

Summary of Christian Doctrine

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PART I – INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1: Religion

1. The Nature of Religion

The Bible informs us that man was created in the image of God. When he fell in sin, he did not entirely cease to be the image-bearer of the Most High. The seed of religion is still present in all men, though their sinful nature constantly reacts against it. Missionaries testify to the presence of religion in some form or other among all the nations and tribes of the earth. It is one of the greatest blessings of mankind, though many denounce it as a curse. Not only does it touch the deepest springs of man's life, but it also controls his thoughts and feelings and desires.

But just what is religion? It is only by the study of the Word of God that we can learn to know the nature of true religion. The word 'religion' is derived from the Latin and not from any word that is found in the original Hebrew or Greek of the Bible. It is found only four times in our translation of the Bible, Gal. 1:18, 14; Jas. 1:26, 27. The Old Testament defines religion as the fear of the Lord. This fear is not a feeling of dread, but of reverent regard for God akin to awe, but coupled with love and confidence. It is the response of the Old Testament believers to the revelation of the law. In the New Testament religion is a response to the gospel rather than to the law, and assumes the form of faith and godliness.

In the light of Scripture we learn to understand that religion is a relation in which man stands to God, a relation in which man is conscious of the absolute majesty and infinite power of God and "8" of his own utter insignificance and absolute helplessness. It may be defined as a conscious and voluntary relationship to God, which expresses itself in grateful worship and loving service. The manner of this religious worship and service is not left to the arbitrary will of man, but is determined by God.

2. The Seat of Religion.

There are several wrong views respecting the seat of religion in man. Some think of religion primarily as a sort of knowledge, and locate it in the intellect. Others regard it as a kind of immediate feeling of God, and find its seat in the feelings. And still others hold that it consists most of all in moral activity, and refer it to the will. However, all these views are one-sided and contrary to Scripture, which teaches us that religion is a matter of the heart. In Scripture psychology the heart is the central organ of the soul. Out of it are all the issues of life, thoughts, feelings, and desires, Prov. 4:28. Religion involves the whole man, his intellectual, his emotional, and his moral life. This is the only view that does justice to the nature of religion.

3. The Origin of Religion.

Particular attention was devoted during the last fifty years to the problem of the origin of religion. Repeated attempts were made to give a natural explanation of it, but without success. Some spoke of it as an invention of cunning and deceptive priests, who regarded it as an easy source of revenue; but this explanation is entirely discredited now. Others held that it began with the worship of lifeless objects (fetishes), or with the worship of spirits, possibly the spirits of

forefathers. But this is no explanation, since the question remains, "How did people ever hit on the idea of worshiping lifeless or living objects?" Still others were of the opinion that religion originated in nature-worship, that is, the worship of the marvels and powers of nature, or in the widespread practice of magic. But these theories do not explain any more than the others how non-religious man ever became religious. They all start out with a man who is already religious.

The Bible gives the only reliable account of the origin of religion. It informs us of the existence of God, the only object worthy of religious worship. Moreover, it comes to us with the assurance that God, whom man could never discover with his natural powers, revealed Himself in nature and, more especially, in His divine Word, demands the worship and service of man, and also determines the worship and service that is well-pleasing to Him. And, finally, it teaches us that God created man in His own image, and thus endowed him with a capacity to understand, and to respond to, this revelation, and engendered in him a natural urge to seek communion with God and to glorify Him.

To memorize Scripture passages bearing on:

a. The Nature of Religion:

Deut. 10:12, 18. "And now, Israel, what does Jehovah your God require of you, but to fear Jehovah your God, to walk in all His ways, and to love Him, and to serve Jehovah your God with all your heart and with all your soul, to keep the commandments of Jehovah, and His statutes, which I command you this day for your good."

Ps. 111:10. "The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of wisdom; all those who do His commandments have a good understanding: His praise endures for ever."

Eccl. 12:13. "Fear God and keep His commandments; for this is the whole duty of man."

John 6:29. "This is the work of God, that you believe on the One whom He has sent."

Acts 16:31. "And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your house."

b. The Seat of Religion.

Ps. 51:10. "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." Also vs. 17. "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, you will not despise."

Prov. 4:23. "Keep your heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."

Matt. 6:8. "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they will see God."

c. The Origin of Religion.

Gen. 1:27. "And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him."

Deut. 4:13. "And He declared to you His covenant, which He commanded you to perform, even the ten commandments."

Ezek. 36:26. "A new heart I will also give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh."

For Further Study of Scripture.

a. What elements of true religion are indicated in the following passages:

Deut. 10:12; “And now, Israel, what does Jehovah your God require of you, but to fear Jehovah your God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve Jehovah your God with all your heart and with all your soul,” (Deut. 10:12)

Eccl. 12:13; “[This is] the end of the matter; all has been heard: fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole [duty] of man.” (Ecclesiastes 12:13)

Hos. 6:6; “For I desire goodness, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt-offerings.” (Hosea 6:6)

Micah 6:8; “He has showed you, O man, what is good; and what does Jehovah require of you, but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” (Micah 6:8)

Mark 12:33; “and to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbor as himself, is much more than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices.” (Mark 12:33)

John 3:36; 6:29; “The one who believes on the Son has eternal life; but the one who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.” (John 3:36) Jesus answered and said to them, “This is the work of God, that you believe on the one whom he has sent.” (John 6:29)

Acts 6:3; “Look out therefore, brethren, for seven men of good report from among you, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.” (Acts 6:3)

Rom. 12:1; “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, [which is] your spiritual service.” (Rom. 12:1); “Love works no ill to his neighbor: love therefore is the fulfillment of the law.” (Rom. 13:10)

Jas. 1:27. “Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, [and] to keep oneself unspotted from the world.” (James 1:27)

b. What forms of false religion are indicated in the following passages:

Ps. 78:35, 36; “35 And they remembered that God was their rock, And the Most High God their redeemer. 36 But they flattered him with their mouth, And lied to him with their tongue.” (Ps. 78:35-36)

Isa. 1:11-17; “11 What to me is the multitude of your sacrifices? says Jehovah: I have had enough of the burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I do not delight in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats. 12 When you come to appear before me, who has required this at your hand, to trample my courts? 13 Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination to me; new moon and Sabbath, the calling of assemblies,-- I cannot endure iniquity and the solemn meeting. 14 My soul hates your new moons and your appointed feasts; they are a trouble to me; I am weary of bearing them. 15 And when you spread forth your hands, I will hide my eyes from you; indeed, when you make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood. 16 Wash, make yourself clean; put away the evil of your doings from before my eyes; cease to do evil; 17 learn to do well; seek justice, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.” (Isaiah 1:11-17)

58:1-5; “1 Cry aloud, spare not, lift up your voice like a trumpet, and declare to my people their transgression, and to the house of Jacob their sins. 2 Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways: as a nation that did righteousness, and did not forsake the ordinance of their God, they ask righteous judgments of me; they delight to draw near to God. 3 Why have we fasted, [they say], and you do not see?

[Why] have we afflicted our soul, and you take no notice? Behold, in the day of your fast you find [your own] pleasure, and exact all your labors. 4 Behold, you fast for strife and contention, and to strike with the fist of wickedness: you do not fast this day so as to make your voice to be heard on high. 5 Is such the fast that I have chosen? the day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head like a rush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? will you call this a fast, and an acceptable day to Jehovah?" (Isaiah 58:1-5)

Ezek. 33:31, 32; "31 And they come to you as the people comes, and they sit before you as my people, and they hear your words, but do not do them; for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goes after their gain. 32 And, lo, you are to them like a very lovely song of someone who has a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument; for they hear your words, but they do not do them." (Ezekiel 33:31-32)

Matt. 6:2, 5; "When therefore you do alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may have the glory of men. Truly I say to you, They have received their reward. (Mat. 6:2) And when you pray, you will not be as the hypocrites: for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, so that they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you, They have received their reward." (Mat. 6:5)

7:21, 26, 27; "Not every one who says to me, Lord, Lord, will enter into the kingdom of heaven; but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. (Mat. 7:21) 26 And every one who hears these words of mine, and does not do them, will be likened to a foolish man, who built his house on the sand: 27 and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and struck on that house; and it fell: and great was its fall." (Mat. 7:26-27)

23:14; "[Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you devour widows' houses, even while for a pretence you make long prayers: therefore you will receive greater condemnation.]" (Mat. 23:14)

Luke 6:2; "But certain of the Pharisees said, Why do you do what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath day?" (Luke 6:2)

13:14; "And the ruler of the synagogue, being moved with indignation because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, answered and said to the multitude, There are six days in which men ought to work: therefore come and be healed on those [days], and not on the day of the Sabbath." (Luke 13:14)

Gal. 4:10; "you observe days, and months, and seasons, and years." (Galatians 4:10)

Col. 2:20; "If you died with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, do you subject yourselves to ordinances," (Col. 2:20)

2Tim. 3:5; "holding a form of godliness, but having denied its power. Turn away from these also." (2Tim. 3:5)

Tit. 1:16; "They profess that they know God; but by their works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and to every good work [they are] reprobate." (Titus 1:16)

Jas. 2:15, 16; "15 If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, Go in peace, be warmed and filled; and yet you do not give them the things needed for the body; what does it profit?" (James 2:15-16)

3:10. "out of the same mouth comes forth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so." (James 3:10)

c. Name six instances of true religion.

Gen. 4:4-8; "4 And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat. And Jehovah had respect for Abel and his offering: 5 but he did not have respect for Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell. 6 And Jehovah said to Cain, Why are you angry? and why is your

countenance fallen? 7 If you do well, will it not be lifted up? and if you do not do well, sin crouches at the door: and you will be its desire, but you must rule over it. 8 And Cain told Abel his brother. And it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him." (Gen 4:4-8)

12:1-8; "1 Now Jehovah said to Abram, Get you out of your country, and from your kindred, and from your father's house, to the land that I will show you: 2 and I will make a great nation of you, and I will bless you, and make your name great; and you will be a blessing; 3 and I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse the one who curses you: and all the families of the earth will be blessed in you. 4 So Abram went, as Jehovah had spoken to him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy five years old when he departed out of Haran. 5 And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came. 6 And Abram passed through the land to the place of Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land. 7 And Jehovah appeared to Abram, and said, I will give this land to your seed: and there he built an altar to Jehovah, who appeared to him. 8 And he removed from there to the mountain on the East of Beth-el, and pitched his tent, having Beth-el on the West, and Ai on the East: and there he built an altar to Jehovah, and called on the name of Jehovah." (Gen. 12:1-8)

15:17; "And it came to pass that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold, a smoking furnace, and a flaming torch passed between these pieces." (Gen. 15:17)

18:22-33; Ex. 3:2-22;

Deut. 32:33; "Their wine is the poison of serpents, And the cruel venom of asps." (Deut. 32:33)

2Kings 18:3-7; 19:14-19; Dan. 6:4-22; Luke 2:25-35; 2:36, 37; "36 And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher (she was of great age, having lived with a husband seven years from her virginity, 37 and she had been a widow eighty four years), who did not depart from the temple, worshipping with fastings and supplications night and day." (Luke 2:36-37)

7:1-10;

2Tim. 1:5. "having been reminded of the unfeigned faith that is in you; which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois, and your mother Eunice; and, I am persuaded, in you also." (2Tim. 1:5)

Questions for Review

1. Is religion limited to certain tribes and nations?
2. How can we learn to know the real nature of true religion?
3. What terms are used in the Old and New Testament to describe religion?
4. How would you define religion?
5. What mistaken notions are there as to the seat of religion in man?
6. What is the center of the religious life according to Scripture?
7. What different explanations have been given of the origin of religion?
8. What is the only satisfactory explanation?

Chapter 2: Rev.

1. Rev. in General.

The discussion of religion naturally leads on to that of revelation as its origin. If God had not revealed Himself, religion would have been impossible. Man could not possibly have had any knowledge of God, if God had not made Himself known. Left to himself, he would never have discovered God. We distinguish between God's revelation in nature and His revelation in Scripture.

Atheists and Agnostics, of course, do not believe in revelation. Pantheists sometimes speak of it, though there is really no place for it in their system of thought. And Deists admit the revelation of God in nature, but deny the necessity, the reality, and even the possibility of any special revelation such as we have in Scripture. We believe in both general and special revelation.

2. General Rev..

The general revelation of God is prior to His special revelation in point of time. It does not come to man in the form of verbal communications, but in the facts, the forces, and the laws of nature, in the constitution and operation of the human mind, and in the facts of experience and history. The Bible refers to it in such passages as Ps. 19:1, 2; Rom. 1:19, 20; 2:14, 15.

“1 The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows his handiwork. 2 Day to day it utters speech, And night to night it shows knowledge. (Ps. 19:1-2) 19 because what is known of God is manifest in them; for God manifested it to them. 20 For the invisible things of him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, [even] his everlasting power and divinity; so that they may be without excuse: (Rom. 1:19-20) 14 (for when Gentiles who do not have the law do by nature the things of the law, those not having the law, are the law to themselves; 15 in that they show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness with it, and their thoughts one with another accusing or else excusing [them]); (Rom. 2:14-15)”

a. Insufficiency of general revelation.

While Pelagians, Rationalists, and Deists regard this revelation as adequate for our present needs, Roman Catholics and Protestants are agreed that it is not “12” sufficient. It was obscured by the blight of sin resting on God's beautiful creation. The handwriting of the Creator was not entirely erased, but became hazy and indistinct. It does not now convey any fully reliable knowledge of God and spiritual things, and therefore does not furnish us a trustworthy foundation on which we can build for our eternal future. The present religious confusion of those who would base their religion on a purely natural basis clearly proves its insufficiency. It does not even afford an adequate basis for religion in general, much less for true religion. Even gentile nations appeal to some supposed special revelation. And, finally, it utterly fails to meet the spiritual needs of sinners. While it conveys some knowledge of the goodness, the wisdom, and the power of God, it conveys no knowledge whatever of Christ as the only way of salvation.

b. Value of general revelation.

This does not mean, however, that general revelation has no value at all. It accounts for the true elements that are still found in heathen religions. Due to this revelation gentiles feel themselves to be the offspring of God, Acts 17:28, seek after God if by chance they might find Him, Acts 17:27, see in nature God's everlasting power and divinity, Rom. 1:19, 20, and do by nature the things of the law, Rom. 2:14. Though they live in the darkness of sin and ignorance, and pervert the truth of God, they still share in the illumination of the Word, John 1:9, and in the general operations of the Holy Spirit, Gen. 6:3. Moreover, the general revelation of God also forms the background for His special revelation. The latter could not be fully understood without the former. Science and history do not fail to illumine the pages of the Bible.

“that they should seek God, if by chance they might feel after him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us: (Acts 17:27)

19 because what is known of God is manifest in them; for God manifested it to them. 20 For the invisible things of him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, [even] his everlasting power and divinity; so that they may be without excuse: (Rom. 1:19-20)

(for when Gentiles who do not have the law do by nature the things of the law, those not having the law, are the law to themselves; (Rom. 2:14)

There was the true light, [even the light] which lights every man, coming into the world. (John 1:9)

And Jehovah said, My spirit will not strive with man for ever, for he is flesh: yet his days will be a hundred and twenty years. (Gen. 6:3)”

3. Special Rev..

In addition to the revelation of God in nature we have His special revelation which is now embodied in Scripture. The Bible is preeminently the book of God's special revelation, a revelation in which facts and words go hand in hand, the words interpreting the facts and the facts giving substance to the words. “13”

a. Necessity of special revelation.

This special revelation became necessary through the entrance of sin into the world. God's handwriting in nature was obscured and corrupted, and man was stricken with spiritual blindness, became subject to error and unbelief, and now in his blindness and perverseness fails to read aright even the remaining traces of the original revelation, and is unable to understand any further revelation of God. Therefore it became necessary that God should re-interpret the truths of nature, should provide a new revelation of redemption, and should illumine the mind of man and redeem it from the power of error.

b. Means of special revelation.

In giving His special or supernatural revelation God used different kinds of means, such as

(1) Theophanies or visible manifestations of God.

He revealed His presence in fire and clouds of smoke, Ex. 3:2; 33:9; Ps. 78:14; 99:7; in stormy winds, Job 38:1; Ps.18:10-16, and in a “still small voice,” I Kings 19:12. These were all tokens

of His presence, revealing something of His glory. Among the Old Testament appearances those of the Angel of Jehovah, the second Person of the Trinity, occupied a prominent place, Gen. 16:13; 31:11; Ex. 23:20-23; Mal. 3:1. The highest point of the personal appearance of God among men was reached in the incarnation of Jesus Christ. In Him the Word became flesh and tabernacle among us, John 1:14.

(2) Direct communications.

Sometimes God spoke to men in an audible voice, as He did to Moses and the children of Israel, Deut. 5:4, and sometimes He suggested His messages to the prophets by an internal operation of the Holy Spirit, 1Pet. 1:11. Moreover, He revealed Himself in dreams and visions, and by means of Urim and Thummim, Num. 12:6; 27:21; Isa. 6. And in the New Testament Christ appears as the great Teacher sent from God to reveal the Father's will; and through His Spirit the apostles become the organs of further revelations, John 14:26; 1Cor. 2:12, 13; 1Thess. 2:13.

(3) Miracles.

The miracles of the Bible should never be regarded as mere marvels which fill men with amazement, but as essential parts of God's special revelation. They are manifestations of the special power of God, "14" tokens of His special presence, and often serve to symbolize spiritual truths. They are signs of the coming Kingdom of God and of the redemptive power of God. The greatest miracle of all is the coming of the Son of God in the flesh. In Him the whole creation of God is being restored and brought back to its original beauty, 1Tim. 3:16; Rev. 21:5.

c. The character of special revelation.

This special revelation of God is a revelation of redemption. It reveals the plan of God for the redemption of sinners and of the world, and the way in which this plan is realized. It is instrumental in renewing man; it illuminates his mind and inclines his will to what is good; it fills him with holy affections, and prepares him for his heavenly home. Not only does it bring us a message of redemption; it also acquaints us with redemptive facts. It not only enriches us with knowledge, but also transforms lives by changing sinners into saints. This revelation is clearly progressive. The great truths of redemption appear but dimly at first, but gradually increase in clearness, and finally stand out in the New Testament in all their fullness and beauty.

To memorize. Scripture passages bearing on:

a. General Rev.:

Ps. 8:1. "O Jehovah, our Lord, how excellent is your name in all the earth."

Ps. 19:1, 2. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork. Day to day it utters speech, and night to night it shows wisdom."

Rom. 1:20. "For the invisible things of Him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even His everlasting power and divinity."

Rom. 2:14, 15. "For when Gentiles who do not have the law do by nature the things of the law, those not having the law, are a law to themselves; in that they show the work of the law written in their hearts, their consciences bearing witness with it, and their thoughts one with another accusing or else excusing them."

b. Special Rev.:

Num. 12:6-8. “And He said, Hear now my words: if there is a prophet among you, I Jehovah will make myself known to him in a vision, I will speak with him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so; he is faithful in all my house: with him I will speak mouth to mouth.”

Heb. 1:1. “God having of old time spoken to the fathers in the prophets by diverse portions and in diverse ways, has in the end of these days spoken to us in His Son.”

2Pet. 1:21. “For no prophecy ever came by the will of man: but men spoke from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit.”

For Further Study:

a. Mention some of the appearances of the Angel of Jehovah. Can he have been a mere angel?

Gen. 16:13; “And she called the name of Jehovah who spoke to her, you are a God that sees: for she said, Have I even here looked after the one who sees me? (Gen. 16:13)”

31:11, 13; “11 And the angel of God said to me in the dream, Jacob: and I said, Here I am. ... 13 I am the God of Beth-el, where you anointed a pillar, where you vowed a vow to me: now arise, get out from this land, and return to the land of your nativity. (Gen. 31)”

32:28; “And he said, your name will no more be called Jacob, but Israel: for you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed. (Gen. 32:28)”

Ex. 23:20-23. “20 Behold, I send an angel before you, to keep you by the way, and to bring you into the place which I have prepared. 21 Take heed before him, and listen to his voice; do not provoke him; for he will not pardon your transgression: for my name is in him. 22 But if you will indeed listen to his voice, and do all that I speak; then I will be an enemy to your enemies, and an adversary to your adversaries. 23 For my angel will go before you, and bring you into the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Canaanite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite: and I will cut them off. (Exodus 23:20-23)”

b. Name some examples of revelation by dreams.

