonished slaves to obey their masters, he refused to endorse the system, of slavery and

continued to preach ideas that logically lead to its abolition. Paul reasons for telling slaves to obey their masters were pragmatic. The world was not yet ready and Christians were not strong enough yet; overt political action on behalf of slaves would have been disastrous for the early Christians. Paul sought to lay a base for future action by sowing the seeds of the gospel. As Christianity matured, the church would be ready to abolish slavery.

Centuries later these ideas would form the basis of the abolitionist movement. God was supervising a historical process by which people would be liberated from slavery. Now when slavery was debated in the United States, there were religious on both sides who quoted the Bible. Those who did not understand how God works in history by studying the context in which the Biblical narratives flowed drew the wrong conclusion. They proof-texted passages that were snap-shots of what God was doing at a particular time without understanding the historical process of God's liberating work from a wider perspective. The abolitionist understood that liberation was a historical process and that the alleged "pro-slavery" passages were snap-shots of God's work in previous ages and not applicable today, and that the gospel leaves no room for slavery. They understood that it was their responsibility to push the teachings of the gospel concerning liberty to its logical conclusion.

The Bible was written to reveal God and point to Christ, providing to man the answer he needs to come to God.

If the Passion of the Christ is the only answer to God's Dilemma and the answer to God's dilemma requires preservation of free will, then the Bible was written to reveal God and point to Christ, providing to man the answer he needs to come to God.

The Bible was written to be a world-view foundation for renewing minds, enabling individuals to do every good work and providing the community of God's people with a moral compass.

If the point of reconciling man to God was to restore a divine foundation to man's thought life, then the existence of teaching that would develop a God-centered world-view a clearly defined moral compass is necessary.

Week 1 Questions

- 1 What presuppositions should people bring into their Bible study
- 2 Why is it important that the Bible be infallible?
- 3 Why is it important that the Bible be written in ordinary human language?

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Week 2: The Grammatical–Historical Hermeneutic

There have been four major approaches to Biblical Hermeneutics through the centuries. These are allegorical, historical–critical, deconstruction, and grammatical–historical.

The Allegorical method assumes that the Bible was written largely in ornate language. In this view of interpretation, the presumption is that words are not interpreted grammatically but as word pictures and parables. Allegorical hermeneutics were not prevalent during the apostolic period, but in the third century Origen made allegorical interpretation popular. Through the middle ages the allegorical method was the predominant approach to hermeneutics in Christianity.

The problem with assuming allegory is that there is no baseline for literal interpretation. Without a baseline literal interpretation, allegories mean whatever the interpreter wants them to mean. Any literary or textual evidence against a particular interpretation is dismissed as allegory, with the allegory being interpreted in a fashion that conforms to the pre–conceived doctrine. Allegorical approaches are subject to all kinds of theological abuse, allowing people to cherry–pick a text to prop up whatever doctrine they are disposed to believe, and then dismiss as allegory any text that does not agree with the proposed doctrine. This is particularly dangerous, as **theological abuse of the allegorical method makes it impossible for the text to correct false doctrines in the minds of the abusers.**

The historical-critical method arose during the nineteenth century. This method does not have a belief in the infallibility or inerrancy as a principle, but instead views the Bible as a product of historical and religious evolution. It studies the text under the assumption that they might contain errors. Such a method necessarily fails to fully grasp a book that has a supernatural origin. Needless to say that this method will fail to see God's perspective in its analysis of His Word. Furthermore, the historical-critical method is not compatible with the requirement of God's Dilemma that free will be preserved and that this requires an infallible revelation of God.

Deconstruction is where the reader cherry-picks a clause or sentence within a passage and uses that clause to frame the context for the rest of the passage. Whereas standard literary construction seeks to discover the context-creating or topic sentence that the author intended, deconstruction put the reader in charge in determining the sentence that frames the context for the passage. Deconstruction is the poorest hermeneutical frame work in terms of discovering meaning. Using deconstruction, a reader can interpret a passage in such a way that the inferred meaning is diametrically opposed to the meaning the author intended for the passage.

The **grammatical-historical** hermeneutic was the hermeneutic employed during Biblical times. The grammatical-historical best accords with the

default usage of language. Most language is interpreted grammatically, with the language providing literary clues to other uses of the language such as allegory, parable, idioms, and hyperbole. Literal interpretation, while usually grammatical, allows for other types of language based on literary criteria. The Grammatical–historical hermeneutic does not allow for allegorizations based upon theological or philosophical criteria.

The grammatical–historical method is historical in that it presumes historical are indeed historical claims rather than mythological history. The Bible stories are seen as historical events in the narrative.

The Grammatical–historical hermeneutic is most compatible with the presuppositions that required the Bible to be treated as God’s infallible word and that the Bible was written human language. In my book *Jerusalem Rising* I document that it was only possible for Israel to rebuild her national life after her captivity in Babylon by using the Grammatical–historical hermeneutic.

Week 2 Questions

- 1 What is the allegorical hermeneutic?
- 2 What problem does the allegorical hermeneutic pose?
- 3 What is the historical–critical hermeneutic?

4 What problems does the historical–critical hermeneutic have?

5 What is deconstruction?

6 What problem does deconstruction have?

7 What is the Grammatical–historical hermeneutic?

8 Why is the Grammatical–historical hermeneutic the best suited method of interpretation?

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Week 3: Original Intent

The whole point of any communication is the expression of the author's thought to the intended audience. The author selects the words that best communicate his or her logic, emotion or point of view. Given that this is the case, it follows that good hermeneutics should involve discovering the original intent of the authors.

Because the Bible is God's Word in human language it is delivered to us through a process called verbal plenary inspiration, By verbal, it means that it is words that are inspired. Plenary means full or complete inspiration. The Bible does not merely contain the Word of God or represent man's interpretation of the Word of God. It IS FULLY the word of God. It is also the words of the human authors God chose to disclose His word to the world.

“Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. 21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”

– 2 Peter 1:20–21

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

– 2 Timothy 3:16–17 NIV

If the Bible has both divine and human authorship, then there are two perspectives in determining original intent. There is both God's original intent and then the original intent of the human author to consider. Studying the original intent of the human author help to understand the local context in which a text was addressed, and studying God's original intent helps to understand the big picture or the grand narrative.

Week 3 Questions

1 Why is original intent so important?

2 Who are the two authors of any Scriptural passage? How does this relate to original intent?

3 How does understanding the original intent of the human author help us to interpret Scripture?

4 How does understanding God's original intent help us to interpret Scripture?

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Week 4: The Big Picture

If The Bible is the revelation of God, then we should expect for God to reveal a big picture. Ephesians 3:10–19 tells us that God has a big picture.

” To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, 11 According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: 12 In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him. 13 Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory. 14 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15 Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, 16 That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; 17 That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; 19 And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.”

The Exact nature of this big picture or meta-narrative is beyond the scope of this study, this study is focused on the methodology that would be used in such a study

A Philosophical study of the Bible

A philosophical study of the Bible seeks to discover what the Bible presents as the answer to philosophical questions. The Bible, for example, teaches that the ground of all being is an Infinite–Personal God who is absolute truth. Numerous other Biblical teachings and inferences have profound philosophical significance. A few of them include

Man is created in the image of God

The physical universe is an open system

The “Fall of man” is the source of all evil in the physical universe.

The inference of Free will

The Bible presents a spirallinear view of time and a views history as flowing according to God’s purposes.

It is beyond the scope of this study to actually unfold this philosophical study, other than to point out that any study that seeks to discern the Bible’s big picture or meta–narrative would include such a philosophical study

A Historical Study of the Bible

A historical study of the Bible is a chronological study that is designed to discern the pattern of both the progressive revelation of God’s word and God’s movement in history. Such a study reveal the meta–narrative of God’s story that He is revealing to man.

Towards a Systematic Theology

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The philosophical and historical studies of the Bible, when taken together, become a powerful systematic theology. As a faithful interpreter gain big picture of the Christian world-view and of God's actions in history, he or she will gain a more systematic understanding of how the doctrines of the Word of God fit together. My book *Jerusalem Rising* was birthed out of a historical study aimed toward establishing a systematic theology.

Book studies

A study of an entire book will give a wide view of the purpose and overall message of the book. A book study is usually in a sequential order, starting from chapter 1:1 to the end of the book. Passages in the book are often compared with other relevant Scriptures. (More on this in the next week/chapter). Two of my book, *Ephesians – a Primer for the Church*, and *Revelation Revealed* are such studies.

A Christ-centered big picture

Christ is the center of the Bible. God's actions in the Old Testament lead to Christ, and His actions in the New Testament flow from Christ. The Bible was written to reveal Christ and provide us information to bring us to Christ and equip us to have a robust relationship with Him. Draw near to Him through your study of the Bible.

Week 4 Questions

Equipping the Saints

- 1 What are four views or studies of a big-picture?
- 2 What is the point of a philosophical study of the Bible?
- 3 What is the point of a historical study of Scripture?
- 4 What is the benefit of weaving together a broad philosophical and historical understanding of Scripture?
- 5 What is the value of doing a systematic study of an entire book?

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Week 5: Comparing Scripture with Scripture

If rationality is a primary attribute of a God who is absolute truth and God reveals an infallible Word using fallible human language in multiple contexts, then two results would be expected. The first is that communication using human language in a the diversity of human contexts would produce discrepancies in perspectives in the various accounts. The other is a fundamental unity and consistency of thought.