Gen. 28:10-17; 31:24; “And God came to Laban the Syrian in a dream of the night, and said to him, Take heed to yourself that you do not speak to Jacob either good or bad. (Gen. 31:24)”

41:2-7;

Judg. 7:13; “And when Gideon had come, behold, there was a man telling a dream to his companion; and he said, Behold, I dreamed a dream; and, lo, a cake of barley bread tumbled into the camp of Midian, and came to the tent, and struck it so that it fell, and turned it upside down, so that the tent lay flat. (Judges 7:13)”

I Kings 3:5-9; Dan. 2:1-3; “1 And in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams; and his spirit was troubled, and his sleep left him. 2 Then the king commanded to call the magicians, and the enchanters, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, to tell the king his dreams. So they came in and stood before the king. 3 And the king said to them, I have dreamed a dream, and my spirit is troubled to know the dream. (Daniel 2)

Matt. 2:13, 19, 20. “13 Now when they were departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appears to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be there until I tell you: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. ...19 But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appears in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, 20 Arise and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead that sought the young child's life. (Mat. 2:13,19-20)

c. Mention some cases in which God revealed Himself in visions.

Isa. 6; Ezek. 1-3; Dan. 2:19; “Then the secret was revealed to Daniel in a vision of the night. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven. (Daniel 2:19)”

7:1-14; Zech. 2-6.

d. Can you infer from the following passages what the miracles recorded reveal?

Ex. 10:1, 2; “1 And Jehovah said to Moses, Go into Pharaoh: for I have hardened his heart, and the heart of his servants, so that I may show these my signs in the midst of them, 2 and so that you may tell in the ears of your son, and of your son’s son, what things I have worked on Egypt, and my signs which I have done among them; so that you may know that I am Jehovah. (Exodus 10:1-2)

Deut. 8:3; “And he humbled you, and allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know; that he might make you know that man does not live by bread only, but by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of Jehovah. (Deut. 8:3)”

John 2:1-11; 6:1- 14, 25-35; 9:1-7; 11:17-44.

Questions for Review

1. How do general and special revelation differ?
2. Where do we meet with the denial of all revelation of God?
3. What is the position of the Deists as to revelation?
4. What is the nature of general revelation?
5. Why is it insufficient for our special needs, and what value does it have?
6. Why was God’s special revelation necessary?
7. What means did God employ in His special revelations?
8. What are the characteristics of special revelation?

Chapter 3: Scripture

1. Rev. and Scripture.

The term ‘special revelation’ may be used in more than one sense. It may denote the direct self-communications of God in verbal messages and in miraculous facts. The prophets and the apostles often received messages from God long before they committed them to writing. These are now contained in Scripture, but do not constitute the whole of the Bible. There is much in it that was not revealed in a supernatural way, but is the result of study and of previous reflection. However, the term may also be used to denote the Bible as a whole, that whole complex of redemptive truths and facts, with the proper historical setting, that is found in Scripture and has the divine guarantee of its truth in the fact that it is infallibly inspired by the Holy Spirit. In view of this fact it may be said that the whole Bible, and the Bible only, is for us God’s special revelation. It is in the Bible that God’s special revelation lives on and brings even now life, light, and holiness.

2. Scripture Proof for the Inspiration of Scripture.

The whole Bible is given by inspiration of God, and is as such the infallible rule of faith and practice for all mankind. Since the doctrine of inspiration is often denied, it calls for special consideration.

This doctrine, like every other, is based on Scripture, and is not an invention of man. While it is founded on a great number of passages, only a few of these can be indicated here. The Old Testament writers are repeatedly instructed to write what the Lord commands them,

Ex.17:14; “And Jehovah said to Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua: that I will utterly blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. (Exodus 17:14)”

34:27; “And Jehovah said to Moses, Write these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel. (Exodus 34:27)”

Num. 33:2; “And Moses wrote their goings out according to their journeys by the commandment of Jehovah: and these are their journeys according to their goings out. (Numbers 33:2)”

Isa. 8:1; “And Jehovah said to me, Take a great tablet, and write on it with the pen of a man, For Maher-shalal-hash-baz; (Isaiah 8:1)”

30:8; “Now go, write it before them on a tablet, and inscribe it in a book, so that it may be for the time to come for ever and ever. (Isaiah 30:8)”

Jer. 25:13; “And I will bring on that land all my words which I have pronounced against it, even all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah has prophesied against all the nations. (Jeremiah 25:13)”

30:2; “Thus speaks Jehovah, the God of Israel, saying, Write all the words that I have spoken to you in a book. (Jeremiah 30:2)”

Ezek. 24:1; “Again, in the ninth year, in the tenth month, in the tenth [day] of the month, the word of Jehovah came to me, saying, (Ezekiel 24:1)”

Dan. 12:4; “But you, O Daniel, close the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many will run to and fro, and knowledge will be increased. (Daniel 12:4)”

Hab. 2:2. "And Jehovah answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain on tablets, so that the one who reads it may run. (Habakkuk 2:2)"

The prophets were conscious of bringing the word of the Lord, and therefore introduced their messages with some such formula as, "Thus says the Lord," or, "The word of the Lord came to me,"

Jer. 36:27, 32; 27 Then the word of Jehovah came to Jeremiah, after that the king had burned the roll, and the words which Baruch wrote at the mouth of Jeremiah, saying, ... 32 Then took Jeremiah another roll, and gave it to Baruch the scribe, the son of Neriah, who wrote in it from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the book which Jehoiakim king of Judah had burned in the fire; and there were added besides those many similar words. (Jeremiah 36:27,32)

Ezek., chapters 26, 27, 31, 32, 39.

Paul speaks of his words as Spirit-taught words, 1Cor. 2:13, claims that Christ is speaking in him, 2Cor. 13:3, and describes his message to the Thessalonians as the word of God, 1Thess. 2:13.

"Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches, but which the Spirit teaches; combining spiritual things with spiritual [words]. (1Co. 2:13)

seeing that you seek a proof of Christ that speaks in me; who is not weak toward you, but is powerful in you: (2Co. 13:3)

And for this cause we also thank God without ceasing, that, when you received from us the word of the message, [even the word] of God, you accepted [it] not [as] the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God, which also works in you who believe. (1 Thessalonians 2:13) "

The Epistle to the Heb. often quotes passages of the Old Testament as words of God or of the Holy Spirit, Heb. 1:5; 3:7; 4:3; 5:6; 7:21. The most important passage to prove the inspiration of Scripture is 2Tim. 3:16, which reads as follows in the Authorized Version: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."

" For to which of the angels did he say at any time, you are my Son, This day I have begotten you? and again, I will be a Father to him, And he will be a Son to me? (Heb. 1:5)

Therefore, even as the Holy Spirit says, Today if you will hear his voice, (Heb. 3:7)

For we who have believed enter into that rest; even as he has said, As I swore in my wrath, They will not enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. (Heb. 4:3)

as he says also in another [place,] you are a priest for ever After the order of Melchizedek. (Heb. 5:6)

(for they indeed have been made priests without an oath; but he with an oath by the one who says of him, The Lord swore and will not repent himself, you are a priest for ever); (Heb. 7:21) "

3. The Nature of Inspiration.

There are especially two wrong views of inspiration, representing extremes that should be avoided.

a. Mechanical inspiration.

It has sometimes been represented as if God literally dictated what the human authors of the Bible had to write, and as if they were purely passive like a pen in the hand of a writer. This means that their minds did not contribute in any way to the contents or form of their writings. But in view of what we find this can hardly be true. They were real authors, who in some cases gathered their materials from sources at their command,

I Kings 11:41; “Now the rest of the acts of Solomon, and all that he did, and his wisdom, are they not written in the book of the acts of Solomon? (1 Kings 11:41)”

14:29; “Now the rest of the acts of Rehoboam, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? (1 Kings 14:29)”

1Chron. 29:29; “Now the acts of David the king, first and last, behold, they are written in the history of Samuel the seer, and in the history of Nathan the prophet, and in the history of Gad the seer, (1Chronicles 29:29)”

Luke 1:1-4, “1 Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to draw up a narrative concerning those matters which have been fulfilled among us, 2 even as they delivered them to us, who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word, 3 it seemed good to me also, having traced the course of all things accurately from the first, to write to you, most excellent Theophilus; 4 in order that you might know the certainty concerning the things in which you were instructed. (Luke 1:1-4)”

in other instances recorded their own experiences as, for instance, in many of the Ps., and impressed on their writings their own particular style. The style of Isaiah differs from that of Jeremiah, and the style of John is not like that of Paul.

b. Dynamic inspiration.

Others thought of the process of inspiration as affecting only the writers, and having no direct bearing on their writings. Their mental and spiritual life was strengthened and raised to a higher pitch, so that they saw things “18” more clearly and had a more profound sense of their real spiritual value. This inspiration was not limited to the time when they wrote the books of the Bible, but was a permanent characteristic of the writers and affected their writings only indirectly. It differed only in degree from the spiritual illumination of all believers. This theory certainly does not do justice to the biblical view of inspiration.

c. Organic inspiration.

The proper conception of inspiration holds that the Holy Spirit acted on the writers of the Bible in an organic way, in harmony with the laws of their own inner being, using them just as they were, with their character and temperament, their gifts and talents, their education and culture, their vocabulary and style. The Holy Spirit illumined their minds, aided their memory, prompted them to write, repressed the influence of sin on their writings, and guided them in the expression of their thoughts even to the choice of their words. In no small measure He left free scope to their own activity. They could give the results of their own investigations, write of their own experiences, and put the imprint of their own style and language on their books.

4. The Extent of Inspiration.

There are differences of opinion also respecting the extent of the inspiration of Scripture.

a. Partial inspiration.

Under the influence of Rationalism it has become quite common to deny the inspiration of the Bible altogether, or to hold that only parts of it are inspired. Some deny the inspiration of the Old Testament, while admitting that of the New. Others affirm that the moral and religious teachings of Scripture are inspired, but that its historical parts contain several chronological, archaeological, and scientific mistakes. Still others limit the inspiration to the Sermon on the Mount. They who adopt such views have already lost their Bible, for the very differences of opinion are “19” proof positive that no one can determine with any degree of certainty which parts of Scripture are, and which are not inspired. There is still another way in which the inspiration of Scripture is limited, namely, by assuming that the thoughts were inspired, while the choice of the words was left entirely to the wisdom of the human authors. But this proceeds on the very doubtful assumption that the thoughts can be separated from the words, while, as a matter of fact, accurate thought without words is impossible.

b. Plenary inspiration.

According to Scripture every part of the Bible is inspired. Jesus and the apostles frequently appeal to the Old Testament books as ‘scripture’ or ‘the Scriptures’ to settle a point in controversy. To their minds such an appeal was equivalent to an appeal to God. It should be noted that of the books to which they appeal in this fashion, some are historical. The Epistle to the Heb. repeatedly cites passages from the Old Testament as words of God or of the Holy Spirit (compare p. 16). Peter places the letters of Paul on a level with the writings of the Old Testament, 2Pet. 3:16,

“as also in all [his] epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which some things are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist, as [they] also [twist] the other scriptures, to their own destruction. (2Pet. 3:16)”

and Paul speaks of all Scripture as inspired, 2Tim. 3:16. “Every scripture inspired of God [is] also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. (2Tim. 3:16)”

We may safely go a step farther and say that the inspiration of the Bible extends to the very words employed. The Bible is verbally inspired, which is not equivalent to saying that it is mechanically inspired. The doctrine of verbal inspiration is fully warranted by Scripture. In many cases we are explicitly told that the Lord told Moses and Joshua exactly what to write,

Lev. 3 and 4; 6:1, 24; “And Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying,... And Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying, (Leviticus 6:1,24)

7:22, 28; “22 And Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying,...28 And Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying, (Leviticus 7:22,28)”

Josh. 1:1; “Now it came to pass after the death of Moses the servant of Jehovah, that Jehovah spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses’ minister, saying, (Joshua 1:1)”

4:1; “And it came to pass, when all the nation were clean passed over the Jordan, that Jehovah spoke to Joshua, saying, (Joshua 4:1)”

6:2, “And Jehovah said to Joshua, See, I have given Jericho into your hand, and its king, and the mighty men of valor. (Joshua 6:2)”

and so on. The prophets speak of Jehovah as putting His words into their mouths,

Jer. 1:9, “Then Jehovah put forth his hand, and touched my mouth; and Jehovah said to me, Behold, I have put my words in your mouth: (Jeremiah 1:9)”

and as directing them to speak His words to the people,

Ezek. 3:4, 10, 11. “4 And he said to me, Son of man, go, get to the house of Israel, and speak to them with my words. ... 10 Moreover he said to me, Son of man, receive all my words that I will speak to you in your heart, and hear [them] with your ears. 11 And go, get to those in captivity, to the children of your people, and speak to them, and tell them, Thus says the Lord Jehovah; whether they will hear, or whether they will refrain. (Ezekiel 3:4,10-11)”

Paul designates his words as Spirit taught words,

1Cor. 2:13, “These things we speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teaches, but [words] which the Spirit teaches; combining spiritual things with spiritual [words]. (1Co. 2:13)”

and both he and Jesus base an argument on a single word,

Matt. 22:43-45; “43 He says to them, How then does David in the Spirit call him Lord, saying, 44 The Lord said to my Lord, Sit on my right hand, Till I put your enemies underneath your feet? 45 If David then calls him Lord, how is he his son? (Mat. 22:43-45)

John 10:35; “If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the scripture cannot be broken), (John 10:35)”

Gal. 3:16. “Now the promises were spoken to Abraham, and to his seed. He does not say, And to seeds, as many; but as one, And to your seed, which is Christ. (Galatians 3:16)”

5. The Perfections of Scripture.

The Reformers developed the doctrine of Scripture as over against the Roman Catholics “20” and some of the Protestant sects. While Rome taught that the Bible owes its authority to the Church, they maintained that it has authority in itself as the inspired Word of God. They also upheld the necessity of Scripture as the divinely appointed means of grace over against the Roman Catholics, who asserted that the Church had no absolute need of it, and some of the Protestant sects, who exalted the “inner light,” or the word of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of the people of God, at the expense of Scripture. In opposition to Rome they further defended the clearness of the Bible. They did not deny that it contains mysteries too deep for human understanding, but simply contended that the knowledge necessary unto salvation, though not equally clear on every page of the Bible, is yet conveyed in a manner so simple that anyone earnestly seeking salvation can easily gather this knowledge for himself, and need not depend on the interpretation of the Church or the priesthood. Finally, they also defended the sufficiency of Scripture, and thereby denied the need of the tradition of the Roman Catholics and of the inner light of the Anabaptists.

To memorize.

Passages bearing on:

a. The inspiration of Scripture:

1Cor. 2:13. "These things we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches, but [words] which the Spirit teaches; combining spiritual things with spiritual words."

1Thess. 2:13. "And for this cause we also thank God without ceasing, that, when you received the word of the message from us, even the word of God, you accepted it not as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God."

2Tim. 3:16. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and *it* is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."

b. The authority of the Bible:

Isa. 8:20. "To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, surely there is no morning for them."

c. The necessity of the Bible:

2Tim. 3:15. "And that from a babe you have known the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus."

a. The clearness of Scripture:

Ps. 19:7b. "The testimony of Jehovah is sure, making wise the simple."

Ps. 119:105. "Your word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path." Also verse 130. "The opening of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple."

e. The Sufficiency of Scripture. Compare the passages under c. above.

For Further Study:

a. Do the traditions of men have authority?

Matt. 5:21-48; 15:3-6; Mark 7:7; "But in vain they worship me, Teaching [as their] doctrines the precepts of men. (Mark 7:7)"

Col. 2:8; "Take heed or there will be someone who makes spoil of you through his philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ: (Col. 2:8)"

Tit. 1:14; "not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men who turn away from the truth. (Titus 1:14)"

2Pet. 1:18. "and this voice we heard [ourselves] borne out of heaven, when we were with him in the holy mount. (2Pet. 1:18)"

b. Did the prophets themselves always fully understand what they wrote?

Dan. 8:15; "And it came to pass, when I, Daniel, had seen the vision, that I sought to understand it; and, behold, there stood before me the vision of a man. (Daniel 8:15)"

12:8; “And I heard, but I did not understand: then I said, O my lord, what will be the result of these things? (Daniel 12:8)”

Zech. 1:7--6:11; 1Pet. 1:11. “searching what [time] or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them pointed to, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that would follow them. (1Pet. 1:11)”

c. Does 2Tim. 3:16 teach us anything respecting the practical value of the inspiration of Scripture? If so, what?

“Every scripture inspired of God [is] also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. (2Tim. 3:16)”

Questions for Review

1. What is the relation between special revelation and Scripture?
2. What different meanings has the term ‘special revelation’?
3. Can we say that special revelation and Scripture are identical?
4. What Scripture proof can you give for the inspiration of the Bible?
5. What are the theories of mechanical and dynamical inspiration?
6. How would you describe the doctrine of organic inspiration?
7. What about the theory that the thoughts are inspired but not the words?
8. How would you prove that inspiration extends to every part of Scripture, and even to the very words?
9. How do Rome and the Reformers differ on the authority, the necessity, the clearness, and the sufficiency of Scripture?

PART II: THE DOCTRINE OF GOD AND CREATION

Chapter 4: The Essential Nature of God

THE BEING OF GOD

1. The Knowledge of God.

The possibility of knowing God has been denied on several grounds. But while it is true that man can never fully comprehend God, it does not follow that he can have no knowledge of Him at all. He can know Him only in part, but nevertheless with a knowledge which is real and true. This is possible because God has revealed Himself. Left to his own resources, man would never have been able to discover nor to know Him.

Our knowledge of God is twofold. Man has an inborn knowledge of God. This does not merely mean that, in virtue of his creation in the image of God, he has a natural capacity to know God. Nor does it imply that man at birth brings a certain knowledge of God with him into the world. It simply means that under normal conditions a certain knowledge of God naturally develops in man. This knowledge is, of course, of a very general nature.

But in addition to this inborn knowledge of God man also acquires knowledge of Him by learning from God's general and special revelation. This is not obtained without efforts on man's part, but is the result of his conscious and sustained pursuit of knowledge. While this knowledge is possible only because man is born with the capacity to know God, it carries him far beyond the limits of the inborn knowledge of God.

2. The Knowledge of God as Known from Special Rev..

While it is not possible to define God, it is possible to give a general description of His being. It is perhaps best to describe Him as a pure Spirit of infinite perfections. The description involves the following elements:

a. God is a pure Spirit.

The Bible contains no definition of God. The nearest approach to it is found in the words of Jesus to the Samaritan woman, "God is spirit." This means that He is essentially spirit, and that all the qualities which belong to the perfect idea of spirit are necessarily found in Him. The fact that He is pure spirit excludes the idea that He has a body of some kind and is in any way visible to the physical eye.

b. God is personal.

The fact that God is spirit also involves His personality. A spirit is an intelligent and moral being, and when we ascribe personality to God, we mean exactly that He is a reasonable Being, capable of determining the course of His life. At present many deny the personality of God and simply conceive of Him as an impersonal force or power. However, the God of the Bible is certainly a personal God, a God with whom men can converse, whom they can trust, who enters

into their experiences, who helps them in their difficulties, and who fills their hearts with joy and gladness. Moreover, He revealed Himself in a personal form in Jesus Christ.

c. God is infinitely perfect.

God is distinguished from all His creatures by infinite perfection. His being and virtues are free from all limitations and imperfections. He is not only boundless and limitless, but also stands out above all His creatures in moral perfection and in glorious majesty. The children of Israel sang of the greatness of God after they passed through the Red Sea: “Who is like to You, O Jehovah, among the gods? Who is like You, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?” Ex. 15:11. Some philosophers of the present day speak of God as “finite, developing, struggling, suffering, sharing with man his defeats and victory.”

d. God and His perfections are one.

Simplicity is one of the fundamental characteristics of God. This means that He is not composed of different parts, and also that His being and attributes are one. It may be said that God’s perfections are God Himself as He has revealed Himself to man. They are simply so many manifestations of the divine Being. Hence the Bible says that God is truth, life, light, love, righteousness, and so on.

To memorize passages proving:

a. That God can be known:

1John 5:20. “And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us an understanding, that we know the One who is true, and we are in the One who is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ.”

John 17:3. “And this is life eternal, that they should know you, the only true God, and the One whom you sent, even Jesus Christ.”

b. That God is a Spirit:

John 4:24. “God is a Spirit: and those who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.”

1Tim. 6:16. “Who alone has immortality, dwelling in light unapproachable; whom no man has seen, nor can see.”

c. That God is personal:

Mal. 2:10. “Do we not all have one father? Has not one God created us?”

John 14:9b. “One who has seen me has seen the Father; how do you say, Show us the Father?”

d. That God is infinite in perfection:

Ex. 15:11. “Who is like You, O Jehovah, among the gods? Who is like You, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?”

Ps. 147:5. “Great is our Lord, and mighty in power; His understanding is infinite.”

For Further Study:

a. Do not the following passages teach that we cannot know God?

Job 11:7; “Can you find God by searching? Can you find the Almighty perfectly? (Job 11:7)”

26:14; “Lo, these are only the outskirts of his ways: And how small a whisper do we hear of him! But who can understand the thunder of his power? (Job 26:14)”

36:26. “Behold, God is great, and we do not know him; The number of his years is unsearchable. (Job 36:26)”

b. If God is a spirit and has no body, how do you explain the following passages?

Ps. 4:6; “There are many who say, Who will show us [any] good? Jehovah, lift you up the light of your countenance on us. (Ps. 4:6)”

17:2; “Let my sentence come forth from your presence; Let your eyes look on equity. (Ps. 17:2)”

18:6, 8, 9; “6 In my distress I called on Jehovah, And cried to my God: He heard my voice out of his temple, And my cry before him came into his ears. 8 There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, And fire out of his mouth devoured: Coals were kindled by it. 9 He bowed the heavens also, and came down; And thick darkness was under his feet. (Ps. 18:6,8-9)”

31:5; “Into your hand I commend my spirit: you have redeemed me, O Jehovah, you God of truth. (Ps. 31:5)”

44:3; “For they did not get the land in possession by their own sword, Nor did their own arm save them; But your right hand, and your arm, and the light of your countenance, Because you were favorable to them. (Ps. 44:3)”

47:8; “God reigns over the nations: God sits on his holy throne. (Ps. 47:8)”

48:10, “As is your name, O God, So is your praise to the ends of the earth: your right hand is full of righteousness. (Ps. 48:10)”

and many others.

c. How do the following passages testify to the personality of God?

Gen. 1:1; “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. (Gen. 1:1)”

Deut. 1:34, 35; “34 And Jehovah heard the voice of your words, and was angry, and swore, saying, 35 Surely there not one of these men of this evil generation will see the good land, which I swore to give to your fathers, (Deut. 1:35-35)

I Kings 8:23-26; “23 and he said, O Jehovah, the God of Israel, there is no God like you, in heaven above, or on earth beneath; who keeps covenant and lovingkindness with your servants, who walk before you with all their heart; 24 who have kept with your servant David my father what you promised him: yes, you spoke with your mouth, and have fulfilled it with your hand, as it is this day. 25 Now therefore, O Jehovah, the God of Israel, keep with your servant David my father what you have promised him, saying, You will not fail to have a man in my sight sit on the throne of Israel, if only your children take heed to their way, to walk before me as you have walked before me. 26 Now therefore, O God of Israel, let your word, I pray, be verified, which you spoke to your servant David my father. (1 Kings 8:23-26)

Job 38:1; “Then Jehovah answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said, (Job 38:1)”

Ps. 21:7; “For the king trusts in Jehovah; And through the lovingkindness of the Most High he will not be moved. (Ps. 21:7)”

50:6; “And the heavens will declare his righteousness; For God is judge himself. Selah (Ps. 50:6)”

103:3-5; “3 Who forgives all your iniquities; Who heals all your diseases; 4 Who redeems your life from destruction; Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies; 5 Who satisfies your desire with good things, [So that] your youth is renewed like the eagle. (Ps. 103:3-5)”

Matt. 5:9; “Blessed are the peacemakers: for they will be called sons of God. (Mat. 5:9)”

Rom. 12:1. “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, [which is] your spiritual service. (Rom. 12:1)”

Questions for Review

1. In what sense is God knowable and in what sense unknowable?
2. What is the difference between inborn and acquired knowledge of God?
3. Is it possible to define God? How would you describe Him?
4. What is involved in God’s spirituality?
5. What do we mean when we speak of God as a personality?
6. What proof have WE for the personality of God?
7. What do we mean when we speak of the infinity of God?
8. How are the being of God and His perfections related?

Chapter 5: The Names of God

When God gives names to persons or things, they are names which have meaning and give an insight into the nature of the persons or things designated. This also applies to the names which God has given Himself. Sometimes the Bible speaks of the name of God in the singular, and in such cases the term is a designation of the manifestation of God in general, especially in relation to His people, Ex. 20:7;

“you will not take the name of Jehovah your God in vain; for Jehovah will not hold him guiltless that takes his name in vain. (Exodus 20:7)”

Ps. 113:3; “From the rising of the sun to its going down Jehovah’s name is to be praised. (Ps. 113:3)”

or simply stands for God Himself,

Prov. 18:10; “The name of Jehovah is a strong tower; The righteous runs into it, and is safe. (Prov. 18:10)”

Isa. 50:10. “Who among you fears Jehovah, who obeys the voice of his servant? One who walks in darkness, and has no light, let him trust in the name of Jehovah, and rely on his God. (Isaiah 50:10)”

The one general name of God is split up into several special names, which are expressive of His many-sided being. These names are not of human invention, but are given by God Himself.

1. The Old Testament Names of God.

Some of the Old Testament names denote that God is the High and Exalted One. ‘El and ‘Elohim indicate that He is strong and mighty and should therefore be feared, while ‘Elyon points to His exalted nature as the Most High, the object of reverence and worship. Another name belonging to this class is ‘Adonai , usually rendered “Lord,” the Possessor and Ruler of all men. Other names express the fact that God enters into relations of friendship with His creatures. One of these, common among the patriarchs, was the name Shaddai or ‘El-Shaddai , which indeed stresses the divine greatness, but as a source of comfort and blessing for His people. It indicates that God controls the powers of nature, and makes them serve His purposes. The greatest name of God, however, always held sacred by the Jews, is the name Jehovah (Yahweh). Its origin and meaning is indicated in Ex. 3:14, 15. It expresses the fact that God is always the same, and especially that He is unchangeable in His covenant relationship, and is always faithful in the fulfillment of His promises. It frequently assumes a fuller form in “Jehovah of Hosts.” This calls up the picture of Jehovah as the King of Glory surrounded by angelic hosts.

2. The New Testament Names of God.

The New Testament names are simply the Greek forms of those found in the Old Testament. The following deserve particular attention:

a. The name Theos.

This is simply the word for ‘God,’ and is the most common name employed in the New Testament. It is frequently found with a possessive genitive as ‘my God,’ ‘thy God,’ ‘our God,’ ‘your God.’ In Christ God is the God of each one of His children. The individual form takes the place of the national form, ‘the God of Israel,’ so common in the Old Testament.

b. The name Kurios.

This is the word for ‘Lord,’ a name that is applied not only to God but also to Christ. It takes the place of both ‘Adonai and Jehovah, though its meaning corresponds more particularly with that of ‘Adonai. It designates God as the Possessor and Ruler of all things, and especially of His people.

c. The name Pater.

It is often said that the New Testament introduced this as a new name. But this is hardly correct, for the name ‘Father’ is also found in the Old Testament to express the special relation in which God stands to Israel, Deut. 32:6;

“Do you thus requite Jehovah, O foolish people and unwise? Is it not your father who has bought you? He has made you, and established you. (Deut. 32:6)”

Isa. 63:16. “For you are our Father, though Abraham does not know us, and Israel does not acknowledge us: you, O Jehovah, are our Father; our Redeemer from everlasting is your name. (Isaiah 63:16)”

In the New Testament it is more individual in that it points to God as the Father of all believers. Sometimes it designates God as the creator of all, 1Cor. 8:6;

“yet to us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we to him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and we through him. (1Co. 8:6)”

Eph. 3:14; “For this cause I bow my knees to the Father, (Eph. 3:14)”

Heb. 12:9; “Furthermore, we had the fathers of our flesh to chasten us, and we gave them reverence: will we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits, and live? (Heb. 12:9)”

Jas. 1:17, “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there can be no variation, nor shadow that is cast by turning. (James 1:17)”

and sometimes the first Person of the Trinity as the Father of Christ,

John 14:11; “Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works’ sake. (John 14:11)”

17:1. “These things Jesus spoke; and lifting up his eyes to heaven, he said, Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son, so that the son may glorify you: (John 17:1)”

To memorize. Passages bearing on:

a. The name of God in general:

Ex. 20:7. “you will not take the name of Jehovah your God in vain; for Jehovah will not hold one guiltless who takes His name in vain.”

Ps. 8:1. “O Jehovah, our Lord, how excellent is your name in all the earth!”

b. Particular names:

Gen. 1:1. “In the beginning God (‘Elohim) created the heavens and the earth.”

Ex. 6:3. "And I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as God Almighty ('El Shaddai); but I was not known to them by my name Jehovah."

Ps. 86:8. "There is none like You among the gods, O Lord ('Adonai); nor are there any works like your works."

Mal. 3:6. "For I, Jehovah, do not change; therefore you, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed."

Matt. 6:9. "Our Father who are in Heaven, Hallowed be your name."

Rev. 4:8. "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord (Kurios) God, the Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come."

For Further Study:

a. What light does Ex. 3:13-16 shed on the meaning of the name Jehovah?

"13 And Moses said to God, Behold, when I come to the children of Israel, and say to them, The God of your fathers has sent me to you; and they say to me, What is his name? What will I say to them? 14 And God said to Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus will you say to the children of Israel, I AM has sent me to you. 15 And moreover God said to Moses, Thus will you say to the children of Israel, Jehovah, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you: this is my name forever, and this is my memorial to all generations. 16 Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say to them, Jehovah, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, has appeared to me, saying, I have surely visited you, and [seen] what has been done to you in Egypt: (Exodus 3:13-16)"

b. What name of God was rather common in the times of the patriarchs? Gen. 17:1;

"And when Abram was ninety nine years old, Jehovah appeared to Abram, and said to him, I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be perfect. (Gen. 17:1)"

28:3; "And God Almighty bless you, and make you fruitful, and multiply you, so that you may be a company of peoples. (Gen. 28:3)"

35:11; "And God said to him, I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; you will become a nation and a company of nations, and kings will come out of your loins; (Gen. 35:11)"

43:14; "and God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may release to you your other brother and Benjamin. And if I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved. (Gen. 43:14)"

48:3; "And Jacob said to Joseph, God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and blessed me, (Gen. 48:3)"

49:25; "Even by the God of your father, who will help you, And by the Almighty, who will bless you, With blessings of heaven above, Blessings of the deep that crouches beneath, Blessings of the breasts, and of the womb. (Gen. 49:25)"

Ex. 6:3. "and I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as God Almighty; but I was not known to them by my name Jehovah. (Exodus 6:3)"

c. Can you give some descriptive names of God?

Isa. 43:3, 15; “3 For I am Jehovah your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior; I have given Egypt as your ransom, Ethiopia and Seba in your stead. ... 15 I am Jehovah, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King. (Isaiah 43:15)

44:6; “Thus says Jehovah, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, Jehovah of hosts: I am the first, and I am the last; and besides me there is no God. (Isaiah 44:6)”

Amos 4:13; “For, lo, the one who forms the mountains, and creates the wind, and declares to man what is his thought; that makes the morning darkness, and treads on the high places of the Earth -- his name is Jehovah, the God of hosts. (Amos 4:13)”

Luke 1:78; “Because of the tender mercy of our God, by which the dayspring from on high will visit us, (Luke 1:78)”

2Cor. 1:3; “Blessed [be] the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort; (2Co. 1:3)”

11:31; “The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, he who is blessed for evermore knows that I do not lie. (2Co. 11:31)”

Jas. 1:17; “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there can be no variation, nor shadow that is cast by turning. (James 1:17)”

Heb. 12:9; “Furthermore, we had the fathers of our flesh to chasten us, and we gave them reverence: will we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits, and live? (Heb. 12:9)”

Rev. 1:8, 17. “8 I am the Alpha and the Omega, says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty. ...17 And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as one dead. And he laid his right hand on me, saying, Fear not; I am the first and the last, (Rev. 1:8,17)

Questions for Review

1. What does Scripture mean when it speaks of the name of God in the singular?
2. Are the special names of God of human origin?
3. What two kinds of names do we distinguish in the Old Testament?
4. What is the meaning of the names ‘Elohim, Jehovah, ‘Adonai, ‘El Shaddai, and Kurios?
5. Is the name Father ever applied to God in the Old Testament?
6. In what different senses is this name used in the New Testaments?

Chapter 6: The Attributes of God

God reveals Himself not only in His names, but also in His attributes, that is, in the perfections of the divine Being. It is customary to distinguish between incommunicable and communicable attributes. Of the former there are no traces in the creature; of the latter there are.

1. The Incommunicable Attributes.

These emphasize the absolute distinction between God and the creature, and include the following:

a. The independence or self-existence of God.

This means that God has the ground of His existence in Himself, and unlike man, does not depend on anything outside of Himself. He is independent in His Being, in His virtues and actions, and causes all His creatures to depend on Him. The idea is embodied in the name Jehovah and finds expression in the following passages,

Ps. 33:11; “The counsel of Jehovah stands fast for ever, The thoughts of his heart to all generations. (Ps. 33:11)”

115:3; “But our God is in the heavens: He has done whatever he pleased. (Ps. 115:3)”

Isa. 40:18 ff.;

Dan. 4:35; “And all the inhabitants of the earth are considered nothing; and he does according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say to him, What are you doing? (Daniel 4:35)”

John 5:26; “For as the Father has life in himself, even so he gave the Son to have life in Himself: (John 5:26)”

Rom. 11:33-36; “33 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past tracing out! 34 For who has known the mind of the Lord? or who has been his counselor? 35 or who has first given to him, so it will be repaid to him again? 36 For all things are of him, and through him, and for him. To him [be] the glory for ever. Amen. (Rom. 11:33-36)”

Acts 17:25; “nor is he served by men’s hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he himself gives to all life, and breath, and all things; (Acts 17:25)”

Rev. 4:11. “You are worthy, our Lord and our God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power: for you created all things, and because of your will they existed, and were created. (Rev. 4:11)”

b. The immutability of God.

Scripture teaches that God is unchangeable. He is forever the same in His divine Being and perfections, and also in His purposes and promises,

Num. 23:19; “God is not a man, that he should lie, Nor the son of man, that he should repent: has he said, and not done it? Or has he spoken, and not make it good? (Numbers 23:19)”

Ps 33:11; “The counsel of Jehovah stands fast for ever, The thoughts of his heart to all generations. (Ps. 33:11)”

102:27; “But you are the same, And your years will have no end. (Ps. 102:27)”

Mal. 3:6; “For I, Jehovah, do not change; therefore you, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed. (Malachi 3:6)”

Heb. 6:17; “Thus God, being minded to show more abundantly to the heirs of the promise the immutability of his counsel, interposed with an oath; (Heb. 6:17)”

Jas. 1:17. “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there can be no variation, nor shadow that is cast by turning. (James 1:17)”

This does not mean, however, that there is no movement in God. The Bible speaks of Him as coming and going, hiding and revealing Himself. He is also said to repent, but this is evidently only a human way of speaking of God,

Ex. 32:14; “And Jehovah repented of the evil which he said he would do to his people. (Exodus 32:14)”

Jonah 3:10, “And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil which he said he would do to them; and he did not do it. (Jonah 3:10)”

and really indicates a change in man’s relation to God.

c. The infinity of God.

This means that God is not subject to limitations. We can speak of His infinity in more than one sense. Viewed in relation to His being, it may be called His absolute perfection. He is unlimited in His knowledge and wisdom, in His goodness and love, in His righteousness and holiness,

Job 11:7-10; “7 Can you find God by searching? Can you find the Almighty perfectly? 8 It is high as heaven; what can you do? Deeper than Sheol; What can you know? 9 The measure of it is longer than the earth, And broader than the sea. 10 If he passes through, and imprisons, And calls to judgment, then who can hinder him? (Job 11)”

Ps. 145:3. “Great is Jehovah, and greatly to be praised; And his greatness is unsearchable. (Ps. 145:3)”

Seen in relation to time, it is called His eternity. While this is usually represented in Scripture as endless duration,

Ps. 90:2; “Before the mountains were brought forth, Or you had ever formed the earth and the world, Even from everlasting to everlasting, you are God. (Ps. 90:2)”

102:12, “But you, O Jehovah, will abide for ever; And your memorial [name] to all generations. (Ps. 102:12)”

it really means that He is above time and therefore not subject to its limitations. For Him there is only an eternal present, and no past or future. Viewed with reference to space, it is called His immensity. He is everywhere present, dwells in all His creatures, filling every point of space, but is in no way bounded by space,

I Kings 8:27; “But will God in very deed dwell on the earth? behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain you; how much less this house that I have built! (1 Kings 8:27)”

Ps. 139:7-10; “7 Where will I go from your Spirit? Or where will I flee from your presence? 8 If I ascend up into heaven, you are there: If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, you are there. 9 If I take the wings of the morning, And dwell in the furthest parts of the sea; 10 Even there your hand will lead me, And your right hand will hold me. (Ps. 139:7-10)

Isa. 66:1; “Thus says Jehovah, Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: what manner of house will you build for me? and what place will be my rest? (Isaiah 66:1)”

Jer. 23:23, 24; “23 Am I a God at hand, says Jehovah, and not a God afar off? 24 Can anyone hide himself in secret places so that I will not see him? says Jehovah. Do I not fill heaven and earth? says Jehovah. (Jeremiah 23:23-24)

Acts 17:27, 28. “27 that they should seek God, if by chance they might feel after 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 even certain of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. (Acts 17:27-28)

d. The simplicity of God.

By ascribing simplicity to God we mean that He is not composed of various parts, such as the body and soul in man, and for that very reason is not subject to division. The three persons in the Godhead are not so many parts of which the divine essence is composed. The whole being of God belongs to each one of the Persons. Hence we can also say that God and His attributes are one, and that He is life, light, love, righteousness, truth, and so on.

2. The Communicable Attributes.

These are the attributes of which we find some resemblance in man. It should be borne in mind, however, that what we see in man is only a finite (limited) and imperfect likeness of what is infinite (unlimited) and perfect in God. Here we have:

a. The knowledge of God.

This is that perfection of God by which He, in a manner all His own, knows Himself and all things possible and actual. God has this knowledge in Himself, and does not obtain it from without. It is always complete and always present in His mind. And because it is all-comprehensive, it is called omniscience. He knows all things, past, present and future, and not only the things that have real existence, but also those which are merely possible.

I Kings 8:29; “that your eyes may be open toward this house night and day, even toward the place of which you have said, My name will be there; to listen to the prayer which your servant will pray toward this place. (1 Kings 8:29)”

Ps. 139:1-16;

Isa. 46:10; “declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not [yet] done; saying, My counsel will stand, and I will do all my pleasure; (Isaiah 46:10)”

Ezek. 11:5; “And the Spirit of Jehovah fell on me, and he said to me, Speak, Thus says Jehovah: Thus you have said, O house of Israel; for I know the things that come into your mind. (Ezekiel 11:5)”

Acts 15:18; “Says the Lord, who makes these things known from of old. (Acts 15:18)”

John 21:17; “He says to him the third time, Do you love me? And he said to him, Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you. Jesus says to him, Feed my sheep. (John 21:17)”

Heb. 4:13. “And there is no creature that is not obvious in his sight: but all things are naked and laid open before the eyes of him with whom we have to do. (Heb. 4:13)”

b. The wisdom of God.

God’s wisdom is an aspect of His knowledge. It is the virtue of God which manifest itself in the selection of worthy ends and in the choice of the best means for the realization of those ends. The final end to which He makes all things subservient is His own glory.

Rom. 11:33; “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past tracing out! (Rom. 11:33)”

1Cor. 2:7; “but we speak God’s wisdom in a mystery, [even] the [wisdom] that has been hidden, which God foreordained before the worlds to our glory: (1Co. 2:7)”

Eph. 1:6, 12, 14; “6 to the praise of the glory of his grace, which he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved:...12 to the end that we should be to the praise of his glory, we who had previously hoped in Christ:... 14 which is an earnest of our inheritance, to the redemption of [God’s] own possession, to the praise of his glory. (Eph. 1:6,12,14)”

Col. 1:16. “for in him all things were created, in the heavens and on the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through him, and for him; (Col. 1:16)”

c. The goodness of God.

God is good, that is, perfectly holy. in Himself. But this is not the goodness we have in mind here. In this connection we refer to the divine goodness that reveals itself in doing well to others. It is that perfection which prompts Him to deal kindly and bounteously with all His creatures The Bible refers to it repeatedly,

Ps. 36:6; “Your righteousness is like the mountains of God; your judgments are a great deep: O Jehovah, you preserve man and beast. (Ps. 36:6)”

104:21; “The young lions roar after their prey, And seek their food from God. (Ps. 104:21)”

145:8, 9, 16; “8 Jehovah is gracious, and merciful; Slow to anger, and of great lovingkindness. 9 Jehovah is good to all; And his tender mercies are over all his works. 16 you open your hand, And satisfy the desire of every living thing. (Ps. 145:8-9,16)”

Matt. 5:45; “that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven: for he makes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the just and the unjust. (Mat. 5:45)”

Acts 14:17. “And yet He did not leave himself without witness, in that he did good and gave you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling your hearts with food and gladness. (Acts 14:17)”

d. The love of God.