It is human nature to different people with distinct free wills to see things in different ways, frame things in different way, often using ambiguous language, and express it using different ways. A certain amount of discrepancy actually increases the authenticity of the Biblical documents. If the documents read too smoothly, then the Bible would be vulnerable to the charges of conspiracy and cover-up. God, in inspiring the Scriptures, preserves these differences so that we may see God's work being authentically witnessed by different people in different contexts holding differing perspectives concerning the same work of God.

These differing perspectives, however, convey a unity of thought and logical consistency. Divergent texts all tell the same story without contradiction.

Equipping the Saints

The unity and diversity within the texts allows us to compare different text whenever we study the same topic. Comparing different Scriptures gives us a clearer and more complete picture of what Scripture teaches about a topic. God engineered the construction of the Scripture, choosing which words were to be included and preserved, in such a way that it would be possible to compare Scripture to Scripture as a method of overcoming ambiguity inherent in human language.

Example: By comparing Scripture with Scripture, it is often possible to construct a chronology of events. We can compare with Scripture to show that Gog is the antichrist and that the Ezekiel war ends with the battle of Armageddon. A Comparison of the texts of Ezekiel and Revelation reveal that there are at least seven signs in common with each other.

An earthquake so severe that a leveling of all of the world's mountains and cities occurs

(Revelation 16:18–20; Ezekiel 38:19–20)

Great hailstones falling out of the sky (Revelation 16:21; Ezekiel 38:22)

The gathering of armies from all over the earth

(Revelation 16:13–14; Ezekiel 38:21(God owns all mountains))

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Raining down blood upon the earth, contaminating all waters

(Revelation 16:3–6; Ezekiel 38:22)

Inflicting pestilence (Revelation 16:2–3; Ezekiel 38:22)

Scorching people with fire (Revelation 19:17–18; Ezekiel 38:22)

Birds of carrion invited to feed on the dead bodies of men and animals.

(Revelation 19:17–18; Ezekiel 39:17–19)

Comparing Scripture with Scripture exposes common events that permit the possibility of a chronology of events. I describe this in more detail in chapter 16 of my book *Mystery Babylon Rising*.

Week 5 Questions

- 1 What two results happen when God's infallible word is expressed using fallible human language?
- 2 What is the value in comparing Scripture to Scripture?

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Week 6: Context

When reading a passage of Scripture, it becomes tempting to isolate a particular phrase that jumps out to the reader and interpret its meaning apart from the surrounding passage.

The context of a sentence is the surrounding paragraph. Paragraphs have surrounding paragraphs and the chapter that contains the paragraph as its context. The context for chapters is created by sections of books or complete books. Sometimes even whole books are written in the context of a book series or in the context of a larger cultural exchange.

A single sentence or thought, called a pericope, can be interpreted in different way depending on context. This is because words can have a range of meaning that is more precisely defined by the context in which it appears. Consider the sentence “I love you.” it means one way when said amongst friends and family, another when said to strangers, and yet another when said to one romantic–sexual partner. It is the context that determines the precise meaning.

The same rule applies to both modern and ancient languages. Consider the Greek word *gune*. This word can be translated as either wife or

woman. A knowledge of context is required to effectively translate this word. There are many such words in every language

In texts containing books, chapters, and paragraphs, there are sentences that create context that frames the rest of the text. Books usually have an introduction or use chapter 1 as the introduction which sets the context for the book. Chapters often start with an introductory paragraph that creates the context for the rest of the chapter. Paragraphs will usually have a topic sentence that sets the context for the rest of the paragraph. Properly discerning which statements are context-creating statements and how they shape the rest of the text is critical to good hermeneutics.

Construction is where interpreter construes the author's intended meaning from the text. Construction seeks to discover the context creating statement that the author has established and construct the meaning of the rest of the narrative from there. Deconstruction taking a passage out of its intended context by creating a counterfeit context. The reader selects a sentence that state something that can be interpreted according to his biases and then forces the rest of the passage to fit this new context – a context often far removed and even contradictory to the author's original intent.

An example of how deconstruction produces context errors is found in certain pro-homosexual interpretations of Leviticus 18. Leviticus 18 is a series of commands documenting forbidden sexual practices. Forbidden practices included adultery, incest, bestiality, and homosexuality.

Tucked in the middle of all of these is a verse that is hijacked; “***And thou shalt not let any of thy seed pass through the fire to Molech*** (sometimes spelled Moloch verse 21).” The pro-homosexualists argue that this is the topic sentence and that this sentence is speaking of ceremonial regulations rather than definitions of morality. They then frame the entire passage as a passage relating to ceremonial uncleanness rather than immorality.

Verse 21, however, is not talking ceremonial uncleanness. It is a reference to the religion of child sacrifice that was done to Moloch. This abominable practice is not ceremonial uncleanness, but idolatry and murder. The closest modern parallel to the religion of Moloch is the abortion industry. Specifically, it is a fertility rite and as such is closely related to sexuality.

Leviticus 18:3–4 is the intended context-creating sentence in chapter 18. It says “***After the doings of the land of Egypt, wherein ye dwell, shall ye not do: and after the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, shall ye not do: neither shall ye walk in their ordinances. Ye shall***

do my judgments, and keep mine ordinances, to walk therein: I am the LORD your God.” The Israelite were not to follow the morality of the Egyptians or the Canaanites, but the morality that God taught. Verse 25 describes the violation of these commands as ‘iniquity’ rather than ‘uncleanness.’ The term ‘iniquity’ is used to identify immorality and ‘uncleanness’ is used to identify ceremonial impurity. Verses 24–25 also state that God punished the nations who previously occupied the land—nations who were not subjected to the ceremonial laws to which Israel was subjected— who committed these sins by evicting them from the land Leviticus 18 is a definition of sexual immorality.

Week 6 Questions

- 1 What is context? How are contexts layered?
- 2 What are context creators?
- 3 Why is context important?
- 4 What are the two context errors interpreters commit?

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Week 7: Exegesis, Exegesis, Exegesis

The word exegesis means to draw out. The point of exegesis is to draw out of the text that which is there. The bottom line in Bible interpretation is that whatever we believe to be Bible teaching must ultimately be based on what has been written down in the text.

Errors occur when doctrines are created that do not have their roots in the actual words of Scripture. Frequently, manmade philosophies will be read into the Scripture and used to frame the context of passages. This is called eisegesis, which mean ‘to put into.’

There are many examples of eisegesis. I will analyze two examples of eisegesis: one is popular proof-text for the doctrine that revelatory gifts have ceased, and the other is the methodology used to support the teaching of the pre-tribulational rapture.

A popular proof text for cessationism is 1 Corinthians 13:10 “***But when that which is perfect^{G5046} is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.***” Some cessationists argue that the word translated ‘perfect’ refers to canonization of the Bible. The Greek word is τέλειος | teleios (Strong’s G5046). This word means complete. Neither the word for canon nor the concept of the Biblical canon appears anywhere in the text. The concept of the Biblical canon is read into the meaning of the word teleios.

Many instances of eisegesis involve misuse of inference, particular inferences suggested by adherence to theological systems. The teaching of the Pre-tribulational rapture involves eisegesis. There is not one single passage in all of Scripture that explicitly teaches that the rapture will occur exactly seven years prior to the return of the Lord. The teaching of the Pre-tribulational rapture is based on making inferences from the theology of dispensationalism. Dispensationalism teaches that the church and Israel are separate programs with separate origins, going on separate tracks towards separate destinies. Dispensationalists conclude that if God is dealing with Israel, He is not dealing with the church; once dispensationalists concluded that the “Tribulation period” is about Israel, it was a short step to infer that the church is not involved here.

In the next chapter, I will show why these inferences are flawed, and give guidelines for making sound inferences from the Scriptures

Week 7 Questions

- 1 What is exegesis?
- 2 What is eisegesis?
- 3 What type of false inference does eisegesis often involve?
- 4 Why is exegesis fundamental?

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Week 8: Inference from the Scriptures

Much of our spiritual knowledge is inference from the explicit reading of the text or inferences of inferences. Consider the sober description of man's condition as sinful. "***For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God*** (Romans 3:23)." Any application of this truth involves inference. For example, there absolutely no ancient manuscripts of the New Testaments in existence that say "***For Dallas Carter has sinned, and come short of the glory of God*** (Romans 3:23)." How do I, Dallas Carter, know that Romans 3:23 applies to me. I draw an inference from the text. Here is that inference presented as a classic categorical syllogism.

All are sinners. (where sinful = has sinned)

Dallas Carter is a member of the class 'all.'

Dallas Carter is sinner.

(where sinner = has sinned)

We make such inferences all the time in interpretation. Inferences are made in integrating knowledge from the Scripture into a Christian world-view and in application of Scripture into contemporary circumstances. It is therefore vitally important that we make valid inferences. Not all inferences are as obviously valid as the one above.

Some inferences are fallacious, introducing man made ideas into the narrative that draw us away from the knowledge of God.

Most errors in making inferences from the Scriptures involve what are called informal fallacies. These can involve fallacies of relevance or fallacies caused by ambiguity in language.

There are three basic types of inferences. One is deductive, the other is inductive¹. The third type of argument is the scientific method.

Deduction is a form of reasoning where valid conclusions absolutely follow from the meaning of the premises. Valid **deductive** inferences absolutely follow from, and carry the same authority as, the premises. The inference above that Dallas Carter is a sinner is a deductive inference. Types of deductive inferences: categorical syllogisms, hypothetical syllogisms, conjunctions, and disjunctions. Deductive inferences are all or nothing: they must be absolutely free of fallacies or they are no good. A deductive inference that is free of fallacy is considered valid. A valid deductive inference in which the starting premises are true is called a sound argument to form a basis of sound doctrine.

Induction is a form of reasoning where one discerns patterns by observation of events or phenomena. Inductive reasoning pre-supposes that the more instances that two or more are observed in a given relation, the greater likelihood that they are necessarily in that relation. Unlike deduction, induction does not produce absolute results. Inductive reasoning argues that the more frequently a sample of instances of a phenomenon is observed in a relationship, the more likely that they are necessarily in that relation. Induction produces probable results rather than absolutely certain results.

The scientific method uses both deductive and inductive reasoning. It involves three steps². The first is to guess the best explanation of a causal relationship. This guess is called a hypothesis. Step #2 is to use deduction to calculate the consequences of the hypothesis. Step #3 is to perform experiments or conduct observations to test the consequences of the deduction.

The Bible and Inference

Because the point of Biblical hermeneutics is to attain understanding of God's intended message for humanity, only inferences that preserve the authority of the original should be considered sound doctrine. Because deduction and induction differ in how they preserve authority, somewhat different rules are followed.

Making deductive inferences from the Scriptures

Deductive Inferences from the Scripture are inferences that follow necessarily from the meaning of a word or sentence. An example of a valid and sound deduction is concluding that man's condition of being created in God's image implies that he has free will. This can be shown through the following two daisy-chained syllogisms.

If existing in the image of God means having similitude of form but not substance of God, and free will is intentionality that can focus effort towards any perceived alternate possibility:

Man is in the (Image of God).

Image of God is the (Form, [but not substance of]) God.

Man is the (form, [but not substance of]) God.

Putting this conclusion into another syllogism:

Man is the (Form, [but not substance of]) God.

(Form, [but not substance of]) God = is able to direct intentionality -> any alternate possibility)

Man = is able to direct intentionality → any alternate possibility)
= free will.

An example of an valid, but not sound, deduction is found in how pre-tribulationists use 1 Thessalonians 5:9 as a proof text for the pre-tribulation rapture

“For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.” – 1 Thessalonians 5:9

The wrath of God is the Tribulation Period of exactly seven years

We are not appointed to go through the Tribulation Period.

This is valid, because if both statements are true, then the conclusion follows. This is not a **sound deduction** because #2 is demonstrably false. The Tribulation Period, as understood in the Pre-Tribulation teaching, includes the wrath of man and the wrath of Satan. The word ‘wrath’ has a much narrower meaning than judgment. The judgment of God can include a wide variety of actions by a variety of agents that happen at God’s decree. Judgment can take the form of natural disasters, man’s wrath, Satan’s wrath, etc. Judgment can serve a variety of purposes, ranging from destructive to corrective; the common denominator is that these events happen in conjunction with the sovereign decree of God.

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Nowhere in Scripture are Christians given blanket immunity from judgment, with several passages indicating that Christians can be targets of judgment (1 Peter 4:17; Hebrews 12:1–11). Wrath, on the other hand, is direct action by God to vanquish evil. In the context of 1 Thessalonians 5:9, it is the Day of the Lord wrath, where God destroys the organized opposition of evil; there is no place for man's wrath and Satan's wrath on this day.

Because the conclusion in valid deduction absolutely preserves the authority of the premise upon which it is based, it is only necessary that it be a valid deduction of the meaning of a text. It must not commit any formal or informal fallacies. Additionally, it must not contradict any explicit Scriptural teaching.

Sometimes, the quickest way to spot false Scriptural inferences is to show counter examples to the inference. There are several examples that are to be found in the debate over whether Charismatic gifts have ceased or continue to this day. One concerns whether miracles are for today, and the other whether revelatory gifts are still in operation.

One proof text for Cessationism is the notion that miracles are tied to the ministry of apostles. They cite the book of Hebrews that says that

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miracles are numbered amongst “the signs of an apostle.” The deduction that is made is that without living apostles, there are no miracles and no miracle workers. This deductive inference is destroyed by a counter example occurring in Acts. According to the text, Phillip the Evangelist had a ministry of miracles. We know from the text that he is not an apostle because he had to call in the apostles Peter and John to impart the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands.

Cessationists also argue that acceptance of any extra-biblical revelation is necessarily a threat to the authority of the Biblical canon. This inference is destroyed by the counter examples of the many instances of extra-Biblical prophecy that occurred during the apostolic period. The texts of 1 Corinthians 12-14 indicate that prophetic gifts were prevalent through the early church and not limited to the apostles. Most prophecies uttered during the lifetimes of the apostles never made it into the Scriptural record. John 21: 25 records that Jesus did many works that were not written. Doubtless, this included teaching those present. There may have even been apostolic letters that did not make it into the canon (for references to these read 1 Corinthians 5:9, 2 Corinthians 2:4, 2 Corinthians 7:8-9, Ephesians 3:3-4, Colossians 4:16). If all of these extra-Biblical revelations during the formation of the canon did not undermine the canon; why would the existence of charismatic gifts today undermine the canon?

Making Inductive Inferences from the Scriptures

Because induction produces probable results rather than absolute results, such inferences can never carry the same authority as the explicit reading of the text, it is necessary to have the conclusion of the induction explicitly affirmed by a text of Scripture. Reasonable induction can supplement and add clarity to an existing doctrinal understanding, but is not adequate as a sole basis for sound doctrine. I can give two example of the use of inductive reasoning in doctrinal formulation.

Example 1: The Elijah Principle

In chapter, of book, I made the case that there is a clear pattern in Scripture of God stacking the deck against His own people so that He may prove His own power. This inductive inference has several passage that explicitly support the inductive conclusion that God uses testing or trial by fire to prove his power and show to the world that which is built on his immovable foundation.

“The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. 4 Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: 5 And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it. 6 The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: 7 The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely the people is

grass. 8 The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever. ” – Isaiah 40:3–8 KJV

“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever. “

– 1 John 2:15–17 KJV

“According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. 11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; 13 Every man’s work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is. 14 If any man’s work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. 15 If any man’s work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.” – 1 Corinthians 3:10–15

“Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.”

– 1 Peter 1:23–25

“And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? 47 Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like: 48 He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock. 49 But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great.”

– Luke 6:46–49

The second example is the observations of the miraculous in the book of Acts. These are buttressed by explicit teaching in 1 Corinthians 12, the book of Ephesians, the book of Revelation, Matthew 28:18–20, and others.

The next two weeks' studies will include a more detailed analysis on how to avoid informal and formal fallacies in making inferences. Making sound inferences is essential when making inferences from the Scripture to form sound doctrine.

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2 Feynman on Scientific Method

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Week 8 Questions

1 Why is making inferences from the Scripture important?

2 What is deduction?

3 What is induction?

4 What is the scientific method?

5 In addition to the conventionally accepted rules of inference for deduction, what rule specific to Biblical inference applies?

6 In addition to the conventionally accepted rules of inference for induction, what rule specific to Biblical inference applies?

7 What shortcut allows one to easily spot a false inference?

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Week 9: Avoiding Logical Fallacies

Informal fallacies are fallacies that relate to the meaning, rather than the form of, words and propositions in an argument. Fallacies can arise over misinterpretations due to ambiguity or vagueness in language, the presence in an argument of propositions irrelevant to the meaning, or unreasonable inductive inferences.

Below is brief description of the major informal fallacies.¹ This list is not a comprehensive list, but includes a few of the most common fallacies that have manifested as hermeneutical mistakes in commentaries of various interpreters.

Begging the question occurs when a conclusion is simply assumed in the premises. Usually begging the question assuming a conclusion without attempting to support it through arguments, but sometimes it can be used as circular reasoning.

Cherry picking occurs when an interpreter selectively picks only data that is useful as evidence for a particular point of view. This is a frequent problem in Biblical hermeneutics. People will cherry-pick proof-texts and string them together to form doctrine without considering the broader context or other passages to get a more complete view of Scriptural teaching.

Example 1: One sect teaches that 1 John 3:9 teaches that Christians cannot sin because they have cherry-picked the text that says “*Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.*” Other sects insist that we will always have sin in our lives while we are on the earth because of 1 John 1:8 that says “*If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.*” different sect draw contradictory conclusions by cherry-picking two clauses that are not only in the same book, but also in the same context. 1 John, when seen in context, asserts that the born experience transforms human nature by planting the Word of God as spiritual DNA. The action of the Word of God in the life of the believer will progressively transform that believer from one who sins to one who does righteousness.

Cherry-picking is also common in anti-Christian polemics. Anti-Christians will pull verse out of context to create a picture far removed from the picture that was intended by God and the human authors of the Bible. These haters would cherry-pick difficult passages from have you believe that Moses is a genocide-loving, pro-slavery fascist. They avoid the many other Scriptures that extol the sanctity of human life, particularly the fact that the unequivocal condemnation of child sacrifice in the Mosaic law was unprecedented for any ancient near eastern nation of that era. The pagan world in which God revealed Himself was quite inhumane and particularly hostile to women and children, and that it was the influence of Judeo-Christian morality that enlightened the

world to the heinous nature of practices like slavery and genocide that are today universally condemned.