This is often called the most central attribute of God, but it is doubtful whether it should be regarded as more central than the other perfections of God. In virtue of it He delights in His own perfections and in man as the reflection of His image. It may be considered from various points of view. The unmerited love of God which reveals itself in pardoning sin is called His GRACE,

Eph. 1:6, 7; “6 to the praise of the glory of his grace, which he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved: 7 in whom we have our redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, (Eph. 1:6-7)”

2:7-9; “7 that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus: 8 for you have been saved by grace through faith; and that not of yourselves, [it is] the gift of God; 9 not of works, so that no man would boast. (Eph. 2:7-9)”

Tit. 2:11. “For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, (Titus 2:11)”

That love relieving the misery of those who are bearing the consequences of sin is known as His mercy or tender compassion,

Luke 1:64, 72, 78; “64 And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue [loosed], and he spoke, blessing God. ... 72 To show mercy towards, our fathers, And to remember his holy covenant;... 78 Because of the tender mercy of our God, By which the dayspring from on high will visit us, (Luke 1:64,72,78)”

Rom. 15:9; “and that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, Therefore will I give praise to you among the Gentiles, And sing to your name. (Rom. 15:9)”

9:16, 18; “16 So then it is not the one who wills, nor the one who runs, but God who has mercy. ...18 So then he has mercy on whom he will, and he hardens whom he will. (Rom. 9:16,18)”

Eph. 2:4. “but God, being rich in mercy, for his great love with which he loved us, (Eph. 2:4)”

And when it bears with the sinner who does not heed the instructions and warnings of God it is named His longsuffering or forbearance,

Rom. 2:4; “Or do you despise the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance? (Rom. 2:4)”

9:22; “What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering vessels of wrath fitted for destruction: (Rom. 9:22)”

1Pet. 3:20; “who beforehand were disobedient, when the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water: (1Pet. 3:20)”

2Pet. 3:15. “And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you, according to the wisdom given to him; (2Pet. 3:15)”

e. The holiness of God.

God’s holiness is first of all that divine perfection by which He is absolutely distinct from all His creatures, and exalted above them in infinite majesty.

Ex. 15:11; “Who is like to you, O Jehovah, among the gods? Who is like you, glorious in holiness, Fearful in praises, doing wonders? (Exodus 15:11)”

Isa. 57:15. “For thus says the high and lofty One that inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite. (Isaiah 57:15)”

But it denotes in the second place that He is free from all moral impurity or sin, and is therefore morally perfect. In the presence of the holy God man is deeply conscious of his sin,

Job 34:10; “Therefore listen to me, you men of understanding: Far be it from God, that he should do wickedness, And from the Almighty, that he should commit iniquity. (Job 34:10)”

Isa. 6:5; “Then I said, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for my eyes have seen the King, Jehovah of hosts. (Isaiah 6:5)”

Hab. 1:13. “you who are of purer eyes than to behold evil, and that can not look on perverseness, therefore look on those who deal treacherously, and hold your peace when the wicked swallows up the man that is more righteous than he; (Habakkuk 1:13)”

f. The righteousness of God.

The righteousness of God is that perfection by which He maintains Himself as the Holy One over against every violation of His holiness. In virtue of it He maintains a moral government in the world and imposes a just law on man, rewarding obedience and punishing disobedience,

Ps. 99:4; “The king’s strength also loves justice; you do establish equity; you execute justice and righteousness in Jacob. (Ps. 99:4)”

Isa. 33:22; “For Jehovah is our judge, Jehovah is our lawgiver, Jehovah is our king; he will save us. (Isaiah 33:22)”

Rom. 1:32. “who, knowing the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but also consent with those who practice them. (Rom. 1:32)”

The justice of God which manifests itself in the giving of rewards is called His remunerative justice; and what reveals itself in meting out punishment is known as His retributive justice. The former is really an expression of His love, and the latter of His wrath.

g. The veracity of God.

This is that perfection of God in virtue of which He is true in His inner being, in His revelation, and in His relation to His people. He is the true God over against the idols, knows things as they really are, and is faithful in the fulfillment of His promises. From the last point of view this attribute is also called God’s faithfulness.

Num. 23:19; “God is not a man, that he should lie, Nor the son of man, that he should repent: has he said, and not done it? Or has he spoken, and not made it good? (Numbers 23:19)”

1Cor. 1:9; “God is faithful, through whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord. (1Co. 1:9)”

2Tim. 2:13; “if we are faithless, he remains faithful; for he cannot deny himself. (2Tim. 2:13)”

Heb. 10:23. “let us hold fast the confession of our hope that it does not waver; for he is faithful that promised: (Heb. 10:23)”

h. The sovereignty of God.

This may be considered from two different points of view, namely, His sovereign will, and His sovereign power. The will of God is represented in Scripture as the final cause of all things,

Eph. 1:11; “in whom also we were made a heritage, having been foreordained according to the purpose of the One who works all things after the counsel of his will; (Eph. 1:11)”

Rev. 4:11. “Worthy are you, our Lord and our God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power: for you created all things, and because of your will they existed, and were created. (Rev. 4:11)”

On the basis of Deut. 29:29 it is customary to distinguish between the secret and the revealed will of God. The former is the will of God’s decree, which is hidden in God and can be known only from its effects, and the latter is the will of His precept, which is revealed in the law and in the gospel. God’s will respecting His creatures is absolutely free,

“The secret things belong to Jehovah our God; but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law. (Deut. 29:29)”

Job 11:10; “If he passes through, and imprisons, And calls to judgment, then who can hinder him? (Job 11:10)”

33:13; “Why do you strive against him, because he does not give account of any of his matters? (Job 33:13)”

Ps. 115:3; “But our God is in the heavens: He has done whatever he pleased. (Ps. 115:3)”

Prov. 21:1; “The king’s heart is in the hand of Jehovah like the watercourses: He turns it wherever he will. (Prov. 21:1)”

Matt. 20:15; “Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with my own? or is your eye evil, because I am good? (Mat. 20:15)”

Rom. 9:15-18; “15 For he says to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion. 16 So then it is not the one who wills, nor the one who runs, but God who has mercy. 17 For the scripture says to Pharaoh, For this very purpose I raised you up, that I might show my power in you, and that my name might be published abroad in all the earth. 18 So then he has mercy on whom he will, and he hardens whom he will. (Rom. 9:15-18)”

Rev. 4:11. “Worthy are you, our Lord and our God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power: for you created all things, and because of your will they existed, and were created. (Rev. 4:11)”

The sinful deeds of man are also under the control of His sovereign will,

Gen. 50:20; “And as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save many people alive. (Gen. 50:20)”

Acts 2:23. “being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and slew him by the hand of lawless men (Acts 2:23)”

The power to execute His will is called his omnipotence. That God is omnipotent does not mean that He can do everything. The Bible teaches us that there are some things which God cannot do. He cannot lie, sin, [or] deny Himself,

Num. 23:19; “God is not a man, that he should lie, Nor the son of man, that he should repent: has he said, and not done it? Or has he spoken, and not made it good? (Numbers 23:19)”

1Sa. 15:29; “And also the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent; for he is not a man, that he should repent. (1Sa. 15:29)”

2Tim. 2:13; “if we are faithless, he remains faithful; for he cannot deny himself. (2Tim. 2:13)”

Heb. 6:18; “that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we may have a strong encouragement, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us: (Heb. 6:18)”

Jas. 1:13, 17. “13 Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted by God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no man: ...17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there can be no variation, nor shadow that is cast by turning. (James 1:13,17)”

It does mean that He can, by the mere exercise of His will, bring to pass whatever He has decided to accomplish, and that, if He so desired, He could do even more than that,

Gen. 18:14; “Is anything too hard for Jehovah? At the set time I will return to you, when the season comes round, and Sarah will have a son. (Gen. 18:14)”

Jer. 32:27; “Behold, I am Jehovah, the God of all flesh: is there anything too hard for me? (Jeremiah 32:27)”

Zech. 8:6; “Thus says Jehovah of hosts: If it is marvelous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in those days, should it also be marvelous in my eyes? says Jehovah of hosts. (Zec. 8:6)”

Matt. 3:9; “and do not think to say within yourselves, We have Abraham for our father: for I say to you, that God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. (Mat. 3:9)”

26:53. “Or do you think that I cannot beseech my Father, and he will even now send me more than twelve legions of angels? (Mat. 26:53)”

To memorize. Passages to prove God’s:

a. Incommunicable attributes:

Independence.

John 5:26. “For as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave the Son to have life in Himself.

Immutability.

Mal. 3:6. “For I, Jehovah, do not change; therefore you, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed.”

James 1:17. “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there can be no variation, nor shadow that is cast by turning.”

Eternity.

Ps. 90:2. “Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, you are God.”

Ps. 102:27. “But you are the same, and your years have no end.”

Omnipresence.

Ps. 139:7-10. “Where will I go from your Spirit? Or where will I flee from your presence? If I ascend up into heaven, you are there: if I make my bed in Sheol, behold you are there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the furthest parts of the sea; even there will your hand lead me, and your right hand will hold me.”

Jer. 23:23, 24. “Am I a God at hand, says Jehovah, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places so that I will not see him’ says Jehovah. Do I not fill heaven and earth? says Jehovah?”

b. Communicable attributes:

Omniscience.

John 21:17b. "And he said to Him, Yes, Lord, you know all things', you know that I love You."

Heb. 4:13. "And there is no creature that is not obvious in his sight; but all things are naked and laid open before the eyes of Him with whom we have to do."

Wisdom,

Ps. 104:24. "O Jehovah, how manifold are your works! In wisdom you have made them all."

Dan. 2:20, 21b. "Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever; for wisdom and might are His.... He gives wisdom to the wise, and knowledge to those who have understanding."

Goodness.

Ps. 86:5. "For you, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive, and abundant in lovingkindness to all those who call on You."

Ps. 118:29 "O give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; for His lovingkindness endures forever."

Love.

John 3:16. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes on Him would not perish, but have eternal life."

1John 4:8. "One who does not love does not know God; for God is love."

Grace.

Neh. 9:17b. "But you are a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abundant in lovingkindness."

Rom. 3:24. "Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

Mercy.

Rom. 9:18. "So then He has mercy on whom He will and whom He will He hardens."

Eph. 2:4, 5. "But God, being rich in mercy, for His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ."

Longsuffering or forbearance.

Num. 14:18. "Jehovah is slow to anger, and abundant in lovingkindness, forgiving iniquity and transgression."

Rom. 2:4. "Or do you despise the riches of His goodness and forbearance and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?"

Holiness.

Ex. 15:11. “Who is like You, O Jehovah, among the gods? Who is like You, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?”

Isa. 6:3b. “Holy, holy, holy, is Jehovah of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory.”

Righteousness or justice.

Ps. 89:14. “Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne.”

Ps. 145:17. “Jehovah is righteous in all His ways, and gracious in all His works.”

1Pet. 1:17. “And if you call on Him as Father, who without favoring anyone judges according to each man’s work, pass the time of your sojourning in fear.”

Veracity or faithfulness.

Num. 23:19. “God is not a man, that He should lie, nor the son of man, that He should repent. has He said, and not done it? Or has He spoken, and not made it good?”

2Tim. 2:13. “If we are faithless, he remains faithful; for He cannot deny Himself.”

Sovereignty.

Eph. 1:11. “In whom also we were made a heritage, having been foreordained according to the purpose of the One who works all things after the council of His will.”

Rev. 4:11. “Worthy are you, our Lord and our God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power; for you created all things, and because of your will they existed, and were created.”

Secret and revealed will.

Deut. 29:29. “The secret things belong to Jehovah our God; but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.”

Omnipotence.

Job 42:2. “I know that you can do everything.”

Matt. 19:26. “With God all things are possible.”

Luke 1:37. “For with God nothing will be impossible.” (AV)

For Further Study:

a. Give instances in which the Bible identifies God and His attributes,

Jer. 23:6; “In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell safely; and this is his name by which he will be called: Jehovah our righteousness. (Jeremiah 23:6)”

Heb. 12:29; “for our God is a consuming fire. (Heb. 12:29)”

1John 1:5; “And this is the message which we have heard from him and announce to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. (1 John 1:5)”

4:16. “And we know and have believed the love which God has in us. God is love; and one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. (1 John 4:16)”

b. How can God be just and gracious to the sinner at the same time,

Zech. 9:9; “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, your king comes to you; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding on an ass, even on a colt the foal of an ass. (Zec. 9:9)”

Rom. 3:24-26. “24 being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: 25 whom God set forth [to be] a propitiation, through faith, in his blood, to show his righteousness because of the passing over of the sins done previously, in the forbearance of God; 26 for showing, [I say], his righteousness at this present season: that he might himself be just, and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. (Rom. 3:24-26)”

c. Prove from Scripture that God’s foreknowledge includes conditional events.

1Sa. 23:10-13; “10 Then said David, O Jehovah, the God of Israel, your servant has surely heard that Saul seeks to come to Keilah, to destroy the city for my sake. 11 Will the men of Keilah deliver me up into his hand? will Saul come down, as your servant has heard? O Jehovah, the God of Israel, I beseech you, tell your servant. And Jehovah said, He will come down. 12 Then said David, Will the men of Keilah deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul? And Jehovah said, They will deliver you up. 13 Then David and his men, who were about six hundred, arose and departed out of Keilah, and went wherever they could go. And it was told to Saul that David had escaped from Keilah; and he refrained to go forth. (1Sa. 23:10-13)”

2Kings 13:19; “And the man of God was angry with him, and said, you should have struck five or six times: then had you struck Syria till you had consumed it, whereas now you will strike Syria but thrice. (2 Kings 13:19)”

Ps. 81:13-15; “13 Oh that my people would listen to me, That Israel would walk in my ways! 14 I would soon subdue their enemies, And turn my hand against their adversaries. 15 The haters of Jehovah should submit themselves to him: But their time should endure for ever. (Ps. 81:13-15)”

48:18; [erroneous verse]

Jer. 38:17-20; “17 Then Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, Thus says Jehovah, the God of hosts, the God of Israel: If you will go forth to the king of Babylon’s princes, then your soul will live, and this city will not be burned with fire; and you will live, and your house. 18 But if you will not go forth to the king of Babylon’s princes, then will this city be given into the hand of the Chaldeans, and they will burn it with fire, and you will not escape out of their hand. 19 And Zedekiah the king said to Jeremiah, I am afraid of the Jews that are fallen away to the Chaldeans, lest they deliver me into their hand, and they mock me. 20 But Jeremiah said, They will not deliver you. Obey, I beseech you, the voice of Jehovah, in what I speak to you: so it will be well with you, and your soul will live. (Jeremiah 38:17-20)”

Ezek. 3:6; “not to many peoples of strange speech and hard language, whose words you cannot understand. Surely, if I sent you to them, they would listen to you. (Ezekiel 3:6)”

Matt. 11:21. “Woe to you, Chorazin! woe to you, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon which were done in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. (Mat. 11:21)”

Questions for Review

1. How do we divide the attributes of God?
2. Which belong to each one of these classes?

3. What is the independence of God?
4. What is His immutability?
5. How can we explain the fact that the Bible apparently ascribes change to God?
6. What is God's eternity and immensity or omnipresence?
7. What is the simplicity of God, and how can we prove it?
8. What is the nature and extent of God's knowledge?
9. How is His wisdom related to His knowledge?
10. What is the goodness of God? Are any other names used for it?
11. Should we speak of love as more central in God than His other attributes?
12. How do we distinguish God's grace, mercy, and longsuffering?
13. What is the holiness of God?
14. In what does God reveal His righteousness?
15. What is included in the veracity of God?
16. What distinction do we apply to the will of God?
17. Do the secret and the revealed will of God ever conflict?
18. Does God's omnipotence imply that He can do everything?

Chapter 7: The Trinity

1. Statement of the Doctrine.

The Bible teaches that, while He exists in three Persons, called Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. These are not three persons in the ordinary sense of the word; they are not three individuals, but rather three modes or forms in which the Divine Being exists. At the same time they are of such a nature that they can enter into personal relations. The Father can speak to the Son and vice versa, and both can send forth the Spirit. The real mystery of the Trinity consists in this that each one of the Persons possesses the whole of the divine essence, and that this has no existence outside of and apart from the Persons. The three are not subordinate in being the one to the other, though it may be said that in order of existence the Father is first, the Son second, and the Holy Spirit third, an order which is also reflected in their work.

2. Scripture Proof for the Trinity.

The Old Testament contains some indications of more than one Person in God. God speaks of Himself in the plural,

Gen. 1:26; “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. (Gen. 1:26)”

11:7; “Come, let us go down, and confound their language there, that they may not understand one another’s speech. (Gen. 11:7)”

the Angel of Jehovah is represented as a divine Person,

Gen. 16:7-13; “7 And the angel of Jehovah found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur. 8 And he said, Hagar, Sarai’s handmaid, where did you come from? and where do you go? And she said, I am fleeing from the face of my mistress Sarai. 9 And the angel of Jehovah said to her, Return to your mistress, and submit yourself under her hands. 10 And the angel of Jehovah said to her, I will greatly multiply your seed, that it will not be numbered for multitude. 11 And the angel of Jehovah said to her, Behold, you are with child, and will bear a son; and you will call his name Ishmael, because Jehovah has heard your affliction. 12 And he will be [as] a wild ass among men; his hand [will be] against every man, and every man’s hand against him; and he will dwell over against all his brethren. 13 And she called the name of Jehovah that spoke to her, you are a God that sees: for she said, Have I even here looked after the one who sees me? (Gen. 16:7-13)”

18:1-21; 19:1-22;

and the Spirit is spoken of as a distinct Person,

Isa. 48:16; “Come near to me, hear this; from the beginning I have not spoken in secret; from the time that it was, there i am: and now the Lord Jehovah has sent me, and his Spirit. (Isaiah 48:16)”

63:10. “But they rebelled, and grieved his holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, [and] fought against them himself. (Isaiah 63:10)”

Moreover, there are some passages in which the Messiah is speaking and mentions two other Persons,

Isa. 48:16; “Come near to me, hear this; from the beginning I have not spoken in secret; from the time that it was, there I am: and now the Lord Jehovah has sent me, and his Spirit. (Isaiah 48:16)”

61:1; “The Spirit of the Lord Jehovah is on me; because Jehovah has anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek; he has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening [of the prison] to those who are bound; (Isaiah 61:1)”

63:9, 10. “9 In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bore them, and carried them all the days of old. 10 But they rebelled, and grieved his holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, [and] fought against them himself. (Isaiah 63:9-10)”

Due to the progress of revelation, the New Testament contains clearer proofs. The strongest proof is found in the facts of redemption. The Father sends the Son into the world, and the Son sends the Holy Spirit. Moreover, there are several passages in which the three Persons are expressly mentioned, such as the great commission,

Matt. 28:19, “Go therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: (Mat. 28:19)”

and the apostolic blessing,

2Cor. 13:14. “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. (2Co. 13:14)”

Compare also Luke 3:21, 22; “21 Now it came to pass, when all the people were baptized, that, Jesus also having been baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, 22 and the Holy Spirit descended in a bodily form, as a dove, on him, and a voice came out of heaven, you are my beloved Son; in you I am well pleased. (Luke 3:21-22)

1:35; “And the angel answered and said to her, The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you: which is also why the holy thing which is begotten will be called the Son of God. (Luke 1:35)”

1Cor. 12:4-6; “4 Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 And there are diversities of ministrations, and the same Lord. 6 And there are diversities of workings, but the same God, who works all things in all. (1Co. 12:4-6)”

1Pet. 1:2. “according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, to obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied. (1Pet. 1:2)”

This doctrine was denied by the Socinians in the days of the Reformation, and is rejected also by the Unitarians and the Modernists of our own day. If they speak of the Trinity at all, they represent it as consisting of the Father, the man Jesus, and a divine influence which is called the Spirit of God.

3. The Father.

The name ‘Father’ is frequently applied in Scripture to the triune God, as the creator of all things,

1Cor. 8:6; “yet to us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we to him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and we through him. (1Co. 8:6)”

Heb. 12:9; “Furthermore, we had the fathers of our flesh to chasten us, and we gave them reverence: will we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits, and live? (Heb. 12:9)”

Jas. 1:17; “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there can be no variation, nor shadow that is cast by turning. (James 1:17)”

as the Father of Israel,

Deut. 32:6; “Do you thus requite Jehovah, O foolish people and unwise? Is he not your father who has bought you? He has made you, and established you. (Deut. 32:6)”

Isa. 63:16; “For you are our Father, though Abraham does not know us, and Israel does not acknowledge us: you, O Jehovah, are our Father; our Redeemer from everlasting is your name. (Isaiah 63:16)”

and as the Father of believers,

Matt. 5:45; “that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven: for he makes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the just and the unjust. (Mat. 5:45)”

6:6, 9, 14; “6 But you, when you pray, enter into your inner chamber, and having shut your door, pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will repay you. ...9 In this way therefore pray. Our Father who are in heaven, Hallowed be your name. ...14 For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. (Mat. 6:6,9,14)”

Rom. 8:15. “For you did not receive the spirit of bondage to fear again; but you received the spirit of adoption, by which we cry, Abba, Father. (Rom. 8:15)”

In a deeper sense, however, it is applied to the First Person of the Trinity, to express His relation to the Second Person,

John 1:14, 18; “14 And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth. ...18 No man has seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has declared [him]. (John 1:14,18)”

8:54; “Jesus answered, If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing: it is my Father who glorifies me; of whom you say, that he is your God; (John 8:54)”

14:12, 13. “12 Truly, truly, I say to you, one who believes on me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater [works] than these he will do; because I go to the Father. 13 And whatever you ask in my name, that I will do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. (John 14:12-13)”

This is the original Fatherhood, of which all earthly fatherhood is but a faint reflection. The distinctive characteristic of the Father is that He generates the Son from all eternity. The works particularly ascribed to Him are those of planning the work of redemption, creation and providence, and representing the Trinity in the Counsel of Redemption.

4. The Son.

The second person in the Trinity is called ‘Son’ or ‘Son of God.’ He bears this name, however, not only as the only begotten of the Father, John 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18; “16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes on him would not perish, but have eternal life. ...18 One who believes on him is not judged: one who does not believe has been

judged already, because he has not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God. (John 3:16,18)"

Gal. 4:4, "but when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, (Galatians 4:4)"

but also as the Messiah chosen of God,

Matt. 8:29; "And behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with you, you Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time? (Mat. 8:29)"

26:63; "But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest said to him, I adjure you by the living God, that you tell us whether you are the Christ, the Son of God. (Mat. 26:63)"

John 1:49; "Nathanael answered him, Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are King of Israel. (John 1:49)"

11:27, "She says to him, Yes, Lord: I have believed that you are the Christ, the Son of God, [even] the one who comes into the world. (John 11:27)"

and in virtue of His special birth through the operation of the Holy Spirit,

Luke 1:32, 35. "32 He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High: and the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David: ...35 And the angel answered and said to her, The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you: which is also why the holy thing which is begotten will be called the Son of God. (Luke 1:32,35)"

His special characteristic as the Second Person of the Trinity is that He is eternally begotten of the Father,

Ps. 2:7; "I will tell of the decree: Jehovah said to me, you are my son; This day I have begotten you. (Ps. 2:7)"

Acts 13:33, "that God has fulfilled the same to our children, in that he raised up Jesus; as it is also written in the second psalm, you are my Son, this day I have begotten you. (Acts 13:33)"

9:20; "And straightway in the synagogues he proclaimed Jesus, that he is the Son of God. (Acts 9:20)"

Heb. 1:5. "For to which of the angels did he say at any time, you are my Son, This day have I begotten you? and again, I will be to him a Father, And he will be to me a Son? (Heb. 1:5)"

By means of eternal generation the Father is the cause of the personal existence of the Son within the Divine Being. The works more particularly ascribed to Him are works of mediation. He mediated the work of creation,

John 1:3, 10; "3 All things were made through him; and without him nothing was made that has been made. ...10 He was in the world, and the world was made through him, and the world did not know him. (John 1:3,10)"

Heb. 1:2, 3, "2 has at the end of these days spoken to us in [his] Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the worlds; 3 who being the bright radiance of his glory, and the very image of his substance, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; (Heb. 1:2-3)

and mediates the work of redemption, Eph. 1:3-14.

5. The Holy Spirit.

Though Socinians, Unitarians, and present day Modernists speak of the Holy Spirit merely as a power or an influence of God, He clearly stands out on the pages of the Bible as a Person,

John 14:16, 17, 26; “16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Comforter, that he may be with you for ever, 17 [even] the Spirit of truth: whom the world cannot receive; for it does not behold him, nor know him: you know him; for he abides with you, and will be in you. ... 26 But the Comforter, [even] the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you. (John 14:16-17,26)”

15:26; “But when the Comforter has come, whom I will send to you from the Father, [even] the Spirit of truth, which proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness of me: (John 15:26)”

16:7-15;

Rom. 8:26. “And in the same way the Spirit also helps our infirmity: for we do not know how to pray as we ought; but the Spirit himself makes intercession for [us] with groanings which cannot be uttered; (Rom. 8:26)”

He has intelligence,

John 14:26, “But the Comforter, [even] the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you. (John 14:26)”

feeling,

Isa. 63:10; “But they rebelled, and grieved his holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, [and] fought against them himself. (Isaiah 63:10)”

Eph. 4:30, “And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, in whom you were sealed to the day of redemption. (Eph. 4:30)”

and will,

Acts 16:7; “and when they had come over against Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia; and the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them; (Acts 16:7)”

1Cor. 12:11. “but all these the one and the same Spirit works, dividing to each one severally even as he will. (1Co. 12:11)”

Scripture represents Him as speaking, searching, testifying, commanding, revealing, striving, and making intercession. Moreover, He is clearly distinguished from His own power in

Luke 1:35; “And the angel answered and said to her, The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you: which is also why the holy thing which is begotten will be called the Son of God. (Luke 1:35)”

4:14; “And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and fame spread abroad concerning him through all the region round about. (Luke 4:14)”

Acts 10:38; “[even] Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all who were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him. (Acts 10:38)”

1Cor. 2:4. “And my speech and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: (1Co. 2:4)”

His special characteristic is that He proceeds from the Father and the Son by inspiration,

John 15:26; “But when the Comforter has come, whom I will send to you from the Father, [even] the Spirit of truth, which proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness of me: (John 15:26)”

16:7; “Nevertheless I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Comforter will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. (John 16:7)”

Rom. 8:9; “But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if any man does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. (Rom. 8:9)”

Gal. 4:6. “And because you are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father. (Galatians 4:6)”

In general it may be said that it is His task to bring things to completion both in creation and redemption,

Gen. 1:3; “And the earth was waste and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep: and the Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters. (Gen. 1:2)”

Job 26:13; “By his Spirit the heavens are garnished; His hand has pierced the swift serpent. (Job 26:13)”

Luke 1:35; “And the angel answered and said to her, The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you: which is also why the holy thing which is begotten will be called the Son of God. (Luke 1:35)”

John 3:34; “For he whom God has sent speaks the words of God: for he does not give the Spirit by measure. (John 3:34)”

1Cor. 12:4-11; Eph. 2:22. “in whom you also are built together for a habitation of God in the Spirit. (Eph. 2:22)”

To memorize. Passages to prove:

a. The Trinity:

Isa. 61:1. “The Spirit of the Lord Jehovah is on Me” (the Messiah), compare Luke 4:17, 18.

Matt. 28:19. “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”

2Cor. 13:14. “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God; and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.”

b. Eternal generation:

Ps. 2:7. “I will tell of the decree: Jehovah said to me, you are my Son; this day have I begotten You.”

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

c. Procession of the Holy Spirit:

John 15:26. “But when the Comforter has come, whom I will send to you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceeds from the Father, He will bear witness of Me.”

For Further Study:

a. In what sense can we speak of a general Fatherhood of God?

1Cor. 8:6; “yet to us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we to him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and we through him. (1Co. 8:6)”

Eph. 3:14, 15; “14 For this cause I bow my knees to the Father, 15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, (Eph. 3:14-15)”

Heb. 12:9; “Furthermore, we had the fathers of our flesh to chasten us, and we gave them reverence: will we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits, and live? (Heb. 12:9)”

Jas. 1:17. “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there can be no variation, nor shadow that is cast by turning. (James 1:17)”

Compare also Num. 16:22. “And they fell on their faces, and said, O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, will one man sin, and will you be angry with all the congregation? (Numbers 16:22)”

b. Can you prove the deity of the incarnate Son?

John 1:1; “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (John 1:1)”

20:28; “Thomas answered and said to him, My Lord and my God. (John 20:28)”

Phil. 2:6; “who, existing in the form of God, did not count being equal with God a thing to be grasped, (Phil. 2:6)”

Tit. 2:13; “looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ; (Titus 2:13)”

Jer. 23:5, 6; “5 Behold, the days come, says Jehovah, that I will raise to David a righteous Branch, and he will reign as king and deal wisely, and will execute justice and righteousness in the land. 6 In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell safely; and this is his name by which he will be called: Jehovah our righteousness. (Jeremiah 23:5-6)”

Isa. 9:6; “For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government will be on his shoulder: and his name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 9:6)”

John 1:3; “All things were made through him; and without him nothing was made that has been made. (John 1:3)”

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

Col. 1:17; “and he is before all things, and in him all things consist. (Col. 1:17)”

John 14:1; “Let not your heart be troubled: believe in God, believe also in me. (John 14:1)”

2Cor. 13:14. “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. (2Co. 13:14)”

c. How do the following passages prove the personality of the Holy Spirit?

Gen. 1:2; “And the earth was waste and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep: and the Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters. (Gen. 1:2)”

6:3; “And Jehovah said, My spirit will not strive with man for ever, for he is flesh: yet his days will be a hundred and twenty years. (Gen. 6:3)”

Luke 12:12; “for the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say. (Luke 12:12)”

John 14:26; “But the Comforter, [even] the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you. (John 14:26)”

15:26; “But when the Comforter has come, whom I will send to you from the Father, [even] the Spirit of truth, which proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness of me: (John 15:26)”

16:8; “And he, when he has come, will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: (John 16:8)”

Acts 8:29; “And the Spirit said to Philip, Go near, and join yourself to this chariot. (Acts 8:29)”

13:2; “And as they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them. (Acts 13:2)”

Rom. 8:11; “But if the Spirit of the one who raised up Jesus from the dead dwells in you, the one who raised up Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit that dwells in you. (Rom. 8:11)”

1Cor. 2:10, 11. “10 But to us God revealed [them] through the Spirit: for the Spirit searches all things, indeed, the deep things of God. 11 For who among men knows the things of a man, save the spirit of the man, which is in him? even so the things of God none knows, save the Spirit of God. (1Co. 2:10-11)”

d. What works are ascribed to the Spirit in

Ps. 33:6; “By the word of Jehovah the heavens were made, And all the their host by the breath of his mouth. (Ps. 33:6)”

104:30; “you send forth your Spirit, they are created; And you renew the face of the ground. (Ps. 104:30)”

Ex. 28:3; “And you will speak to all that are wise-hearted, whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom, that they make Aaron’s garments to sanctify him, that he may minister to me in the priest’s office. (Exodus 28:3)”

2Pet. 1:21; “For no prophecy ever came by the will of man: but men spoke from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit. (2Pet. 1:21)”

1Cor. 3:16; “Do you not know that you are a temple of God, and [that] the Spirit of God dwells in you? (1Co. 3:16)”

Questions for Review

1. Can we discover the doctrine of the Trinity from nature?
2. Are there three separate individuals in God?
3. Is one Person subordinate to another in God?
4. How can we prove the Trinity from the Old Testament?

5. What is the strongest proof for the Trinity?
6. What New Testament passages best prove it?
7. In what different senses is the name ‘Father’ applied to God?
8. What works are more particularly ascribed to each one of the Persons?
9. In what different senses is the name ‘Son’ applied to Christ?
10. What is the special characteristic of each Person?
11. How can you prove that the Holy Spirit is a Person?

Chapter 8: The Divine Decrees

1. The Divine Decrees in General.

The decree of God is His eternal plan or purpose, in which He has foreordained all things that come to pass. Since it includes many particulars, we often speak of the divine decrees in the plural, though in reality there is but a single decree. It covers all the works of God in creation and redemption, and also embraces the actions of men, not excluding their sinful deeds. But while it rendered the entrance of sin into the world certain, it does not make God responsible for our sinful deeds. His decree with respect to sin is a permissive decree.

a. Characteristics of the decree.

The decree of God is founded in wisdom,

Eph. 3:9-11, “9 and to make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God who created all things; 10 to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known through the church to the principalities and the powers in the heavenly [places], 11 according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: (Eph. 3:9-11)”

though we do not always understand it. It was formed in the depths of eternity, and is therefore eternal in the strictest sense of the word, Eph. 3:11.

Moreover, it is effectual, so that everything that is included in it certainly comes to pass,

Isa. 46:10. “declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not [yet] done; saying, My counsel will stand, and I will do all my pleasure; (Isaiah 46:10)”

The plan of God is also unchangeable, because He is faithful and true,

Job 23:13, 14; “13 But he is in one [mind], and who can turn him? And what his soul desires, even that he does. 14 For he performs what is appointed for me: And many such things are with him. (Job 23:13-14)”

Isa. 46:10; “declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not [yet] done; saying, My counsel will stand, and I will do all my pleasure; (Isaiah 46:10)”

Luke 22:22. “For the Son of man indeed goes, as it has been determined: but woe to that man through whom he is betrayed! (Luke 22:22)”

It is unconditional, that is, its execution does not depend on any action of man but even renders such action certain,

Acts 2:23. “being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and slew him by the hand of lawless men (Acts 2:23)”

Eph. 2:8. “for by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, [it is] the gift of God; (Eph. 2:8)”

Moreover, it is all-inclusive, embracing the good and the wicked actions of men,

Eph. 2:10; “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God before prepared that we should walk in them. (Eph. 2:10)”

Acts 2:23. “being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and slew him by the hand of lawless men (Acts 2:23)”

contingent events,

Gen. 50:20, “And as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save many people alive. (Gen. 50:20)”

the duration of man’s life,

Job 14:5; “Seeing his days are determined, The number of his months is with you, And you have appointed his bounds that he cannot pass; (Job 14:5)”

Ps. 39:4, “Jehovah, make me to know my end, And the measure of my days, what it is; Let me know how frail I am. (Ps. 39:4)”

and the place of his habitation,

Acts 17:26. “and he made of one [man] every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, having determined [their] appointed seasons, and the bounds of their habitation; (Acts 17:26)”

With respect to sin it is permissive.

b. Objections to the doctrine of the decrees.

Many do not believe in the doctrine of the decrees, and raise especially three objections.

(1) It is inconsistent with, the moral freedom of man. But the Bible clearly teaches not only that God has decreed the free acts of man, but also that man is none to the less free and responsible for his acts,

Gen. 50:19, 20; “19 And Joseph said to them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God? 20 And as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save many people alive. (Gen. 50:19-20)”

Acts 2:23. “being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and slew him by the hand of lawless men (Acts 2:23)”

4:27-29. “27 for of a truth in this city against your holy Servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, were gathered together, 28 to do whatever your hand and your council foreordained to come to pass. 29 And now, Lord, look on their threats: and grant to your servants to speak your word with all boldness, (Acts 4:27-29)”

We may not be able to harmonize the two altogether, but it is evident from Scripture that the one does not cancel the other.

(2) It makes people slothful in seeking salvation. They feel that, if God has determined whether they will be saved or not, it makes no difference what they may do. But this is hardly correct, because man does not know what God has decreed respecting him. Moreover, God has decreed not only the final destiny of man, but also the means by which it will be realized. And seeing that the end is decreed only as the result of the appointed means, it encourages rather than discourages their use.

(3) It makes God the author of sin. It may be said, however, that the decree merely makes God the author of free moral beings, who are themselves the authors of sin. Sin is made certain by the decree, but God does not Himself produce it by His direct action. At the same time it must be admitted that the problem of God's relation to sin remains a mystery which we cannot fully solve.

2. Predestination.

Predestination is the plan or purpose of God respecting His moral creatures. It pertains to men, both good and bad, to angels and devils, and to Christ as the Mediator. Predestination includes two parts, namely, election and reprobation.

a. Election. The Bible speaks of election in more than one sense, as

(1) the election of Israel as the Old Testament people of God,

Deut. 4:37; "And because he loved your fathers, therefore he chose their seed after them, and brought you out with his presence, with his great power, out of Egypt; (Deut. 4:37)"

7:6-8; "6 For you are a holy people to Jehovah your God: Jehovah your God has chosen you to be a people for his own possession, above all peoples that are on the face of the earth. 7 Jehovah did not set his love on you, nor choose you, because you were more in number than any people; for you were the fewest of all peoples: 8 but because Jehovah loves you, and because he would keep the oath which he swore to your fathers, Jehovah has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. (Deut. 7:6-8)"

10:15; "Only Jehovah had a delight in your fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above all peoples, as it is today. (Deut. 10:15)"

Hos. 13:5; "I knew you in the wilderness, in the land of great drought. (Hosea 13:5)"

(2) the election of persons to some special office or service,

Deut. 18:5; "For Jehovah your God has chosen him out of all your tribes, to stand to minister in the name of Jehovah, him and his sons for ever. (Deut. 18:5)"

1Sa. 10:24; "And Samuel said to all the people, See the one whom Jehovah has chosen, that there is none like him among all the people? And all the people shouted, and said, [Long] live the king. (1Sa. 10:24)"

Ps. 78:70; "He chose David also his servant, And took him from the sheepfolds: (Ps. 78:70)"

(3) and the election of individuals to salvation,

Matt. 22:14; "For many are called, but few chosen. (Mat. 22:14)"

Rom. 11:5; "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. (Rom. 11:5)"

Eph. 1:4. "even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blemish before him in love: (Eph. 1:4)"

The last is the election to which we refer in this connection. It may be defined as God's eternal purpose to save some of the human race in and by Jesus Christ.

b. Reprobation. The doctrine of election naturally implies that God did not intend to save all. If He purposed to save some, He naturally also purpose not to save others. This is also in harmony with the teachings of Scripture,

Matt. 11:25, 26; “25 At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank you, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you hid these things from the wise and understanding, and revealed them to babes: 26 indeed, Father, for so it was well-pleasing in your sight. (Mat. 11:25-26)

Rom. 9:13, 17, 18, 21, 22; “13 Even as it is written, Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated. ...17 For the scripture says to Pharaoh, For this very purpose I raised you up, that I might show my power in you, and that my name might be published abroad in all the earth. 18 So then he has mercy on whom he will, and he hardens whom he will. ...21 Or has not the potter a right over the clay, from the same lump to make one part a vessel for honor, and another for dishonor? 22 What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering vessels of wrath fitted for destruction: (Rom. 9:13,17-18,21-22)”

11:7, 8; “7 What then? What Israel seeks for, that he did not obtain; but the election obtained it, and the rest were hardened: 8 according as it is written, God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that they would not see, and ears that they would not hear, to this very day. (Rom. 11:7-8)”

2Pet. 2:9; “the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment to the day of judgment; (2Pet. 2:9)”

Jude 4. “For there are certain men *who* crept in secretly, those who were written of long ago for this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ. (Jude v.4)”

Reprobation may be defined as God’s eternal purpose to pass some men by with the operation of His special grace, and to punished them for their sin. It really embodies a twofold purpose therefore: (1) to pass some by in the bestowal of saving grace; and (2) to punish them for their sins.

It is sometimes said that the doctrine of predestination exposes God to the charge of injustice. But this is hardly correct. We could speak of injustice only if man had a claim on God, and God owed man eternal salvation. But the situation is entirely different if all men have forfeited the blessings of God, as they have. No one has the right to call God to account for electing some and rejecting others. He would have been perfectly just, if He had not saved any,

Matt. 20:14, 15; “14 Take up what is yours, and go your way; it is my will to give to this last one, even as *I gave* to you. 15 Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with my own? or is your eye evil, because I am good? (Mat. 20:14-15)”

Rom. 9:14, 15. “14 What will we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. 15 For he says to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion. (Rom. 9:14-15)”

To memorize. Passages pertaining to:

a. God’s decree in general:

Eph. 1:11. “In whom also we were made a heritage, having been foreordained according to the purpose of the One who works all things after the counsel of His will.”

Ps. 33:11. “The counsel of Jehovah stands fast forever, the thoughts of His heart to all generations.”

Isa. 46:10. “Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done; saying, My counsel will stand, and I will do all my pleasure.”

b. Predestination:

Eph. 1:11, compare above under a.

Ps. 2:7. “I will tell of the decree: Jehovah said to me. you are my Son; this day have I begotten You.”

Eph. 1:4, 5. “Even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blemish before Him in love, having foreordained us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will.”

Rom. 11:5. “Even so then, at this present time also, there is a remnant according to the election of grace.”

Rom. 9:13. “Even as it is written, Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.”

Rom. 9:18. “So then He has mercy on whom He will, and whom He will He hardens.”

For Further Study.

a. Is foreknowledge the same as foreordination or predestination?

Acts 2:23. “being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and slew him by the hand of lawless men (Acts 2:23)”

Rom. 8:29; “For whom he foreknew, he also foreordained [to be] conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren: (Rom. 8:29)”

11:2; “God did not cast off his people which he foreknew. Or do you not know what the scripture says of Elijah? how he pleads with God against Israel: (Rom. 11:2)”

1Pet. 1:2. “according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, to obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied. (1Pet. 1:2)”

b. How does the Bible indicate that Christ was also an object of predestination?

Ps. 2:7; “I will tell of the decree: Jehovah said to me, you are my son; This day have I begotten you. (Ps. 2:7)”

Isa. 42:1; “Behold, my servant, whom I uphold; my chosen, in whom my soul delights: I have put my Spirit on him; he will bring forth justice to the Gentiles. (Isaiah 42:1)”

1Pet. 1:20; “who was foreknown indeed before the foundation of the world, but was manifested at the end of times for your sake, (1Pet. 1:20)”

2:4. “to whom coming, a living stone, rejected indeed of men, yet with God elect, precious, (1Pet. 2:4)”

In what sense is this to be understood?

c. What indications do we have that the angels were also objects of predestination?