A complex question is a question that has two or more components that present a concealed dilemma. Complex questions are worded such that any yes or no answer involves implying something that is false or scandalous. For example, any yes or no answer to the question “have you stopped beating your spouse” implies that the person interrogated has beaten their spouse. If the implication has already been established, then the complex question is valid as a follow up question; otherwise, it is a fallacy. Unless spouse abuse has already been factually established, this question would be fallacious.

A loaded question is a complex question that contains emotionally loaded language. The question “Do you support marriage equality or the continuation of bigotry” is a loaded question. It assumes that the only possibilities are support for same-sex marriage or bigotry – that there is no possibility of reasonable disagreement. Here I Blog shows a real world example of this:

“Fallacy of Complex Question – is loaded with assumption so the opponent is guilty no matter the answer.

“Again, from the Anderson – Morgan debate. At about 2:40 Morgan begins asking Anderson about prisoners’ rights to marry asking, “You

would rather defend a prisoner's right to get married than you would Suze Orman's right to get married to her partner?"

"If Anderson simply answers "no" then it appears he is not in favor of prisoners marrying. If he simply says "yes" then Morgan has not only been allowed to re-define the topic again, but it seems as though Anderson wants greater rights for convicted criminals than for Orman and all homosexuals." ²

Fallacies of distribution (composition – division) are fallacies that wrongly interpret the relationship between the whole or collective of a class and the particular members that make up that class. Such fallacies can be fallacies of composition or division. **Fallacies of composition** are fallacies that make wrong inferences about the whole of something based upon known facts concerning some or every part of the whole. **Fallacies of division** are fallacies that make wrong inferences about some or every part of the whole based upon known facts concerning the whole of something.

Atheists commit the **fallacy of composition** when they argue that religion is the source of all wars, violence, and repressive behaviors. They cite the behavior of certain extreme groups, but commit the fallacy of composition by arguing that the attribute that lead these group to

violence are attributes of religion in general. What applies to certain sects does not apply to every sect – or to the whole.

Rationalization, in both psychology and logic, involves making excuses. The informal **fallacy of rationalization** occurs when people resort to making an excessive number of ad hoc hypothesis to salvage a view that has many difficulties. An ad hoc hypothesis is an alternate explanation that is invoked and applied exclusively to plug up a hole in a theory. Ad hoc hypotheses are not always fallacious; sometimes they can provide important modifications to a theory that make it workable. When done excessively, however, it can destroy the possibility of as coherent understanding of a topic – bringing instead an incoherent patchwork of ideas that just don't fit together.

Rationalization occurs in Biblical hermeneutics when a doctrine is asserted is found to run contrary to the plain meaning, and the interpreter re-interprets the passages that contradict the doctrine in way different from the plain sense. An occasional rationalization can be justified, because sometimes literary and textual considerations indicate that a passages is best interpreted in a fashion different than the plain sense. If one's doctrine requires them to constantly or excessively rationalize a large number of Scripture to make the Scripture fit the doctrine, then there is a big problem. Interpreting the plain sense is the default – and most of the time – best way to read the Scripture.

Rationalization is often employed alongside cherry-picking, particularly in defense of denominational “sacred cows.” The sect will cherry-pick verses that support their sacred cow doctrinal point, and then explain away large number of Scriptures that contradict the doctrine. They employ any fallacy, whether it is a hermeneutical mistake or logical fallacy, to evade the plain application of the passage in refuting the pet doctrine. They may argue that the passage is allegorical, and interpret the allegory to fit the pet doctrine. They may deconstruct either the passage or a key word, interpreting in way that fits their pet doctrine rather than the context in which the passage is actually found.

Relative privation is a fallacy that argues that a point is unimportant because another may be perceived as more important. It is often used in an attempt to dismiss the condemnation of one sin because another is not being adequately addressed, being often tethered to accusations of hypocrisy. Those who would advocate that the Bible fails to condemn homosexuality will argue that those who condemn it fail to condemn adultery, charging them with hypocrisy. Their intent is to stop people from condemning homosexuality. This is fallacious, as the Biblical condemnation of hypocrisy was never intended to become a license to sin but a call to be consistently sin-free. When we find ourselves having inconsistent attitudes towards sin, we should continue to pursue a more consistent righteousness rather than justify sin. since the Bible calls both

homosexuality and adultery sinful, our moral teaching should be consistent with the Bible.

Correlative-based fallacies occur when error are made in representing the number of logical possibilities in a given context. There are three type of correlative or correlation-based fallacies: Denying the correlative, Suppressing correlative, False dilemma.

Denying the correlative is attempting to insert a possibility that does not really exist. **Suppressing the correlative** involves defining the possibilities such that one or more are eliminated. The most common correlative fallacy is the false dilemma.

A **false dilemma** exist when it is asserted that there are only two logical possibilities when in fact there are other possibilities. The Jewish religious leaders sought to trap Jesus with a false dilemma in Matthew 22:15–22. They asked him ” *Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?* ” The dilemma they were trying to set up allowed only two possibilities: Be a traitor to the Law of God and give tribute to Caesar, or be a traitor to Caesar and reject tribute to Caesar. They thought they had Him trapped.

“Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk. 16 And they sent out unto him their disciples with the

***Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men. 17 Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not? 18 But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites? 19 Shew me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a penny. 20 And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? 21 They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's. 22 When they had heard these words, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way."* – Mat 22:15–22**

Jesus, however, saw through their scheme. He demonstrated that it was a false dilemma and grab the dilemma by the horns. In vs 19–20, He asks whose image is on the money. They answered it was Caesar. Jesus replied " ***Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.*** " Jesus pointed out that the Jewish leadership had, by their actions had entered into a social contract with Caesar. They used Caesar's money, Caesar's roads, and in less than a week they would use Caesar's police power and courts to crucify Christ, claiming that their only king was Caesar. They had entered into a social contract, or in Hebrew thought, taken a vow or promise of allegiance to Caesar. Jesus answer, then was one that was legal under both God's and Caesar's law.

Inductive fallacies include sampling bias, false analogy, slothful induction, hasty generalization, and “correlation proves causation.”

False analogy is where an analogy is drawn on irrelevant grounds. For example, it is a false analogy to conclude that bizarre facial hair causes people to become ruthless dictators because there is no connection between attribute of one’s facial hair to their political philosophy or moral character.

Sampling bias occurs when the data observed in a sample is not representative of the whole population or class of objects. Sampling bias often occur in comparing statistics. For example, comparisons between the United States and many other developed countries on standardized test are faulty due to sampling bias; in the United states any high school student is eligible to take the SAT test, whereas in many other countries only the top students are allowed to sit for an SAT-comparable test. The test sample in these countries are not representative to the total student populations, but only the elite students, so it is unable to provide a valid comparison between the overall student populations between the United States and other developed countries

Hasty generalization occurs when a conclusion is drawn based on insufficient observations. Hasty generalizations fail because there is not enough information to know whether the observed sample is representative of the whole class. Hasty generalization occurs in the promotion of many ideas in the evolutionist movement, as we do not

have an adequate basis of observation to know whether the observation sample is representative of extreme of space and time.

Slothful induction occurs where there is sufficient information to justify a conclusion, but no conclusion is drawn. Atheistic scientists commit slothful induction occurs in relation to the fine-tuning argument, which present strong evidence against a random universe but presents implications that are difficult for an atheistic or materialistic philosophy. Many scientists who are philosophic materialists have conjectured that the current universe is just one of an infinite number of universes in a multi-verse. This theory, by its very nature, is untestable; it is a rationalization – the creation of an ad hoc hypothesis without any testability in order to salvage their viewpoint and avoid the strong inference that is suggested by the fine-tuning argument.

It is a fallacy to assert that mere **correlation proves causation**. Merely because things are similar or co-occur does not imply a causal connection. For example, there is a strong correlation between the consumption of ice-cream and the rise in juvenile crime rates. It would however be a fallacy to conclude that consumption of ice cream causes crime. Such an explanation is fallacious because it provides no explanation of any mechanism adequate to account for causation. There is no mechanism that connects causally ice-cream consumption to juvenile delinquency. There is, however, a mechanism that connects summer vacation via boredom to juvenile delinquency; and there is also

a mechanism that connects heat to ice cream consumption – both of which occur in the summer months.

Fallacies of correlation occur in evolutionary theory when similarities amongst fossils and genomes of various types of organisms. Mere similarity does not prove common descent, and scientists have not observed any mechanism adequate to account for the diversity of life. Evolutionary biologists have proposed such mechanisms, but have not, and due to the nature of evolution likely never will, confirm the existence of these mechanisms.

Fallacies of **Amphibology** and **Equivocation** are fallacies related to ambiguity in language. Amphiboly involves ambiguity in sentence structure and equivocation involves people shifting the meanings of words in the middle of a discourse.

This ambiguity of amphibology allows people to parse words in a very misleading way by exploiting the range of meanings possible in a given word or sentence structure. The greater the amphibology, the more wiggle room careless or dishonest interpreters have to focus on the range of meaning that is most convenient for their purposes. It is even entirely possible to have war of definitions. The Bible calls this striving over words.