1Tim. 5:21. “I charge [you] in the sight of God, and Christ Jesus, and the elect angels, that you observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing by partiality. (1Tim. 5:21)”

How should we conceive of this?

Questions for Review

1. What is the divine decree?
2. Why do we sometimes speak of 'decrees' in the plural?
3. What are the characteristics of the decree?
4. What is the nature of God's decree respecting sin?
5. What objections are raised against the doctrine of the Decrees?
6. What can be said in answer to these?
7. How is predestination related to the decree in general?
8. Who are the objects of predestination?
9. How must we conceive of the predestination of the angels and of Christ?
10. In what different senses does the Bible speak of election?
11. What does reprobation include, and what proof is there for it?
12. Does the doctrine of predestination involve injustice on the part of God? If not, why not?

Chapter 9: Creation

The discussion of the decrees naturally leads on to the study of their execution, which begins with the work of creation. This is the beginning and basis of all revelation, and also the foundation of all religious life.

1. Creation in General.

The word creation is not always used in the same sense in the Bible. In the strict sense of the word it denotes that work of God by which He produces the world and all that is in it, partly without the use of pre-existent materials, and partly out of material that is by its nature unfit, for the manifestation of His glory. It is represented as a work of the triune God,

Gen. 1:2; “And the earth was waste and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep: and the Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters. (Gen. 1:2)”

Job 26:13; “By his Spirit the heavens are garnished; His hand has pierced the swift serpent. (Job 26:13)”

33:4; “The Spirit of God has made me, And the breath of the Almighty gives me life. (Job 33:4)”

Ps. 33:6; “By the word of Jehovah the heavens were made, And all their host by the breath of his mouth. (Ps. 33:6)”

Isa. 40:12, 13; “12 Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and calculated heaven with the yardstick, and contained the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? 13 Who has directed the Spirit of Jehovah, or being his counselor has taught him? (Isaiah 40:12-13)”

John 1:3; “All things were made through him; and without him nothing was made that has been made. (John 1:3)”

1Cor. 8:6; “yet to us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we to him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and we through him. (1Co. 8:6)”

Col. 1:15-17. “15 who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; 16 for in him all things were created, in the heavens and on the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through him, and for him; 17 and he is before all things, and in him all things consist. (Col. 1:15-17)”

Over against Pantheism we must maintain that it was a free act of God. He did not need the world.

Eph. 1:11; “in whom also we were made a heritage, having been foreordained according to the purpose of the One who works all things after the counsel of his will; (Eph. 1:11)”

Rev. 4:11. “Worthy are you, our Lord and our God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power: for you created all things, and because of your will they existed, and were created. (Rev. 4:11)”

And over against Deism, that He created the world so that it always remains dependent on Him. He must uphold it from day to day,

Acts 17:28; “for in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain even of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. (Acts 17:28)”

Heb. 1:3. “who being the bright radiance of his glory, and the very image of his substance, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; (Heb. 1:3)”

a. The time of creation. The Bible teaches us that God created the world “in the beginning,” that is, at the beginning of all temporal things. Back of this beginning lies a timeless eternity. The first part of the work of creation mentioned in

Gen. 1:1 “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. (Gen. 1:1)”

was strictly creation out of nothing or without the use of preexistent material. The expression “creation out of nothing” is not found in the Bible, but in one of the apocryphal books, 2Macc. 7:28. However, the idea is clearly taught in such passages as

Gen. 1:1; Ps. 33:9; “For he spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast. (Ps. 33:9)”

148:5; “Let them praise the name of Jehovah; For he commanded, and they were created. (Ps. 148:5)”

Rom. 4:7; “[saying], Blessed are those whose iniquities are forgiven, And whose sins are covered. (Rom. 4:7)”

Heb. 11:3. “By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God, so that what is seen has not been made out of things which appear. (Heb. 11:3)”

b. The final purpose of creation. Some find the final end or purpose of creation in the happiness of man. They say that God could not make Himself the final end, because He is sufficient to Himself. But it would seem to be self-evident that God does not exist for man, but man for God. The creature cannot be the final end of creation. The Bible teaches us clearly that God created the world for the manifestation of His glory. Naturally, the revelation of the glory of God is not intended as an empty show to be admired by the creature, but also aims at promoting their welfare and attuning their hearts to the praise of the Creator.

Isa. 43:7; “every one who is called by my name, and whom I have created for my glory, whom I have formed, yes, whom I have made.”

Isa. 60:21; “Your people also will be all righteous; they will inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified.”

Isa. 61:3; “to appoint to those who mourn in Zion, to give to them a garland for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of Jehovah, that he may be glorified.”

Ezek. 36:21, 22; “21 But I had regard for my holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations, where they went. 22 Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord Jehovah: I do not do [this] for your sake, O house of Israel, but for my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations, where you went.”

Ezek. 39:7; “And I will make known my holy name in the midst of my people Israel; nor will I suffer my holy name to be profaned any more: and the nations will know that I am Jehovah, the Holy One in Israel.”

Luke 2:14; “Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace among men in whom he is well pleased.”

Rom. 9:17; “For the scripture says to Pharaoh, For this very purpose I raised you up, that I might show my power in you, and that my name might be published abroad in all the earth.”

Rom. 11:36; “For all things are of him, and through him, and for him. To him [be] the glory for ever. Amen.”

1Cor. 15:28; “And when all things have been subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to the one who subjected all things to him, that God may be all in all. (1Co. 15:28)”

Eph. 1:5, 6, 12, 14; “5 having foreordained us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, 6 to the praise of the glory of his grace, which he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved:...12 to the end that we should be to the praise of his glory, we who had before hoped in Christ: ...14 which is an earnest of our inheritance, to the redemption of [God’s] own possession, to the praise of his glory. (Eph. 1:5-6,12,14)”

3:9, 10; “9 and to make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God who created all things; 10 to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known through the church to the principalities and the powers in the heavenly [places], (Eph. 3:9-10)”

Col. 1:16. “for in him all things were created, in the heavens and on the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through him, and for him; (Col. 1:16)”

c. Substitutes for the doctrine of creation. They who reject the doctrine of creation resort to one of three theories for the explanation of the world. (1) Some say that original matter is eternal, and out of it the world arose, either by mere chance, or by some higher directing force. But this is impossible, because you cannot have two eternals and therefore two infinites alongside of each other. (2) Others maintain that God and the world are essentially one, and that the world is a necessary issue (outflow) of the divine being. But this view robs God of His power of self-determination, and men of their freedom and of their moral and responsible character. It also makes God responsible for all the evil there is in the world. (3) Still others take refuge in the theory of evolution. But this is clearly a mistake, since evolution offers no explanation of the world. It already presupposes something that evolves.

2. The Spiritual World.

God created not only a material but also a spiritual world, consisting of the angels.

a. Proof for the existence of angels. Modern liberal theology has largely discarded the belief in such spiritual beings. The Bible, however, assumes their existence throughout and ascribes to them real personality,

2Sam. 14:20; “your servant Joab has done this thing to change the face of the matter: and my lord is wise, according to the wisdom of an angel of God, to know all things that are in the earth. (2Sa. 14:20)”

Matt. 24:36; “But no one knows of that day and hour, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only. (Mat. 24:36)”

Jude 6; “And angels that did not keep their own principality, but left their proper habitation, he has kept in everlasting bonds under darkness until the judgment of the great day. (Jude v.6)”

Rev. 14:10. “he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is prepared unmixed in the cup of his anger; and he will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: (Rev. 14:10)”

Some ascribe to them airy bodies, but this is contrary to Scripture. They are pure spiritual beings (though sometimes assuming bodily forms),

Eph. 6:12; “For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual [hosts] of wickedness in the heavenly [places]. (Eph. 6:12)”

Heb. 1:14, “Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to do service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation? (Heb. 1:14)”

without flesh and bone,

Luke 24:39, “See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit does not have flesh and bones, as you behold me having. (Luke 24:39)”

and therefore invisible,

Col. 1:16. “for in him all things were created, in the heavens and on the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through him, and for him; (Col. 1:16)”

Some of them are good, holy and elect,

Mark 8:38; “For whoever will be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of man also will be ashamed of him, when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels. (Mark 8:38)”

Luke 9:26; “For whoever will be ashamed of me and of my words, of him will the Son of man be ashamed, when he comes in his own glory, and [the glory] of the Father, and of the holy angels. (Luke 9:26)”

2Cor. 11:14; “And no marvel; for even Satan fashions himself into an angel of light. (2Co. 11:14)”

1Tim. 5:21; “I charge [you] in the sight of God, and Christ Jesus, and the elect angels, that you observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing by partiality. (1Tim. 5:21)”

Rev. 14:10, “he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is prepared unmixed in the cup of his anger; and he will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: (Rev. 14:10)”

and others are fallen from their original state, and therefore evil,

John 8:44; “You are of [your] father the devil, and the lusts of your father it is your will to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of [liars]. (John 8:44)”

2Pet. 2:4; “For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them down to hell, and committed them to pits of darkness, to be reserved to judgment; (2Pet. 2:4)”

Jude 6. “And angels that did not keep their own principality, but left their proper habitation, he has kept in everlasting bonds under darkness until the judgment of the great day. (Jude v.6)”

b. Classes of angels. There are evidently different classes of angels. The Bible speaks of cherubim, who reveal the power, majesty, and glory of God, and guard His holiness in the garden of Eden, in tabernacle and temple, and at the descent of God to the earth.

Gen. 3:24; “So he drove out the man; and he placed the Cherubim at the East of the garden of Eden, and the flame of a sword which turned every way, to guard the way of the tree of life. (Gen. 3:24)”

Ex. 25:18; “And you will make two cherubim of gold; you will make them of beaten work, at the two ends of the mercy-seat. (Exodus 25:18)”

2Sam. 22:11; “And he rode on a cherub, and flew; Indeed, he was seen on the wings of the wind. (2Sa. 22:11)”

Ps. 18:10; “And he rode on a cherub, and flew; Indeed, he soared on the wings of the wind. (Ps. 18:10)”

80:1; “Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock; you who sit [above] the cherubim, shine forth. (Ps. 80:1)”

99:1; “Jehovah reigns; let the peoples tremble: He sits [above] the cherubim; let the earth be moved. (Ps. 99:1)”

Isa. 37:16. “O Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel, that sit [above] the cherubim, you, and you alone, are the God of all the kingdoms of the earth; you have made heaven and earth. (Isaiah 37:16)”

Alongside of these are seraphim, mentioned only in

Isa. 6:2, 3, 6. “2 Above him stood the seraphim: each one had six wings; with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. 3 And one cried to another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is Jehovah of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. ...6 Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: (Isaiah 6:2-3,6)”

They stand as servants round about the throne of the heavenly King, sing His praises, and are ever ready to do His bidding. They serve the purpose of reconciliation and prepare men for the proper approach to God.

Two angels are mentioned by name. The first of these is Gabriel,

Dan. 8:16; “And I heard a man’s voice between [the banks of] the Ulai, which called, and said, Gabriel, make this man understand the vision. (Daniel 8:16)”

9:21; “indeed, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation. (Daniel 9:21)”

Luke 1:19, 26. “19 And the angel answering said to him, I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God; and I was sent to speak to you, and to bring you these good tidings. ... 26 Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, (Luke 1:19,26)”

Evidently it was his special task to convey divine revelations to man and to interpret them. The second is Michael,

Dan. 10:13, 21; “13 But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withheld me one and twenty days; but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me: and I remained there with the kings of Persia. ...21 But I will tell you what is inscribed in the writing of truth: and there is none who holds with me against these, but Michael your prince. (Daniel 10:13,21)”

Jude 9; “But Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring a railing judgment against him, but said, The Lord rebuke you. (Jude v.9)”

Rev. 12:7. “And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels [going forth] to war with the dragon; and the dragon warred and his angels; (Rev. 12:7)”

In the Epistle of Jude he is called the archangel. He is the valiant warrior fighting the battles of Jehovah against the enemies of the people of God and against the evil powers in the spirit world. Besides these the Bible mentions in general terms principalities, powers, thrones, dominions,

Eph. 1:21; “far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in what is to come: (Eph. 1:21)”

3:10; “to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known through the church to the principalities and the powers in the heavenly [places], (Eph. 3:10)”

Col. 1:16; “for in him all things were created, in the heavens and on the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through him, and for him; (Col. 1:16)”

2:10; “and in him you are made full, who is the head of all principality and power: (Col. 2:10)”

1Pet. 3:22. “who is one the right hand of God, having gone into heaven; angels and authorities and powers being made subject to him. (1Pet. 3:22)”

These names point to differences of rank and dignity among the angels.

c. Work of the angels. The angels are represented as praising God continually,

Ps. 103:20; “Bless Jehovah, you his angels, who are mighty in strength, who fulfill his word, Listening to the voice of his word. (Ps. 103:20)”

Isa. 6; Rev. 5:11. “And I saw, and I heard a voice of many angels round about the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and they numbered ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; (Rev. 5:11)”

Since the entrance of sin into the world they serve those who inherit salvation,

Heb. 1:14, “Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to do service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation? (Heb. 1:14)”

rejoice at the conversion of sinners,

watch over believers,

Ps. 34:7; “The angel of Jehovah encamps round about those who fear him, And delivers them. (Ps. 34:7)”

91:11, “For he will give his angels charge over you, To keep you in all your ways. (Ps. 91:11)”

protect the little ones,

Matt. 18:10, “See that you do not despise one of these little ones; for I say to you, that in heaven their angels always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven. (Mat. 18:10)”

are present in the Church,

1Cor. 11:10; “for this reason, the woman ought to have [a sign of] authority on her head, because of the angels. (1Co. 11:10)”

Eph. 3:10; “to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known through the church to the principalities and the powers in the heavenly [places], (Eph. 3:10)”

1Tim. 5:21, “I charge [you] in the sight of God, and Christ Jesus, and the elect angels, that you observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing by partiality. (1Tim. 5:21)”

and convey believers to the bosom of Abraham,

Luke 16:22. “And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and that he was carried away by the angels into Abraham’s bosom: and the rich man also died, and was buried. (Luke 16:22)”

They also frequently bear special revelations of God,

Dan. 9:21-23; “21 indeed, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation. 22 And he instructed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you wisdom and understanding. 23 At the beginning of your supplications the commandment went forth, and I have come to tell you; for you are greatly beloved: therefore consider the matter, and understand the vision. (Daniel 9:21-23)”

Zech. 1:12-14, “12 Then the angel of Jehovah answered and said, O Jehovah of hosts, how long will you not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which you have been indignant these seventy years? 13 And Jehovah answered the angel who talked with me with good words, [even] comfortable words. 14 So the angel who talked with me said to me, Cry, saying, Thus says Jehovah of hosts: I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy. (Zec. 1:12-14)”

communicate blessings to His people,

Ps. 91:11, 12; “11 For he will give his angels charge over you, To keep you in all your ways. 12 They will bear you up in their hands, Lest you dash your foot against a stone. (Ps. 91:11-12)”

Isa. 63:9; “In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bore them, and carried them all the days of old. (Isaiah 63:9)”

Dan. 6:22; “My God has sent his angel, and has shut the lions’ mouths, and they have not hurt me; forasmuch as before him innocence was found in me; and also before you, O king, have I done no hurt. (Daniel 6:22)”

Acts 5:19, “But an angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them out, and said, (Acts 5:19)”

and execute judgments on His enemies,

Gen. 19:1, 13; “1 And the two angels came to Sodom at evening; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot saw them, and rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face to the earth; ...13 for we will destroy this place, because their cry has grown great before Jehovah: and Jehovah has sent us to destroy it. (Gen. 19:1,13)”

2Kings 19:35; “And it came to pass that night, that the angel of Jehovah went forth, and struck in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred eighty and five thousand: and when men arose early in the morning, behold, these were all dead bodies. (2 Kings 19:35)”

Matt. 13:41. “The Son of man will send forth his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all things that cause stumbling, and those who do iniquity, (Mat. 13:41)”

d. Evil angels. Besides the good there are also evil angels, who delight in opposing God and destroying His work. They were created good, but did not retain their original position,

2Pet. 2:4; “For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them down to hell, and committed them to pits of darkness, to be reserved to judgment; (2Pet. 2:4)”

Jude 6. “And angels that did not keep their own principality, but left their proper habitation, he has kept in everlasting bonds under darkness until the judgment of the great day. (Jude v.6)”

Their special sin is not revealed, but they probably revolted against God and aspired to divine authority,

compare 2Thess. 2:4, 9. “4 the one who opposes and exalts himself against all that is called God or that is worshipped; so that he sits in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God. ...9 [even he], whose coming is according to the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, (2 Thessalonians 2:4,9)”

Satan, who was evidently one of the princes among the angels, became the recognized head of those that fell away,

Matt. 25:41; “Then will he say also to them on the left hand, Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels: (Mat. 25:41)”

9:34; “But the Pharisees said, By the prince of the demons he casts out demons. (Mat. 9:34)”

Eph. 2:2. “in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the powers of the air, of the spirit that now works in the sons of disobedience; (Eph. 2:2)”

With superhuman power he and his hosts seek to destroy the work of God. They seek to blind and mislead even the elect, and encourage the sinner in his evil way.

3. The Material World.

In Gen. 1:1 we have the record of the original creation of heaven and earth. The rest of the chapter is devoted to what is often called secondary creation, the completion of the work in six days.

a. The days of creation. The question is frequently debated, whether the days of creation were ordinary days or not. Geologists and evolutionists speak of them as long periods of time. Now the word ‘day’ does not always denote a period of twenty-four hours in the Scripture.

Compare Gen 1:5; “And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day. (Gen. 1:5)”

2:4; “These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that Jehovah God made earth and heaven. (Gen. 2:4)”

Ps. 50:15; “And call on me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will glorify me. (Ps. 50:15)”

Eccl. 7:14; “In the day of prosperity be joyful, and in the day of adversity consider; indeed, God has made the one side by side with the other, to the end that man should not find out anything [that will be] after him. (Ecclesiastes 7:14)”

Zech. 4:10. “For who has despised the day of small things? for these seven will rejoice, and will see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel; [these are] the eyes of Jehovah, which run to and fro through the whole earth. (Zec. 4:10)”

Yet the literal interpretation of the word ‘day’ in the narrative of creation is favored by the following considerations:

- (a) The Hebrew word yom (day) primarily denotes an ordinary day, and should be so understood unless the context demands another interpretation.
- (b) The repeated mention of morning and evening favors this interpretation.
- (c) It was evidently an ordinary day which Jehovah set aside and hallowed as a day of rest.
- (d) In Ex. 20:9-11 Israel is commanded to labor six days and to rest on the seventh, because Jehovah made heaven and earth in six days and rested on the seventh day.
- (e) The last three days were evidently ordinary days, for they were determined by the earth's relation to the sun. And if they were ordinary days, why not the others?

b. Work of the six days.

On the first day light was created, and by the separation of light and darkness day and night were constituted. This does not conflict with the idea that sun, moon, and stars were created on the fourth day, for these are not themselves light, but light-bearers.

The work of the second day was also a work of separation, the separation of the waters above from the waters below by the establishment of the firmament.

On the third day the work of separation is continued in the separation of the sea and the dry land. In addition to that the vegetable kingdom of plants and trees was established. By the word of His power God caused the earth to bring forth flowerless plants, vegetables, and fruit trees, each yielding seed after their kind.

The fourth day brought the creation of sun, moon, and stars, to serve a variety of purposes: to divide day and night, to serve as signs of weather conditions, to determine the succession of the seasons and of days and years, and to function as lights for the earth.

The work of the fifth day consisted in the creation of birds and fishes, the inhabitants of the air and of the water.

Finally, the sixth day is marked by the climax of the work of creation. The higher classes of land animals were created, and the whole work was crowned by the creation of man in the image of God. His body was formed out of the dust of the earth, while his soul was an immediate creation of God.

On the seventh day God rested from His creative labors and delighted in the contemplation of His work.

PARALLEL “decolumnized.” Notice the parallel between the work of the first and that of the last three days:

1. The creation of light.
4. *Creation of light-bearers.*

2. Creation of expanse and separation of waters.

5. *Creation of fowls of the air and fishes of the sea.*

3. Separation of waters and dry land, and preparation of the earth as a habitation for man and beast.

6. *Creation of the beasts of the fields, the cattle, and all creeping things; and man.*

c. The theory of evolution. Evolutionists want to substitute their view of the origin of things for the Scriptural doctrine. They believe that from the simplest forms of matter and life all existing species of plants and animals (including man), and also the various manifestations of life, such an intelligence, morality, and religion, developed by a perfectly natural process, purely as the result of natural forces. This is merely an assumption, however, and one that fails at several points. Moreover, it is in hopeless conflict with the narrative of creation as it is found in the Bible.

To memorize.

Passages bearing on:

a. The fact of creation:

Gen: 1:1. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

Ps. 33:6. "By the word of Jehovah the heavens were made, and all their host by the breath of His mouth."