” If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; 4 He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, 5 Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.” – 1 Timothy 6:3–5

The Bible strongly condemns this parsing of words, characterizing this practice as “***perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth*** (verse5).” God wants us to pursue truth in interpretation. We should specifically avoid informal fallacies in both Biblical interpretation and our broader thinking.

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Week 10: Formal Fallacies

Formal fallacies¹ are fallacies that relate to the form of the argument or arrangement of the terms rather than their meaning. They are fallacies of the form of the arguments as represented in logical form. Logical form is a special way of representing an argument using precise language or mathematical symbolism. When argument from everyday language are rearranged into logical form, these can be represented mathematically by variables. a mathematical type logical argument can be made using these variables in place of everyday words. Error in the arrangement of these variables or their relationships to each other are called formal fallacies. Formal arguments include conditional and unconditional (categorical) arguments.

Hypothetical syllogisms – Conditional arguments

A hypothetical syllogism is a conditional argument with two premises and a conclusion. The first premise is an if...then statement. The 'If' part is the antecedent, and the 'then' part is the consequent. The second premise is a confirmation or denial of either the antecedent or the consequent. There are four possible forms of this type of argument. The argument are structured like this:

If A, Then B

Either A or Not A or B or Not B depending on argument form

Either A or Not A or B or Not B

This argument form is common in the Scriptures. Of the four possible forms of this argument, two of the forms are valid and the other two are invalid.

Valid forms

The two valid forms are modus pollens – confirming the antecedent and modus tollens – denying the consequent.

Modus ponens or confirming the antecedent² takes the form:

If A, Then B

A

Therefore B

In Scripture we see the modus pollens form in 1 John 1:9 ” *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* ” It can be expressed this way.

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IF we confess our sins, THEN our sins are forgiven.

We have confessed our sins

Therefore, our sins are forgiven. (paraphrase)

Modus Tollens or denying the consequent is an argument form where the second premise denies the 'then' part of the if..then statement. It takes the form.

If A, Then B

Not B

Therefore Not A

In Scripture, we see the modus tollens form in 1 Corinthian 15

If Christ is not raised, THEN Preaching and faith worthless, Christians still in sins, and apostles false witness.

However, Preaching and faith with power (not worthless) & Christian freed from sin (not still in sins) & apostles true witnesses (not false witnesses)

Therefore Jesus is risen from the dead.

Invalid forms

There are two invalid forms. They are denying the antecedent and confirming the consequent. These involve that do not follow from the premises because there are other possible conditions.

Denying the antecedent occurs when you draw conclusions about the consequent (the then part) based on a denial of the antecedent. Denying the consequent takes this form.

If A, Then B

Not A

Therefore Not B

This fails because there are other conditions that may account for B besides A. Consider this example.

If a student makes straight A's, THEN he will get a scholarship

The student did not make straight A's

The student did not get a scholarship.

This conclusion fails because there may be other ways that a student might get a scholarship. Students get scholarships for financial need, musical and athletic ability, and a host of other reasons.

When some interpreters read 1 John 1:9, they draw the wrong inference. When they read that “IF we confess our sins, THEN He will forgive our sins” this way.

IF we confess our sins, THEN He will forgive our sins.

We have not confessed our sins

He has not forgiven our sins.

This fails because we are justified by faith. Instead of seeing confession as a promise of affirmative action by Our Lord and Savior, people turn it into a legalistic requirement by committing the fallacy of denying the antecedent. Instead of being a legalistic requirement, confession is a tool to exercise faith and release power from God.

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The fallacy of affirming the consequent occurs when people draw conclusions about the antecedent (the if part) by affirming the consequent. Affirming the consequent takes the form.

If A, Then B

B

Therefore A

Because the consequent might be true for reasons other than the antecedent, this form fails. A real world example of this form may look something like this.

If a student makes straight A's, THEN he will get a scholarship

The student got a scholarship

Therefore student made straight A's

Again, this fails because a student could have got the scholarship through other causes.

Disjunctive argument.

Disjunctive arguments are exclusive OR argument that show a contradictory relationship between two ideas. These two ideas are called disjuncts. This type of argument is extremely common in the Scripture. It takes the following form

A OR B

NOT A

THEREFORE B

This argument form is used by Jesus in Matthew 6:24. It can be expressed this way.

Since ” *No man can serve two masters ; Ye cannot serve God and mammon.*”

he will serve God OR he will serve mammon (money)

He serves God

Therefore he does not serve money.

This argument form has three invalid forms. He cannot deny both disjuncts, he cannot affirm both disjuncts, and he cannot deny and affirm the same disjunct.

Categorical Syllogisms

A categorical syllogism is an argument type that, when expressed in logical form, has exactly two premises followed by a conclusion. When expressed in logical form, these arguments have three terms. The validity of this type argument depends solely on the form of the argument; it is agnostic concerning the content of the argument. This argument form is not as common in the Scripture.²

There are four types of premises in a categorical syllogism. These types of statement are labeled A, E, I, and O type statements as defined in the square of opposition:

A type: All A are B

E type: No A are B

I type: Some A are B

O type: Some A are not B

Categorical syllogisms can be evaluated by using three rules of inference. The first two rules relate to whether a term is distributed to

all members of the class designated by that term, and the third relates to whether a conclusion affirm or denies a truth.

Distribution refers to universal application. For example, in the statement 'All men are mortal,' 'men' is distributed because it applies to each and every man. 'Mortal' is not distributed as the statement does not apply to every mortal. There may be mortals who are not men. There are three ways to determine if a term is distributed.

Every term preceded by the word 'All' is distributed

Every term preceded by the word 'Not' is distributed.

In every sentence in which the subject is preceded by the word 'No,' both the subject and predicate are distributed

Here are the two rules on distribution:

The middle term must be distributed. It is impossible to deduce any link between the other two terms if the statement that contain the middle term do not absolutely apply to every member of the class referenced by the middle term.

If a term is distributed in the conclusion, it must be distributed in one of the premises. If there are no statements that absolutely apply to all

members of a class in the premises, then it is impossible to deduce an absolutely applicable statement in the conclusion.

The third rule relates to how statement affirm or negate. Affirmation occurs in statements containing 'all' and 'some.' Negation occurs in statements containing 'no' and 'not.'

In order to draw any conclusions at least one statement must be affirmative, and the sign value of the conclusion must be a valid product of the multiplied sign values of the premises. Two affirmative statement in the premises must produce an affirmative conclusion (think $+1 * +1 = +1$). An affirmative and a negative statement (think $-1 * +1 = -1$) produce a negative conclusion. Two negative statements produce no conclusion, as it denies a link between the statements in the premises.

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1 "Formal Fallacy", The Fallacy Files

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2 The categorical syllogism, at least in its formal application, is extremely uncommon in the Scripture. As a formal application, it is primarily connected to Aristotelian logic. It is included for completeness, but I will not be asking questions on this section. Of the 64 possible

forms, only one appears in Scripture. This one is so obviously valid that no formal training in logic is needed to understand its validity

Week 10 Questions

1. What are Informal Fallacies?

2. What are three types of informal fallacies?

3. Which two-fallacy combination is the most common in Biblical hermeneutics?

4. Fill in the blank the fallacy

a (_____) occurs when an interpreter selectively picks only data that is useful as evidence for a particular point of view.

b (_____) occurs when a conclusion is simply assumed in the premises.

c A (_____) is a question that has two or more components that present a concealed dilemma. Complex questions are worded such that any yes or no answer involves implying something else that is false or scandalous without actually establishing the implication.

d A (_____) is a complex question that contains emotionally loaded language.

e (_____) are fallacies that wrongly interpret the relationship between the whole or collective of a class and the particular members that make up that class. Such fallacies can be fallacies of composition or division.

f (_____) are fallacies that make wrong inferences about the whole of something based upon known facts concerning some or every part of the whole.

g (_____) are fallacies that make wrong inferences about some or every part of the whole based upon known facts concerning the whole of something.

h (_____) occurs in Biblical hermeneutics when a doctrine is asserted is found to run contrary to the plain meaning, and the interpreter re-interprets the passages that contradict the doctrine in way different from the plain sense in order to salvage the doctrine.

i (_____) is a fallacy that argues that a point is unimportant because another may be perceived as more important. It is often used in an attempt to dismiss the condemnation of one sin because another is not being adequately addressed.

j A (_____) exists when it is asserted that there are only two logical possibilities when in fact there are other possibilities.

k (_____) is where an analogy is drawn on irrelevant grounds.

l (_____) occurs when the data observed in a sample is not representative of the whole population or class of objects.

m (_____) occurs when a conclusion is drawn based on insufficient observations.

n (_____) occurs where there is sufficient information to justify a conclusion, but no conclusion is drawn.

o The fallacy of (_____) is the assumption that events or phenomena that are similar or co-incident imply a causal connection.

p (_____) involves ambiguity in sentence structure

q (_____) involves shifting the meanings of words in the middle of a discourse.

5. What are formal fallacies?

6. What is logical form?
7. What are two main types of arguments?
8. What is a conditional argument?
9. What are the two valid conditional argument forms?
10. What are the two invalid conditional argument forms? What is a disjunctive syllogism?
11. What are the two valid disjunctive syllogisms.
12. What are three invalid disjunctive syllogisms.

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Week 11: Using Lexical and Reference Tools

Sometimes in the course of Biblical study, it is necessary for contemporary people to consult various reference works. This is because the modern audience is far removed culturally and linguistically (language orientation) from the original audiences. Various types of reference works have been produced to help bridge this gap.

Because these works do not carry canonical authority that is found in the Scripture, the use of these poses a challenge to interpretation. I shall list various types of reference work, starting from the least authoritative to the most authoritative.

Secular Knowledge Base

The least authoritative references are works from secular academic disciplines. While these works carry great authority in the respective secular disciplines; they are not authoritative for Bible interpretation, neither do they carry as high an authority as the bible as the arbiter of truth.

Sometimes knowledge from secular disciplines can be helpful in interpretation. When the debate started over the relationship between predestination and freewill amongst the early Calvinists and Arminians, the prevailing cosmology or meta-narrative understood eternity as an infinite distance on a timeline and inside a single timeline. In this view,

the foreknowledge of God is often described as God “looking down the corridor of time.” If God lives within time and He can only look down the corridor of time to know a singular future, then foreknowledge certainly means fore-ordination – and no possibility of free will. Arminians found the moral implications of no free will unacceptable and rejected this conclusion. The Medieval cosmology left Calvinists and Arminians stuck in their divide.

Modern developments in cosmology in both philosophy and science, however, do not view time as not a single line, but as having an almost infinite number of branches. Each branch represents a possible choice. Eternity is understood as being outside of time and enveloping time. This cosmology allows for free choices. The time-stream is an open book or Web page to God. God can click anywhere He wants on the time-stream. In this cosmology, predestination is simply a matter of God drawing a time line through whatever combination of choices suits His purposes.

While such works can be helpful in Bible interpretation, the interpreter must be careful not to impose secular perspectives that are alien to both the Christian worldview and the text upon the text. This frequently happen in interpreting Genesis 1–2. Many interpreters feel pressure to make their interpretation fit the prevailing evolutionary narrative and read secular so-called science* into the narrative.

Commentaries

Commentaries can be extremely useful in gaining the perspective of others. Seeing how others view the Scriptures can help us avoid skewing interpretation to fit selfish biases; this helps to avoid the fallacy of confirmation bias where the interpreter cherry picks facts that confirm his own biases.

Commentaries, however, carry low authority precisely they are largely perspective and opinion oriented. They tend to be heavy on opinion. While many commentaries use good hermeneutics and good exegesis, they are the [usually?] informed opinions of human beings. The authority of these commentaries is far less than that of Scripture.

Historical narrative

History narrative can be a good source of information about historical persons, trends, and events contemporary to persons and events found in the Biblical narrative. Reading such history can fill in gaps in our knowledge of historical events portrayed in the Biblical narrative.

However, history book suffers in they usually presented as a narrative. As such both the facts chosen and how they are used to construct the story can be a reflection of the biases of the historian presenting the narrative. History books also suffer from the limitations of the methods of historical inquiry. History does not present itself as a well constructed

narrative. Historians must piece together numerous artifacts and manuscripts. This includes making judgments about the authenticity of evidence discovered. Not every artifact and manuscript is what it purports to be. While some highly intelligent minds have constructed for us some very good histories, professional historians are by no means infallible; their authority is inferior to that of Scripture.

Historical references

Historical references generally have somewhat more authority than historical narrative because the narrative, with its biases, has been filtered out. Historical references are focused more concisely on factual information and less on how it is woven into narrative. Such references are good sources for researching the cultural context of a given historical situation.

Historical references also suffer from the limitations on the historical method. As such, while historical references carry greater authority than historical narrative, their authority is less than that of Scripture.

Lexicons, concordances, and Bible dictionaries

These are the most authoritative extra-Biblical resources. These tools allow the interpreter to dig deeper into the Greek, Hebrew and Aramaic words that are in the original texts. The resources will list standard

definitions of words, sometimes including with them definitions examples of usage.

Week 11 Questions

- 1 Why is it sometimes necessary to use reference works?
- 2 What are some reference works?
- 3 Why are works in the secular knowledge base particularly risky?
- 4 What is the risk of using works from secular knowledge base, commentaries, and historical narrative?
- 5 What is the most reliable extra-Biblical reference source?

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Week 12: Preserving God's Word

Last week/chapter, I wrote that Lexicographical – dictionary resources are the most authoritative extra-Biblical resources. While these resources are very reliable, they are not inspired. This raises the question of how God preserved his Message.

Can God preserve His message using human language even if our knowledge of that language is less than infallible? The answer is absolutely yes. To understand why the limitations of human language do not limit God, we should understand how God address these epistemological limits to human knowledge. This issue is addressed in 1 Corinthians 13:9–12, which describes current limits of human epistemology.

“For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. 10 But when that which is perfect [complete] is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. 11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. 12 For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.”

– 1 Corinthians 13:9–12

This passage says that we have partial knowledge of the things of God. This makes sense, as God is infinite and humans are finite. Humanity, in

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the current mortal flesh, cannot grasp exhaustively the knowledge of God in both its breadth and depth. Communication between an infinite person and finite persons created in the image of the infinite person is possible because the finite person has the same categories as the Infinite Person. The finite person, however, has neither the storage capacity and bandwidth to store all information, nor the infallibility to guarantee integrity of the data; The Infinite Person is not only able to do those things, but is able to compensate for the weaknesses of the finite person in the communication process. Communication between the Infinite Person and the finite person involves a tradeoff: Completeness comes at the price of expressiveness and precision. Precise expressiveness comes at the price of completeness.

God chose completeness over precision at the cost of some ambiguity. 1 Corinthians 13:12 says that “*we see through a glass, darkly.*” This dark glass Paul is referring to was a description of ancient mirrors. They lack the perfect and precise reflectivity of modern mirrors. Ancient mirrors were basically polished brass. These mirrors would do a good job of presenting a complete or whole image, but the image would be fuzzy, lacking precise expression of details. Images produced by these mirrors provided good knowledge of the big picture but were weak on some of the details.

God compensates for ambiguity at the level of microscopic or nano-scope detail by weaving the fullness of His Message into the Big Picture.

Throughout these Bible studies, both narrative and points of doctrine have been supported NY multiple passages in context and multiple contexts that are woven together in one meta-narrative. God has **embedded abundant redundancy** into his word to insure that his message gets through. Uncertainties at a microscopic level concerning the integrity of a particular text or its meaning do not create uncertainty in the larger narrative anymore than a microscopic mole can defile a portrait.

Further proof that uncertainties in small scales do not create uncertainty in larger scales can be found in physics and mathematics. In physics, this principle is called the Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle; and in mathematics, it is called Godel's Completeness and his two Incompleteness Theorems. These principles prove the epistemology that Paul laid out in 1 Corinthians 13:12 under inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

The Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle

The Heisenberg Principle states that it is impossible to measure with high precision both the position and momentum of particles. It is generally regarded by physicist as, not merely an uncertainty of measurements, but an actual uncertainty in the physical universe. Hyper Lab's description assert that "*Even with perfect instruments and technique, the uncertainty is inherent in the nature of things.*" Below is

the following definition from HyperPhysics Lab at Georgia State University.¹

“The position and momentum of a particle cannot be simultaneously measured with arbitrarily high precision. There is a minimum for the product of the uncertainties of these two measurements. There is likewise a minimum for the product of the uncertainties of the energy and time.

$$\Delta x \Delta p > h/2$$

$$\Delta E \Delta T > h/2$$

“This is not a statement about the inaccuracy of measurement instruments, nor a reflection on the quality of experimental methods; it arises from the wave properties inherent in the quantum mechanical description of nature. Even with perfect instruments and technique, the uncertainty is inherent in the nature of things.”

The Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle does not destroy certainty on the larger level. It is only at the subatomic level that uncertainty exists. We can be certain of the big picture view of things, but when we pursue precision at the subatomic level we lose some certainty. The Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle suggests that the universe is porous, allowing for

some wiggle room at the smallest levels. If this be the nature of reality, then it follows that good interpretation of the Bible allow for wiggle-room at the smallest levels. What is gained by precision is lost in certainty

Godel's Completeness and Incompleteness Theorems

Godel's Completeness and Incompleteness Theorems describe the same scope of epistemology as 1 Corinthians 13:12. Godel's Completeness Theorem says that in a natural language or propositional logic, every valid argument can be constructed as a formal proof using the language of mathematics or mathematical logic. Godel's First Incompleteness Theorem states that every logically consistent formal system, meaning a system that describes proof using mathematical language or meta-language*, has statements that are true but unprovable from within the system. Godel's Second Incompleteness Theorem states that no consistent formal system can prove its own validity from statements within the system. **Ambiguous, natural language has contained within it completeness, but the more precise, formal system are necessarily incomplete.**

What formal systems gain by precision, they lose in completion. Even if gaps in one formal system are filled by appeal to another formal system, the second formal system would have gaps of its own. No finite number of formal systems can have complete knowledge. Only an infinite number of formal systems can attain formal completion, and only the

mind of God can contain knowledge of an infinite “number” of formal systems.