John 1:3. "All things were made through Him; and without Him nothing was made that has been made."

Heb. 11:3. "By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God, so that what is seen has not been made out of things which appear."

b. The final end of creation:

Isa. 43:6, 7. "Bring...every one who is called by my name, and whom I have created for my glory, whom I have formed; indeed, whom I have made."

Ps. 19:1. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork."

Ps. 148:13. "Let them praise the name of Jehovah; for His name alone is exalted: His glory is above the earth and the heavens."

Compare the connection.

c. Angels:

Ps. 103:20. "Bless Jehovah, you His angels, who are mighty in strength, who fulfill His word, listening to the voice of His word."

Heb. 1:14. "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to do service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?"

Jude 6. "And the angels that did not keep their principality, but left their proper habitation, He has kept in everlasting bonds under darkness until the judgment of the great day."

d. Time of creation:

Gen. 1:1. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

Ex. 20:11. "For in six days Jehovah made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: therefore Jehovah blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy."

For Further Study:

a. In what sense is the word 'to create' used in

Ps. 51:10; "Create in me a clean heart, O God; And renew a right spirit within me. (Ps. 51:10)"

104:30; "you send forth your Spirit, they are created; And you renew the face of the ground. (Ps. 104:30)"

Isa. 45:7? "I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil. I am Jehovah, that does all these things. (Isaiah 45:7)"

b. Do [the following verses]

Gen. 1:11, 12, 20, 24 "11 And God said, Let the earth put forth grass, herbs yielding seed, [and] fruit-trees bearing fruit after their kind, in which is their seed, on the earth: and it was so. 12 And the earth brought forth grass, herbs yielding seed after their kind, and trees bearing fruit, in which is their seed, after their kind: and God saw that it was good....20 And God said, Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. 24 And God said, Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind, cattle, and creeping things, and beasts of the earth after their kind: and it was so. (Gen. 1:11-12,20,24)"

favor the idea of evolution?

Compare Gen. 1:21, 25; "21 And God created the great sea-monsters, and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarmed, after their kind, and every winged bird after its kind: and God saw that it was good. ...25 And God made the beasts of the earth after their kind, and the cattle after their kind, and everything that creeps on the ground after its kind: and God saw that it was good. (Gen. 1:21,25)"

2:9. "And out of the ground Jehovah God made grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life as well, in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. (Gen. 2:9)"

c. Do the following passages tell us anything about the sin of the angels? if so, what?

2Pet. 2:4; "For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them down to hell, and committed them to pits of darkness, to be reserved to judgment; (2Pet. 2:4)"

Jude 6; compare also 2Thess. 2:4-12. "4 the one who opposes and exalts himself against all that is called God or that is worshipped; so that he sits in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God. 5 Do you not remember, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? 6 And now you know what restrains, to the end that he may be revealed in his own season. 7 For the mystery of lawlessness already works: only [there is] one that restrains now, until he be taken out of the way. 8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will slay with the breath of his mouth, and bring to nothing by the manifestation of his coming; 9 [even he], whose coming is according to the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, 10 and with all deceit of unrighteousness for those who perish; because they did not receive the love of the truth, so that they might be saved. 11 And for this reason, God sends

them a delusion, so that they would believe a lie: 12 so that they all might be judged who did not believe the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. (2 Thessalonians 2:4-12)"

Questions for Review

1. What is creation?
2. Was creation a free or a necessary act of God?
3. Is the word 'create' always used in the same sense in Scripture?
4. Does the Bible prove creation out of nothing? Where?
5. What two views are there as to the final end of creation?
6. In what sense is the glory of God the final end?
7. What substitutes have been suggested for the doctrine of creation?
8. What is the nature of the angels?
9. What orders of angels are named in Scripture?
10. What is the function of Gabriel and Michael?
11. What is the work of the angels?
12. What proof have we for the existence of evil angels?
13. Were they created evil?
14. Were the days in Gen. ordinal days or long periods?
15. What did God create on each of the six days?
16. Is the theory of evolution consistent with the doctrine of creation?
17. Can you name some of the points on which they differ?

Chapter 10: Providence

Since God not only created the world but also upholds it, we naturally pass from the doctrine of creation to that of divine providence. This may be defined as that work of God in which He preserves all His creatures, is active in all that happens in the world, and directs all things to their appointed end. It includes three elements, of which the first pertains primarily to the being, the second to the activity, and the third to the purpose of all things.

1. The Elements of Divine Providence. We distinguish three elements:

a. Divine preservation. This is that continuous work of God by which He upholds all things. While the world has a distinct existence and is not a part of God, it nevertheless has the ground of its continued existence in God and not in itself. It endures through a continued exercise of divine power by which all things are maintained in being and action. This doctrine is taught in the following passages:

Ps. 136:25; “Who gives food to all flesh; For his lovingkindness [endures] for ever. (Ps. 136:25)”

145:15; “The eyes of all wait for you; And you give them their food in due season. (Ps. 145:15)”

Neh. 9:6; “you are Jehovah, even you alone; you have made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all things that are on it, the seas and all that is in them, and you preserve them all; and the host of heaven worships you. (Nehemiah 9:6)”

Acts 17:28; “for in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain even of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. (Acts 17:28)”

Col. 1:17; “and he is before all things, and in him all things consist. (Col. 1:17)”

Heb. 1:3. “who being the bright radiance of his glory, and the very image of his substance, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; (Heb. 1:3)”

b. Divine concurrence. This may be defined as that work of God by which He co-operates with all His creatures and causes them to act precisely as they do. It implies that there are real secondary causes in the world, such as the powers of nature and the will of man, and asserts that these do not work independently of God. God works in every act of His creatures, not only in their good but also in their evil acts. He stimulates them to action, accompanies their action at every moment, and makes this action effective. However, we should never think of God and man as equal causes; the former is the primary, and the latter only a secondary cause. Nor should we conceive of them as each doing a part of the work like a team of horses. The same deed is in its entirety both a deed of God and a deed of man. Moreover, we should guard against the idea that this co-operation makes God responsible for man's sinful deeds. This doctrine is based on Scripture,

Deut. 8:18; “But you will remember Jehovah your God, for he is the one who gives you power to get wealth; so that he may establish his covenant which he swore to your fathers, as it is today. (Deut. 8:18)”

Ps. 104:20, 21, 30; “20 you make darkness, and it is night, In which all the beasts of the forest creep forth. 21 The young lions roar after their prey, And seek their food from God. ...30 you send forth your Spirit, they are created; And you renew the face of the ground. (Ps. 104:20-21,30)”

Amos 3:6; “Will the trumpet be blown in a city, and the people not be afraid? will evil befall a city, and Jehovah has not done it? (Amos 3:6)”

Matt. 5:45; “that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven: for he makes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the just and the unjust. (Mat. 5:45)”

10:29; “Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? and not one of them will fall on the ground without your Father: (Mat. 10:29)”

Acts 14:17; “And yet He did not leave himself without witness, in that he did good and gave you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling your hearts with food and gladness. (Acts 14:17)”

Phil. 2:13. “for it is God who works in you both to will and to work, for his good pleasure. (Phil. 2:13)”

c. Divine government. This is the continued activity of God by which He rules all things so that they answer to the purpose of their existence. God is represented as King of the universe both in the Old and in the New Testament. He adapts His rule to the nature of the creatures which He governs; His government of the physical world differs from that of the spiritual world. It is universal,

Ps. 103:19; “Jehovah has established his throne in the heavens; And his kingdom rules over all. (Ps. 103:19)”

Dan. 4:34, 35, “34 And at the end of the days I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted up my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to me, and I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honored the one who lives for ever; for his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom from generation to generation. 35 And all the inhabitants of the earth are considered nothing; and he does according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say to him, What are you doing? (Daniel 4:34-35)”

includes the most insignificant things,

Matt. 10:29-31, “29 Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? and not one of them will fall on the ground without your Father: 30 but the very hairs of your head are all numbered. 31 Therefore, fear not: you are more valuable than many sparrows. (Mat. 10:29-30)”

and what is seemingly accidental,

Prov. 16:33, “The lot is cast into the lap; But the whole disposition is of Jehovah. (Prov. 16:33)”

and bears on both the good and the evil deeds of man,

Phil. 2:13; “for it is God who works in you both to will and to work, for his good pleasure. (Phil. 2:13)”

Gen. 50:20; “And as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save many people alive. (Gen. 50:20)”

Acts 14:16. “who in the generations gone by suffered all the nations to walk in their own ways. (Acts 14:16)”

2. Misconceptions of Divine Providence. In the doctrine of providence we should guard against two misconceptions:

a. The Deistic conception. This is to the effect that God’s concern with the world is of the most general nature. He created the world, established its laws, set it in motion, and then withdrew

from it. He wound it up like a clock, and now lets it run off. It is only when something goes wrong that He interferes with its regular operation. God, is only a God afar off.

b. The Pantheistic conception. Pantheism does not recognize the distinction between God and the world. It identifies the two, and therefore leaves no room for providence in the proper sense of the word. There are, strictly speaking, no such things as secondary causes. God is the direct author of all that transpires in the world. Even the acts which we ascribe to man as really acts of God. God is only a God that is near, and not a God afar off.

3. Extraordinary Providences or Miracles. We distinguish between general and special providences, and among the latter the miracles occupy an important place. A miracle is a supernatural work of God, that is a work which is accomplished without the mediation of secondary causes. If God sometimes apparently uses secondary causes in the production of miracles, He employs them in an unusual way, so that the work is after all supernatural. Some regard miracles as impossible, because they involve a violation of the laws of nature.

But this is a mistake. The so-called laws of nature merely represent God's usual method of working. And the fact that God generally works according to a definite order does not mean that He cannot depart from this order, and cannot without violating or disturbing it bring about unusual results. Even man can lift up his hand and throw a ball into the air in spite of the law of gravitation and without in any way disturbing its operation. Surely, this is not impossible for the omnipotent God. The miracles of the Bible are means of revelation.

Num. 16:28; "And Moses said, By this you will know that Jehovah has sent me to do all these works; for [I have] not [done them] of my own mind. (Numbers 16:28)"

Jer. 32:20; "who set signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, even to this day, both in Israel and among [other] men; and made you a name, as it is today; (Jeremiah 32:20)"

John 2:11; "Jesus did this beginning of his signs in Cana of Galilee, and manifested his glory; and his disciples believed on him. (John 2:11)"

5:36. "But the witness which I have is greater than [that of] John; for the works which the Father has given me to accomplish, the very works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father has sent me. (John 5:36)"

To memorize. Passages referring to:

a. Preservation:

Ps. 36:6b. "O Jehovah, you preserve man and beast."

Neh. 9:6. "you are Jehovah, even you alone; you have made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all things that are on it, the seas all that is in them, and you preserve them all."

Col. 1:17. "And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist."

b. Concurrence.

Deut. 8:18a. "But you will remember Jehovah your God, for He is the One who gives you power to get wealth."

Amos 3:6. "Will the trumpet be blown in a city, and the people not be afraid? Will evil befall a city, and Jehovah not have done it?"

Phil. 2:13. “For it is God who works in you both to will and to work, for His good pleasure.”

c. Government.

Ps. 103:19. “Jehovah has established His throne in the heavens; and His Kingdom rules over all.”

Dan. 4:3b. “His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and His dominion is from generation to generation.”

1Tim. 6:15. “Which in its own times He will show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords.”

d. Miracles and their design:

Ex. 15:11. “Who is like to You, O Jehovah, among the gods? Who is like You glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?”

Ps. 72:18. “Blessed be Jehovah God, the God of Israel, who alone does wondrous things.”

Mark 2:10, 11. “But that you may know that the Son of man has power on earth to forgive sins, He says to the sick of the palsy, I say to you, Arise, and take up your bed, and go your way into your house.”

John 2:11. “Jesus did this beginning of his miracles in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed on Him.”

For Further Study:

a. Name some examples of special providences.

Compare Deut. 2:7; “For Jehovah your God has blessed you in all the work of your hand; he has known your walking through this great wilderness: these forty years Jehovah your God has been with you; you have lacked nothing. (Deut. 2:7)”

I Kings 17:6, 16; “6 And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank from the brook. ...16 The jar of meal did not waste, nor did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of Jehovah, which he spoke by Elijah. (1 Kings 17:6,16)”

2Kings 4:6; “And it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said to her son, Bring me another vessel. And he said to her, There are no more vessels. And the oil stayed. (2 Kings 4:6)”

Matt. 14:20. “And they all ate, and were filled: and they took up what remained of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full. (Mat. 14:20)”

b. How should belief in divine providence affect our cares?

Isa. 41:10; “Fear you not, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you; yes, I will help you; indeed, I will uphold you with the right hand of my righteousness. (Isaiah 41:10)”

Matt. 6:32; “For the Gentiles seek after all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. (Mat. 6:32)”

Luke 12:7; “But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not: you are more valuable than many sparrows. (Luke 12:7)”

Phil. 4:6, 7; “6 In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus. (Phil. 4:6-7)”

1Pet. 5:7. “casting all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you. (1Pet. 5:7)”

c. Name some of the blessings of providence.

Compare Isa. 25:4; “For you have been a stronghold to the poor, a stronghold to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shade from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall. (Isaiah 25:4)”

Ps. 121:4; “Behold, the one who keeps Israel Will neither slumber nor sleep. (Ps. 121:4)”

Luke 12:7; “But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not: you are more valuable than many sparrows. (Luke 12:7)”

Deut. 33:27; “The eternal God is [your] dwelling-place, And underneath are the everlasting arms. (Deut. 33:27a)”

Ps. 37:28; “For Jehovah loves justice, And does not forsake his saints; They are preserved for ever: But the seed of the wicked will be cut off. (Ps. 37:28)”

2Tim. 4:18. “The Lord will deliver me from every evil work, and will save me to his heavenly kingdom: to whom [be] the glory forever and ever. Amen. (2Tim. 4:18)”

Questions for Review

1. How is the doctrine of providence related to that of creation?
2. What is divine providence?
3. What is the difference between general and special providence?
4. What are the objects of divine providence?
5. What are the three elements of providence, and how do they differ?
6. How must we conceive of the divine concurrence?
7. How far does the divine government extend?
8. What is a miracle, and what purpose do the scriptural miracles serve?
9. Why do some consider miracles impossible?

PART III – THE DOCTRINE OF MAN IN RELATION TO GOD

Chapter 11: Man in His Original State

From the discussion of the doctrine of God we pass on to that of man, the crown of God's handiwork.

1. The Essential Elements of Human Nature.

The usual view is that man consists of two parts, body and soul. This is in harmony with the self-consciousness of man, and is also borne out by a study of Scripture, which speaks of man as consisting of "body and soul,"

Matt. 6:25; "Therefore I say to you, do not be anxious for your life, what you will eat, or what you will drink; nor yet for your body, what you will put on. Is not the life more than the food, and the body than the clothing? (Mat. 6:25)"

10:28, "And do not be afraid of those who kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. (Mat. 10:28)"

or of "body and spirit,"

Eccl. 12:7; "and the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit returns to God who gave it. (Ecclesiastes 12:7)"

1Cor. 5:3,5. "3 For truly, being absent in body but present in spirit, I have already judged the one who has so worked this thing as though I were present,...5 to deliver such a person to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. (1Co. 5:3,5)"

Some are of the opinion that the words 'soul' and 'spirit' denote different elements, and that therefore man consists of three parts, body, soul, and spirit,

Compare 1Thess. 5:23. "And the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Thessalonians 5:23)"

It is evident, however, that the two words 'soul' and 'spirit' are used interchangeably. Death is sometimes described as a giving up of the soul,

Gen. 35:18; "And it came to pass, as her soul was departing (for she died), that she called his name Ben-oni: but his father called him Benjamin. (Gen. 35:18)"

I Kings 17:21, "And he stretched himself on the child three times, and cried to Jehovah, and said, O Jehovah my God, I pray you, let this child's soul come into him again. (1 Kings 17:21)"

and sometimes as the giving up of the spirit,

Luke 23:46; "And Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, Father, into your hands I commend my spirit: and having said this, he gave up the ghost. (Luke 23:46)"

Acts 7:59. "And they stoned Stephen, calling on [the Lord], and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. (Acts 7:59)"

The dead are in some cases named “souls,”

Rev. 9:6; “And in those days men will seek death, and will in no way find it; and they will desire to die, and death flees from them. (Rev. 9:6)”

20:4, “And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them: and [I saw] the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, and for the word of God, and such as did not worship the beast, nor his image, and did not receive the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they lived, and reigned with Christ a thousand years. (Rev. 20:4)”

and in others ‘spirits,’

1Pet 3:19; “in which he also went and preached to the spirits in prison, (1Pet. 3:19)”

Heb. 12:23. “to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, (Heb. 12:23)”

The two terms denote the spiritual element in man from different points of view. As spirit it is the principle of life and action, which controls the body, and as soul it is the personal subject, which thinks and feels and wills, and in some cases the seat of the affections.

2. The Origin of the Soul in Each Individual.

There are three views respecting the origin of the individual souls.

a. Pre-existentialism. Some advocated the idea that the souls of men existed in a previous state, and that something that happened then accounts for their present condition. A few found in this an explanation of the fact that man is born as a sinner. This view finds no favor now.

b. Traducianism. According to this View men derive their souls as well as their bodies from their parents. This is the common view in the Lutheran Church. Support for it is found in the fact that nothing is said about the creation of Eve’s soul, and that descendants are said to be in the loins of their Fathers,

Gen. 46:26; “All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, that came out of his loins, besides Jacob’s sons’ wives, all the souls were sixty six; (Gen. 46:26)”

Heb. 7:9, 10. “9 And, so to say, through Abraham even Levi, who receives tithes, has paid tithes; 10 for he was still in the loins of his father, when Melchizedek met him. (Heb. 7:9-10)”

Furthermore, it seems to be favored by the fact that in the case of animals both body and soul are passed on from the old to the young, by the inheritance of family traits and peculiarities, and by the inheritance of sinful corruption, which is a matter of the soul more than of the body. However, it is burdened with serious difficulties. It either makes the parents creators, or assumes that the soul of man can be divided into various parts. Moreover, it endangers the sinlessness of Jesus.

c. Creationism. This holds that each soul is a direct creation of God, of which the time cannot be precisely determined. The soul is supposed to be created pure, but to become sinful even before birth by entering into that complex of sin by which humanity as a whole is burdened. This view is common in Reformed circles. It is favored by the fact that Scripture represents the body and the soul of man as having different origins,

Eccl. 12:7; “and the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit returns to God who gave it. (Ecclesiastes 12:7)”

Isa. 42:5; “Thus says God Jehovah, the one who created the heavens, and stretched them forth; the one who spread abroad the earth and what comes out of it; the one who gives breath to the people on it, and spirit to those who walk in it: (Isaiah 42:5)”

Zech. 12:1; “The burden of the word of Jehovah concerning Israel. [Thus] says Jehovah, who stretches forth the heavens, and lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him: (Zec. 12:1)”

Heb. 12:9. “Furthermore, we had the fathers of our flesh to chasten us, and we gave them reverence: will we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits, and live? (Heb. 12:9)”

Moreover, it is more in harmony with the spiritual nature of the soul, and safeguards the sinlessness of Jesus. It is not free from difficulties, however. It does not explain the inheritance of family traits, and may seem to make God the Creator of sinful souls.

3. Man as the Image of God.

The Bible teaches that man is created in the image of God. According to

Gen. 1:26, God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.”

The two words ‘image’ and ‘likeness’ evidently denote the same thing. The following passages show that they are used interchangeably:

Gen. 1:26, 27; “26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. 27 And God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. (Gen. 1:26-27)”

5:1; “This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God he made him; (Gen. 5:1)”

9:6; “Whoever sheds man’s blood, his blood will be shed by man: For he made man in the image of God. (Gen. 9:6)”

1Cor. 11:7; “For a man indeed ought not to have his head veiled, in so far as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man. (1Co. 11:7)”

Col. 3:10; “and have put on the new man, that is being renewed in knowledge after the image of the one who created him: (Col. 3:10)”

Jas. 3:9. “With it we bless the Lord and Father; and with it we curse men, who are made after the likeness of God: (James 3:9)”

The word ‘likeness’ probably stresses the fact that the image is most like or very similar. There are different views of the image of God in man:

a. The Roman Catholic view: Roman Catholics find the image of God in certain natural gifts with which man is endowed, such as the spirituality of the soul, the freedom of the will, and immortality. To these God added a supernatural gift, called original righteousness, to keep the lower nature in check. This is supposed to constitute man’s likeness to God.

b. The Lutheran view. The Lutherans are not all agreed on this point, but the prevailing opinion is that the image of God consists only in those spiritual qualities with which man was endowed at creation, namely, true knowledge, righteousness, and holiness. These may be designated original righteousness. This view is too restricted.

c. The Reformed view. The Reformed distinguish between the natural and the moral image of God. The former is the broader of the two, and is generally said to consist in man's spiritual, rational, moral, and immortal being. This was obscured but not lost by sin. The latter is the image of God in the more restricted sense, and consists in true knowledge, righteousness, and holiness. This was lost by sin and is restored in Christ,

Eph. 4:24; "and put on the new man, that after God has been created in righteousness and holiness of truth. (Eph. 4:24)"

Col. 3:10. [above]

Since man retained the image in the broader sense, he can still be called the image or image-bearer of God,

Gen. 9:6; 1Cor. 11:7; 15:49; "And as we have borne the image of the earthly, we will also bear the image of the heavenly. (1Co. 15:49)"

Jas 3:9. [above]

4. Man in the Covenant of Works.

God at once entered into covenant relationship with man. This original covenant is called the covenant of works.

a. Scripture proof for the covenant of works.