Three things follow from these three theorems: A finite mind can find complete, but not exhaustive knowledge expressed in terms of somewhat ambiguous natural language. This knowledge includes certainty about the big picture, but fuzzy on the details – just what Paul claimed in 1 Corinthians 13:12 (Godel’s completeness Theorem). The second is that no formal system can account for all of reality (Both of Godel’s Incompleteness Theorems). The third is that no uncertainty caused by incompleteness or inconsistency can destroy the certainty that exists in natural language and logic. Godel’s Incompleteness Theorems do not contradict the Completeness Theorem.

No formal or formalized system can be both consistent and complete. Attempts to do result in discrepancies. These discrepancies, however, do not destroy our knowledge of the whole. These three theorems confirm the Pauline epistemology of 1 Corinthians 13:12. Uncertainties at the microscopic level do not destroy our knowledge of the message of God.

God has chosen to communicate His message in natural language. Natural language is complete and sufficient to convey His intended message. Because no formal system can be both consistent and

complete, discrepancies from these systems or formalized systems (i. e. modern science) at the microscopic level are not valid objections to the main narrative. Reality exists in such a way that no finite mind can judge with certainty in both a complete and consistent way the smallest scales. The Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle establishes these limits as a matter of empirical or experiential observation, and Godel's Theorems establish these limits as necessary truths. In the midst of microscopic uncertainty is certainty and completeness concerning the big picture.

The Bible is consistent concerning the big picture or meta-narrative, and it uniquely and completely provides answer to some fundamental questions that are found nowhere else. God has built in massive redundancy into the Scripture, insuring that important doctrines are confirmed in context and in multiple places. Weakness in human knowledge at the microscopic level, whether it be matters of textual criticism or that of the most precise shade of meaning of a word in its original language, do not hinder the ability of the Holy Spirit to deliver God's intended message to man using human language.

The role of the Holy Spirit in Hermeneutics

While this study in hermeneutics emphasizes valid methodologies of interpretation, God has not left us with just methods. He has given us his Holy Spirit that we may understand his ways (1 Corinthians 2:9-16). We should seek God, asking him for the wisdom He generously gives when we study his word (James 1:5-8). While I have said only a little

about seeking God's wisdom, this is the most important thing in hermeneutics.

Scripture References

1 Corinthians 2:9–16; James 1:5–8

Other References

1 HyperPhysics Lab at Georgia State University

<http://hyperphysics.phy-astr.gsu.edu/hbase/uncer.html>

2 Godel's Completeness Theorem

http://www.princeton.edu/~achaney/tmve/wiki100k/docs/G%C3%B6del_s_completeness_theorem.html

3 Godel's First Incompleteness Theorem

<http://mathworld.wolfram.com/GoedelsIncompletenessTheorem.html>

4 Godel's Second Incompleteness Theorem

<http://mathworld.wolfram.com/GoedelsSecondIncompletenessTheorem.html>

Week 12 Questions

- 1 Can God preserve His message using human language even if our knowledge of that language is less than infallible?
- 2 What does the Bible say about human epistemology?
- 3 What is the Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle?
- 4 How does the Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle confirm Biblical epistemology?
- 5 What does Godel's Completeness Theorem say?
- 6 What does Godel's Incompleteness Theorems say?
- 7 What do Godel's Three Theorems, when taken together, mean for epistemology?
- 8 Why is God redundant in his revelation?
- 9 What is the most important thing in Hermeneutics?

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Answer Key for How do We Know

Week 1 Questions

1 What presuppositions should people bring into their Bible study?

The Bible is God's infallible word.

The Bible was written in human language and in human thought forms.

The Bible was written in specific cultural contexts to document God's activity in history, but it was also written to communicate his message to all mankind.

The Bible was written to reveal God and point to Christ, providing to man the answer he needs to come to God.

The Bible was written to be a world-view foundation for renewing minds, enabling individuals to do every good work and providing the community of God's people with a moral compass.

2 Why is it important that the Bible be infallible?

If the Bible merely "contains" the Word of God, or is merely "man's interpretation" of the Word of God, then man is on the throne – deciding which parts are deemed the Word of God. The self would then **necessarily** remain the foundation in rebellion to God's true role. We would be in bondage to the self-centered nature. Only if the Bible is indeed the Word of God is it possible for a God-based message to be spread that can be accompanied by man's agreement in faith.

3 Why is it important that the Bible be written in ordinary human language?

Because man was created in the image of God, there are enough commonality between finite human rationality and infinite Divine rationality to make communication possible. The bible was written in ordinary human language because God wanted to communicate with man.

Week 2 Questions

1 What is the allegorical hermeneutic?

The Allegorical Hermeneutic was the method of interpretation that assumes a default non-literal interpretation to passages.

2 What problem does the allegorical hermeneutic have?

The problem with assuming allegory is that there is no baseline for literal interpretation. Without a baseline literal interpretation, allegories mean whatever the interpreter wants them to mean. This makes the allegorical method game for theological abuse as theological abuse of the allegorical method makes it impossible for the text to correct false doctrines in the minds of the abusers.

3 What is the historical–critical hermeneutic?

The historical–critical hermeneutic studies the Bible as if it were just another naturally produced book– seeing the Bible as a product of historical and religious evolution.

4 What problems does the historical–critical hermeneutic have?

Because it sees the Bible as a product of naturalistic evolution, it cannot adequately grasp the perspective of a supernatural God in its analysis of the text.

5 What is deconstruction?

Deconstruction is where an interpreter cherry–picks a clause within a passage, usually one amenable to his biases, and then frame the remainder of the passage to fit the artificially selected passage.

6 What problem does deconstruction have?

Deconstruction is audience–centric. While an author may consider the perspectives and background of his audience in constructing communication, communication begins as a decision by an author to publish his intended message. Passages of the author’s communication are framed in accordance to the **original intent** of the author, not the audience.

7 What is the Grammatical–historical hermeneutic?

The Grammatical–historical hermeneutic is a method of interpretation that assumes a default literal interpretation. Literalness of interpretation, while usually grammatical, does allow for non–literal elements when the literary style and form indicates.

8 Why is the Grammatical–historical hermeneutic the best suited method of interpretation?

It best fits the default manner of interpreting human language; it is also the most compatible with the presuppositions of sound Biblical hermeneutics.

Week 3 Questions

1 Why is original intent so important?

The whole point of any communication is the expression of the author’s thought to the intended audience.

2 Who are the two authors of any Scriptural passage? how does this relate to original intent?

All Scripture is inspired by God and contains the words God intended to communicate. Every book of Scripture also has a human author(s). Scripture, then, communicates compatible divine and human original intent.

3 How does understanding the original intent of the human author help us to interpret Scripture?

A knowledge of the original intent of the human author provides information on the local and immediate context of the passage. Human original intent must be interpreted with the framework of God's original intent.

4 How does understanding God's original intent help us to interpret Scripture?

A knowledge of God's original intent provides information concerning the big story or meta-narrative that God intended for us to know. God's original intent frames the entire message of Scripture.

Week 4 Questions

1 What are four views or studies of a big-picture?

A philosophical study, a historical study, book studies, and a Christ-centered big picture.

2 What is the point of a philosophical study of the Bible?

It provides a Christian worldview, including a Christian metaphysics (theory of being), Christian Ethics, and Christian epistemology (theory of knowing).

3 What is the point of a historical study of Scripture?

To gain a broad view of the progressive revelation of God's Word and His action throughout history.

4 What is the benefit of weaving together a broad philosophical and historical understanding of Scripture?

Weaving together historical and philosophical understandings of the Bible will help the interpreter gain a systematic understanding of how the doctrines of the Word of God fit together.

5 What is the value of doing a systematic study of an entire book?

A study of an entire book will give a wide view of the purpose and overall message of the book.

Week 5 Questions

1 What two results happen when God's infallible word is expressed using fallible human language?

The limitations of human language are such that, when used in various contexts, result in discrepancies due to diversities of perspectives. The fact that God's Word itself is infallible means that there will be remarkable consistency of thought in spite of the differences in contexts and perspectives.

2 What is the value in comparing Scripture to Scripture?

God engineered the construction of the Scripture, choosing which words were to be included and preserved, in such a way that it would be possible to compare Scripture to Scripture as a method of overcoming ambiguity inherent in human language.

Week 6 Questions

1 What is context? How are contexts layered?

Context is the text that surrounds a text. Sentences are surrounded by, or exist in the context of, paragraphs. Paragraphs exist in the context of chapters, chapter exist in the context of books, and books in the context of book series or the larger cultural discussion.

2 What are context creators?

A context creator is text that determines or influences the meaning of other texts. in a paragraph, the topic sentence is the context creator.

3 Why is context important?

Man words, and even sentences, are ambiguous enough to have multiple possible meaning. Correctly determining context can narrow down the number of possible meanings.

4 What are the two context errors interpreters commit?

One context error is to simply cherry-pick a passage out of context and “proof-text” it as a pretext for whatever. The second context error is to frame the context using as a context creator a text that the author did not intend to be used to frame the meaning of the text. (e. g. Homosexualist’s treatment of Leviticus 18).

Week 7 Questions

1 What is exegesis?

Exegesis comes from a Greek word meaning ‘to draw out.’ Exegesis has to do with deriving from the Scripture meaning that is present in the text.

2 What is eisegesis?

Eisegesis is the opposite of exegesis. eisegesis is putting a meaning into a text that was not originally present.

3 What type of false inference does eisegesis often involve?

Eisegesis often involve drawing inferences from man-made theological systems. inferences from these system are often read into a text od Scripture to make it appear that the Scripture supports a man-made doctrine that it doesn't really support.

4 Why is exegesis fundamental?

The bottom line in Bible interpretation is that whatever we believe to be Bible teaching must ultimately be based on what has been written down in the text.

Week 8 Questions

1 Why is making inference from the Scripture important?

Inferences are made in integrating knowledge from the Scripture into a Christian world-view and in application of Scripture into contemporary circumstances.

2 What is deduction?

Deduction is a form of reasoning where valid conclusions absolutely follow from the meaning of the premises. Valid deductive inferences absolutely follow from, and carry the same authority as, the premises.

3 What is induction?

Induction is a form of reasoning where one discerns patterns by observation of events or phenomena. Inductive reasoning pre-supposes that the more instances that two or more are observed in a given relation, the greater likelihood that they are necessarily in that relation.

4 What is the scientific method?

The scientific method is a three step reasoning process. The first is to guess the best explanation of a causal relationship. This guess is called a hypothesis. Step #2 is to use deduction to calculate the consequences of the hypothesis. Step #3 is to perform experiments or conduct observations to test the consequences of the deduction.

5 In addition to the conventionally accepted rules of inference for deduction, what rule specific to Biblical inference applies?

Because the conclusion in valid deduction absolutely preserves the authority of the premise upon which it is based, it is only necessary that it be a valid deduction of the meaning of a text. It must not commit any formal or informal fallacies. Additionally, it must not contradict any explicit Scriptural teaching.

6 In addition to the conventionally accepted rules of inference for induction, what rule specific to Biblical inference applies?

Because induction produces probable results rather than absolute results, such inferences can never carry the same authority as the explicit reading of the text, it is necessary to have the conclusion of the induction explicitly affirmed by a text of Scripture.

7 What shortcut allows one to easily spot a false inference?

Sometimes, the quickest way to spot false Scriptural inferences is to show counter examples to the inference.

Week 9 Questions

1 What are Informal Fallacies?

Informal fallacies are fallacies that relate to the meaning, rather than the form of, words and propositions in an argument.

2 What are three types of informal fallacies?

Misinterpretations due to ambiguity or vagueness in language, the presence in an argument of propositions irrelevant to the meaning, or unreasonable inductive inferences.

3 Which two-fallacy combination is the most common in Biblical hermeneutics?

The most common two-fallacy combination is Cherry-picking and rationalization. The interpreter would cherry-pick a passage whose plain interpretation is amenable with his biases. He would then rationalize

passages that contradicted his doctrine, imposing upon the text an interpretation, without any literary justification, to bring the interpretations of those passage into conformity to the pet doctrine. Rationalizations would often employ numerous other fallacies, both logical and hermeneutic to twist the text into the mold of the cherry-picked doctrine. Rationalization is often employed in defense of denominational “sacred cows.”

4 Fill in the blank the fallacy

a **Cherry picking** occurs when an interpreter selectively picks only data that is useful as evidence for a particular point of view.

b **Begging the question** occurs when a conclusion is simply assumed in the premises.

c A **complex question** is a question that has two or more components that present a concealed dilemma. Complex questions are worded such that any yes or no answer involves implying something else that is false or scandalous without actually establishing the implication.

d A **loaded question** is a complex question that contains emotionally loaded language.

e Fallacies of distribution are fallacies that wrongly interpret the relationship between the whole or collective of a class and the particular members that make up that class. Such fallacies can be fallacies of composition or division.

f Fallacies of composition are fallacies that make wrong inferences about the whole of something based upon known facts concerning some or every part of the whole.

g Fallacies of division are fallacies that make wrong inferences about some or every part of the whole based upon known facts concerning the whole of something.

h Rationalization occurs in Biblical hermeneutics when a doctrine is asserted is found to run contrary to the plain meaning, and the interpreter re-interprets the passages that contradict the doctrine in way different from the plain sense in order to salvage the doctrine.

i Relative privation is a fallacy that argues that a point is unimportant because another may be perceived as more important. It is often used in

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an attempt to dismiss the condemnation of one sin because another is not being adequately addressed.

j A **false dilemma** exist when it is asserted that there are only two logical possibilities when in fact there are other possibilities.

k **False analogy** is where an analogy is drawn on irrelevant grounds.

l **Sampling bias** occurs when the data observed in a sample is not representative of the whole population or class of objects.

m **Hasty generalization** occurs when a conclusion is drawn based on insufficient observations.

n **Slothful induction** occurs where there is sufficient information to justify a conclusion, but no conclusion is drawn.

o The fallacy of **correlation proves causation** is the assumption that events or phenomena that are similar or co-occur imply a causal connection.

p **Amphibology** involves ambiguity in sentence structure

q Equivocation involves shifting the meanings of words in the middle of a discourse.

Week 10 Questions

1 What are formal fallacies?

Formal fallacies are fallacies relating to the form or structure of an argument. Formal fallacies have nothing to do with the meaning of the words or sentences.

2 What is logical form?

Logical form is a special way of representing an argument using precise language or mathematical symbolism.

3 What are two main types of arguments?

The two main types of arguments are hypothetical syllogisms (conditional arguments) and categorical syllogisms (unconditional arguments).

4 What is a conditional argument?

A conditional argument consists of an IF...THEN statement, a second statement that affirms or denies either the IF part (antecedent) or the

THEN part (consequent). These two statements are followed by the third statement, which is a conclusion that is asserted to follow from the two premises.

5 What are the two valid conditional argument forms?

One of these is modus ponens, which is where the antecedent (IF-part) is affirmed, and a conclusion is drawn the consequent (THEN-part) is true. The other is modus tollens, which is where the consequent (THEN-part) is denied, and the conclusion is drawn that the antecedent (IF-part) is false.

6 What are the two invalid conditional argument forms?

One of these is where the antecedent (IF-part) is denied, and a conclusion is drawn the consequent (THEN-part) is false. The other is where the consequent (THEN-part) is affirmed, and the conclusion is drawn that the antecedent (IF-part) is true.

7 What is a disjunctive syllogism?

A disjunctive syllogism is an exclusive OR. The first premise is the disjunction and the second premise is an affirmation or denial of one of the disjuncts, followed by a conclusion.

8 What are the two valid disjunctive syllogisms.

He can deny one of the disjuncts in the premises and affirm the other in the conclusion; or he can affirm one of the disjuncts in the premises and deny the other in the conclusion.

9 What are three invalid disjunctive syllogisms.

He cannot deny both disjuncts; he cannot affirm both disjuncts; he cannot deny and affirm the same disjunct.

Week 11 Questions

1 Why is it sometimes necessary to use reference works?

It is sometimes necessary to use reference works because the modern audience is far removed culturally and linguistically (language orientation) from the original audiences. Various types of reference works have been produced to help bridge this gap.

2 What are some reference works?

Secular knowledge base, commentaries, historical narrative, historical references, Lexicons, concordances, and Bible dictionaries

3 Why are works in the secular knowledge base particularly risky?

While such works can be helpful in Bible interpretation, the interpreter must be careful not to impose secular perspectives that are alien to both the Christian worldview and the text upon the text.

4 What is the risk of using works from secular knowledge base, commentaries, and historical narrative?

They tend to be heavy on opinion.

5 What is the most reliable extra-Biblical reference source?

Lexicons, concordances, and Bible dictionaries.

Week 12 Questions

1 Can God preserve His message using human language even if our knowledge of that language is less than infallible?

Yes. To understand why the limitations of human language do not limit God, we should understand how God address these epistemological limits to human knowledge.

2 What does the Bible say about human epistemology?

1 Corinthians 13:12 compares the limits of human knowledge to ancient mirrors. It says that “*we see through a glass, darkly.*” This dark glass Paul is referring to was a description of ancient mirrors. They lack the

perfect and precise reflectivity of modern mirrors. Ancient mirrors were basically polished brass. These mirrors would do a good job of presenting a complete or whole image, but the image would be fuzzy, lacking precise expression of details. Like those mirrors, we can see the big picture better than exhaustive details.

3 What is the Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle?

The Heisenberg Principle states that it is impossible to measure with high precision both the position and momentum of particles.

4 How does the Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle confirm Biblical epistemology?

The Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle does not destroy certainty on the larger level. It is only at the subatomic level that uncertainty exists. This confirms 1 Corinthians 13:12 that says that we can be certain of the big picture view of things, but when we pursue precision at the smallest level we lose some certainty.

5 What does Godel's Completeness Theorem say?

That any valid proposition in natural language can be proved formally.

6 What does Godel's Incompleteness Theorems say?

The First Incompleteness Theorem says that any consistent formal system has statements that are true but not provable from within that system. The Second Incompleteness Theorem says that no formal system can prove its own validity.

7 What do Godel's Three Theorems, when taken together, mean for epistemology?

No formal or formalized system can be both consistent and complete. Attempts to do result in discrepancies. These discrepancies, however, do not destroy our knowledge of the whole. These three Theorems confirm the Pauline epistemology of 1 Corinthians 13:12. Uncertainties at the microscopic level of our knowledge do not destroy our knowledge of the message of God.

8 Why is God redundant in his revelation?

God is redundant so that his intended message can be clearly seen as his people study and interpret Scripture.

9 What is the most important thing in Hermeneutics?

Seeking the help of the Holy Spirit.