(1) Paul draws a parallel between Adam and Christ in Rom. 5:12-21

In Adam all men died, but in Christ all those who are His are made alive. This means that Adam was the representative head of all men, just as Christ is now the representative head of all those who are His.

Rom. 5:12-21. "12Therefore, as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed into all men, upon which all sinned: 13for until the law, sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law. 14Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the same way as Adam's transgression, who is a figure of the one who was to come. 15But unlike the trespass, thus indeed *is* the free gift. For if by the trespass of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God, and the gift which came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many. 16And *unlike it was* through one who sinned, *thus indeed* is the gift: for the judgment of one *led* to condemnation, but the free gift *led* from many trespasses to justification. 17For if, by the trespass of the one, death reigned through the one; much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one, Jesus Christ. 18So then as through one trespass condemnation [came] to all men; even so through one act of righteousness, justification of life [came] to all men. 19For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the one, the many will be made righteous. 20And the law entered besides, so the trespass might abound; but where sin abounded, grace abounded exceedingly more: 21so that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

(2) In Hos. 6:7 we read: "But they like Adam have transgressed the covenant" (Am. Rev.). Adam's sin is called a transgression of the covenant.

b. The elements of the covenant of works.

(1) The parties. A covenant is always a compact between two parties. In this case they are the triune God, the sovereign Lord of the universe, and Adam as the representative of the human race. Since these parties are very unequal, the covenant naturally partakes of the nature of an arrangement imposed on man.

(2) The promise. The promise of the covenant was the promise of life in the highest sense, life raised above the possibility of death. This is what believers now receive through Christ, the last Adam.

(3) The condition. The condition was that of absolute obedience. The positive command not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was clearly a test of pure obedience.

(4) The penalty. The penalty was death in the most inclusive sense of the word, physical, spiritual, and eternal. This consists not only in the separation of body and soul, but more fundamentally in the separation of the soul from God.

(5) The sacrament(s). In all probability the tree of life was the only sacrament of this covenant,-- if it was indeed a sacrament. It seems to have been appointed as a symbol and seal of life.

c. The present validity of the covenant of works. Arminians hold that this covenant was wholly set aside. But this is not correct. The demand of perfect obedience still stands for those who do not accept the righteousness of Christ.

Lev. 18:5; "You will therefore keep my statutes, and my ordinances; which if a man does, he will live in them: I am Jehovah. (Leviticus 18:5)"

Gal. 3:12. "and the law is not of faith; but, the one who does them will live in them. (Galatians 3:12)"

Though they cannot meet the requirement, the condition stands. It holds no more, however, for those who are in Christ, since He met the demands of the law for them. It ceased to be a way of life, for as such it is powerless after the fall.

To memorize. Passages bearing on:

a. The elements of human nature:

Matt. 10:28. "And do not be afraid of those who kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him who is able to destroy both body and soul in hell."

Rom. 8:10. "And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness."

b. The creation of the soul:

Eccl. 12:7. "And the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit returns to God who gave it."

Heb. 12:9. "Furthermore, we had the fathers of our flesh to chasten us, and we gave them reverence: will we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits, and live?"

c. Man's creation in the image of God:

Gen. 1:27. "And God created man in His own image, He created him in the image of God; male and female He created them."

Gen. 9:6. "Whoever sheds man's blood, his blood will be shed by man; for He made man in the image of God."

d. Man in general even now the image of God:

Gen. 9:6. Compare above under c.

Jas. 3:9. "With it we bless the Lord and Father; and with it we curse men, who are made in the likeness of God."

e. The restoration of the image of God in man:

Eph. 4:24. "And put on the new man, which is being created after God in righteousness and holiness of truth."

Col. 3:10. "And have put on the new man, that is being renewed in knowledge after the image of the One who created him."

f. The covenant of works:

Hos. 6:7. "But they like Adam have transgressed the covenant."

1Cor. 15:22. "For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive."

For Further Study:

a. How would you explain the passages which seem to imply that man consists of three elements,

1Thess. 5:23; "And the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Thessalonians 5:23)"

Heb. 4:12; "For the word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart. (Heb. 4:12)"

compare

Matt. 22:37. "And he said to him, you will love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. (Mat. 22:37)"

b. Does man's dominion over the rest of creation also form part of the image of God?

Gen. 1:26, 28; "26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. ...28 And God blessed them: and God said to them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over every living thing that moves on the earth. (Gen. 1:26-28)"

Ps. 8:6-8; “6 you make him have dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under his feet: 7 All sheep and oxen, Yes, and the beasts of the field, 8 The birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea, Whatever passes through the paths of the seas. (Ps. 8:6-8)”

Heb. 2:5-9. “5 For he did not subject the world to come to angels, of which we speak. 6 But one has somewhere testified, saying, What is man, that you are mindful of him? Or the son of man, that you visit him? 7 you made him a little lower than the angels; you crowned him with glory and honor, And set him over the works of your hands: 8 you put all things in subjection under his feet. For in subjecting all things to him, he left nothing that is not subject to him. But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him. 9 But we behold the one who has been made a little lower than the angels, *who is* Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he would taste of death for every [man]. (Heb. 2:5-9)”

c. What indications of a covenant can you find in Gen. 2 and 3?

Questions for Review

1. What is the usual view of the elements of human nature, and how can this be proved?
2. What other view is there, and what passages seem to support it?
3. What different views are there as to the origin of the soul?
4. What are the arguments for, and the objections to each one of these?
5. Do the words ‘image’ and likeness denote different things?
6. What is the Roman Catholic, the Lutheran, and the Reformed view of the image of God in man?
7. What distinction do the Reformed make, and why is it important?
8. What Bible proof have we for the covenant of works?
9. Who are the parties in the covenants?
10. What is the promise, the condition, the penalty, and the sacrament of the covenants?
11. In what sense does this covenant still hold?
12. In what sense is it abolished?

Chapter 12: Man in the State of Sin

1. The Origin of Sin.

The Bible teaches us that sin entered the world as the result of the transgression of Adam and Eve in paradise. The first sin was occasioned by the temptation of Satan in the form of a serpent, who sowed in man's heart the seeds of distrust and unbelief. Scripture clearly indicates that the serpent, who appears as the tempter in the story of the fall, was but an instrument of Satan,

John 8:44; "You are of [your] father the devil, and it is your will to do the lusts of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of [liars]. (John 8:44)"

Rom. 16:20; "And the God of peace will bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. (Rom. 16:20)"

2Cor. 11:3; "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve in his craftiness, your minds might be corrupted from the simplicity and the purity that is *held* toward Christ. (2Co. 11:3)"

Rev. 12:9. "And the great dragon was cast down, the old serpent, the one who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world; he was cast down to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him. (Rev. 12:9)"

The first sin consisted in man's eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This eating was sinful simply because God had forbidden it. It clearly showed that man was not willing to subject his will unconditionally to the will of God, and comprised several elements. In the intellect it revealed itself as unbelief and pride, in the will as the desire to be like God, and in the affections an unholy satisfaction in eating of the forbidden fruit. As a result of it man lost the image of God in the restricts sense, became guilty and utterly corrupt, and fell under the sway of death,

Gen. 3:19; "in the sweat of your face you will eat bread, till you return to the ground; for you were taken out of it: for dust you are, and to dust you will return. (Gen. 3:19)"

Rom. 5:12; "Therefore, as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; even so death passed to all men, upon which all sinned:-- (Rom. 5:12)"

6:23. "For the wages of sin is death; but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rom. 6:23)"

2. The Essential Nature of Sin.

At present many substitute the word 'evil' for 'sin,' but this is a poor substitute, for the word 'sin' is far more specific. It denotes a kind of evil, namely, a moral evil for which man is responsible and which brings him under a sentence of condemnation. The modern tendency is to regard it merely as a wrong done to one's fellow-beings misses the point entirely, for such a wrong can be called sin only in so far as it is contrary to the will of God. Sin is correctly defined by Scripture as "lawlessness,"

1John 3:4. "Every one who sins also commits lawlessness; indeed sin is lawlessness."

It is lack of conformity to the law of God, and as such the opposite of that love which is required by the divine law. The Bible always contemplates it in relation to the law,

Rom. 1: 32; “who, knowing the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but also consent with those who practice them.”

Rom. 2:12-14; “12 For as many as have sinned without the law will also perish without the law: and as many as have sinned under the law will be judged by the law; 13 for the hearers of the law are not just before God, but the doers of the law will be justified: 14 (for when Gentiles who do not have the law do by nature the things of the law, those, not having the law, are the law to themselves;”

Rom. 4:15; “for the law produces wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there transgression.”

Rom. 5:13; “for until the law, sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law.”

Jas. 2:9, 10; “9 but if you are biased toward someone, you commit sin, being convicted by the law as transgressors. 10 For whoever would keep the whole law, and yet stumbles in one [point], has become guilty of all.”

1John 3:4. “Every one who sins also commits lawlessness; indeed sin is lawlessness.”

It is first of all guilt, making men liable to punishment,

Rom. 3:19; “Now we know that whatever things the law says, it speaks to those who are under the law; that every mouth may be shut, and all the world may be brought under the judgment of God:”

Rom. 5:18; “So then as through one trespass condemnation [came] to all men; even so through one act of righteousness, justification of life [came] to all men.”

Eph. 2:3, “among whom we also all once lived in the lust of our flesh, doing the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest:”

and then also inherent corruption or moral pollution. All men are guilty in Adam, and are therefore born with a corrupt nature.

Job 14:4; “Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean *thing*? No one.”

Jer. 17:9; “The heart is deceitful above all things, and it is exceedingly corrupt: who can know it?”

Isa. 6:5; “Then I said, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for my eyes have seen the King, Jehovah of hosts.”

Rom. 8:5-8; “5 For those who are after the flesh mind the things of the flesh; but those who are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. 6 For the mind of the flesh is death; but the mind of the Spirit is life and peace: 7 because the mind of the flesh is hatred against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can it be: 8 and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

Eph. 4:17-19. “17 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you no longer walk as the Gentiles also walk, in the vanity of their mind, 18 being darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardening of their heart; 19 who being past feeling gave themselves up to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.”

Sin has its seat in the heart of man, and from this center influences the intellect, the will, and the affections, in fact the whole man, and finds expression through the body.

Prov. 4:23; “Keep your heart with all diligence; For out of it are the issues of life.”

Jer. 17:9; Matt. 15:19, 20; “19 For out of the heart come forth evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, railings: 20 these are the things which defile the man; but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile the man.”

Luke 6:45; “The good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth what is good; and the evil [man] out of the evil [treasure] brings forth what is evil: for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.”

Heb. 3:12. “Take heed, brethren, lest by chance there will be an evil heart of unbelief in any one of you, in falling away from the living God:”

In distinction from the Roman Catholics we maintain that it does not consist in outward acts only, but includes evil thoughts, affections, and intents of the heart.

Matt. 5:22, 28; “22 but I say to you, that every one who is angry with his brother will be in danger of the judgment; and whoever would say to his brother, Raca, will be in danger of the council; and whoever would say, you fool, will be in danger of the hell of fire. ... 28 but I say to you, that every one who looks at a woman to lust after her has committed adultery with her already in his heart.”

Rom. 7:7; “What will we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Moreover, I would not have known sin, except through the law: for I would not have known coveting, except the law had said, you will not covet:”

Gal. 5:17, 24. “17 For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary the one to the other; so that you may not do the things that you would. ...24 And those who are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and lusts.”

3. Sin in the Life of the Human Race.

Three points deserve consideration here:

a. The connection between Adam’s sin and that of his descendants. This has been explained in three different ways.

(1) The earliest explanation is called the realistic theory, which is to the effect that God originally created one general human nature, which in course of time divided into as many parts as there are human individuals. Adam possessed the whole of this general human nature; and through his sin it became guilty and polluted. Naturally, every individual part of it shares this guilt and pollution.

(2) In the days of the Reformation the representative theory came to the foreground. According to this view Adam stood in a twofold relation to his descendants: he was their natural head, and he was their representative as the head of the covenant. When he sinned as their representative, this sin was also imputed to them, and as a result they are all born in a corrupt state. This is our Reformed view.

(3) A third theory, not as well known, is that of mediate imputation. It holds that the guilt of Adam’s sin is not directly placed to our account. His corruption is passed on to his descendants, and this makes them personally guilty. They are not corrupt because they are guilty in Adam, but guilty because they are corrupt.

b. Original and Actual Sin. We distinguish between original and actual sin. All men are born in a sinful state and condition, which is called original sin, and is the root of all the actual sins that are committed.

(1) Original sin. This includes both guilt and pollution. The guilt of Adam’s sin is imputed to us. Because he sinned as our representative, we are guilty in him. Moreover, we also inherit his

pollution, and now have a positive disposition toward sin. Man is by nature totally depraved. This does not mean that every man is as bad as he can be, but that sin has corrupted every part of his nature and rendered him unable to do any spiritual good. He may still do many praiseworthy things in relation to his fellow-beings, but even his best works are radically defective, because they are not prompted by love to God nor done in obedience to God. This total depravity and inability is denied by Pelagians, Arminians, and Modernists, but is clearly taught in Scripture,

Jer. 17:9; “The heart is deceitful above all things, and it is exceedingly corrupt: who can know it?”

John 5:42; “But I know you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves.”

John 6:44; “No man can come to me, unless the Father who sent me draw him: and I will raise him up in the last day.”

John 15:4, 5; “4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine; so neither can you, unless you abide in me. 5 I am the vine, you are the branches: One who abides in me, and I in him, that person bears much fruit: for apart from me you can do nothing.”

Rom. 7:18, 23, 24; “18 For I know that no good thing dwells in me, that is, in my flesh: for to will is present with me, but to do what is good [is] not. ...23 but I see a different law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity under the law of sin which is in my members. 24 Wretched man that I am! who will deliver me out of the body of this death?”

Rom. 8:7, 8; “7 because the mind of the flesh is hatred against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can it be: 8 and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.”

1Cor. 2:14; “Now the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually judged.”

2Cor. 7:1; “Having therefore these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”

Eph. 2:1-3; “1 And you [did he make alive,] when you were dead through your trespasses and sins, 2 in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the powers of the air, of the spirit that now works in the sons of disobedience; 3 among whom we also all once lived in the lust of our flesh, doing the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest:”

Eph. 4:18; “being darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardening of their heart;”

2Tim. 3:2-4; “2 For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, haughty, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, 3 without natural affection, implacable, slanderers, without self-control, fierce, no lovers of good, 4 traitors, headstrong, puffed up, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God; “

Tit. 1:15; “To the pure all things are pure: but to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure; but both their mind and their conscience are defiled.”

Heb. 11:6. “And without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing [to him]; for the one who comes to God must believe that he is, and [that] he is a rewarder of those who seek after him.”

(2) Actual sin. The term ‘actual sin’ denotes not only sins consisting in outward acts, but also those conscious thoughts, desires, and decisions that proceed from original sin. They are the sins which the individual performs in distinction from his inherited nature and inclination. While original sin is one, actual sins are manifold. They may be sins of the inner life, such as pride,

envy, hatred, sensual lusts, and evil desires; or sins of the outer life, such as deceit, theft, murder, adultery, and so on. Among these there is one unpardonable sin, namely, the sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, after which a change of heart is impossible, and for which it is not necessary to pray,

Matt. 12:31, 32; “31 Therefore I say to you, Every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven to men; but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. 32 And whoever would speak a word against the Son of man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever would speak against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in what is to come.”

Mark 3:28-30; “28 Truly I say to you, All their sins will be forgiven to the sons of men, and their blasphemies however they blaspheme: 29 but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin: 30 because they said, He has an unclean spirit.”

Luke 12:10; “And every one who would speak a word against the Son of man, it will be forgiven him: but to the one who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit it will not be forgiven.”

Heb. 6:4-6; “4 For as touching those who were once enlightened and tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, 5 and tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the age to come, 6 and [then] fell away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.”

Heb. 10:26, 27; “26 For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more a sacrifice for sins, 27 but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and a fierceness of fire which will devour the adversaries.”

1John 5:16. “If any man sees his brother sinning a sin *that is* not toward death, he will ask, and *God* will give him life – for those who do not sin toward death. There is a sin toward death: I am not saying that he should ask concerning this.”

c. The Universality of Sin. Scripture and experience both teach us that sin is universal. Even the Pelagians do not deny this, though they ascribe it to external conditions, such as a bad environment, evil examples, and a wrong kind of education.

There are passages in which the Bible directly asserts the universality of sin, such as

I Kings 8:46; “If they sin against you (for there is no man that does not sin), and you are angry with them, and deliver them to the enemy, so that they carry them away captive to the land of the enemy, far off or near;”

Ps. 143: 2; “And do not enter into judgment with your servant; For in your sight no man living is righteous.”

Prov. 20:9; “Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?”

Eccl. 7:20; “Surely there is not a righteous man on earth, that does good, and does not sin.”

Rom. 3:1-12, 19, 23; “1 What advantage then has the Jew? or what is the profit of circumcision? 2 Much in every way: first of all, that they were entrusted with the oracles of God. 3 For what if some were without faith? will their lack of faith make the faithfulness of God of no effect? 4 God forbid: indeed, let God be found true, and every man a liar; as it is written, That you might be justified in your words, And might prevail when you come into judgment. 5 But if our righteousness commends the righteousness of God, what will we say? Is God unrighteous who visits with wrath? (I speak as men do.) 6 God forbid: for then how will God judge the world? 7 But if the truth of God through my lie abounded to his glory, why am I even still judged as a sinner? 8 and why not (as we are slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say), Let us do evil, that good may come? whose condemnation is just. 9 What then? are we better than

they are? No, in no way: for we before laid to the charge both of Jews and Greeks, that they are all under sin; 10 as it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one; 11 There is none that understands, There is none that seeks after God; 12 They have all turned aside, they have together become unprofitable; There is none that does good, no, not, so much as one: ... 19 Now we know that whatever things the law says, it speaks to those who are under the law; that every mouth may be shut, and all the world may be brought under the judgment of God: ... 23 for all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God;”

Gal 3:22; “But the scriptures enclose all things under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.”

Jas. 3:2; “For in many things we all stumble. If any stumbles not in word, the same is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body also.”

1John 1:8, 10. “8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ...10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.”

Moreover, it teaches that man is sinful from birth, so that this cannot be considered the result of imitation,

Job 14:4; “Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean *thing*? No one.”

Ps. 51:5; “Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity; And in sin my mother conceived me.”

John 3:6. “What is born of the flesh is flesh; and what is born of the Spirit is spirit.”

Even infants are considered sinful, for they are subject to death, which is the penalty for sin,

Rom. 5:12-14. All men are by nature under condemnation, and therefore need the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. Children are never made an exception to this rule. John 3:3, 5; “3 Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God. ...5 Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God!”

Eph. 2:3; “among whom all of us also once lived in the lust of our flesh, doing the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the rest.”

1John 5:12. “The one who has the Son has the life; the one who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.”

To memorize. Passages to prove:

a. That sin is guilt:

Rom. 5:18. “So then, just as through one trespass condemnation [came] to all men; even so through one act of righteousness, justification of life [came] to all men.”

1John 3:4. “Every one who sins also commits lawlessness; indeed sin is lawlessness.”

Eph. 2:3. “Among whom all of us also once lived in the lusts of our flesh, doing the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the rest.”

b. That sin is pollution:

Jer. 17:9. “The heart is deceitful above all things, and it is exceedingly corrupt: who can know it?”

Rom. 7:18, “For I know that no good thing dwells in me, that is in my flesh; for to will is present with me, but to do what is good is not.”

Rom. 8:5. "For those who are after the flesh mind the things of the flesh; but those who are after the Spirit *mind* the things of the Spirit."

c. That sin has its seat in the heart:

Jer. 17:9. Compare above under b.

Matt. 15:19. "For out of the heart come forth evil thoughts murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, railings."

Heb. 3:12. "Take heed, brethren, lest by chance there will be an evil heart of unbelief in any one of you, in falling away from the living God."

d. That Adam's guilt is imputed to us:

Rom. 5:12. "Through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; even so death passed to all men, upon which all sinned." Also verse 19. "For as through one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the one the many will be made righteous."

1Cor. 15:21, 22. "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ will all be made alive."

e. That man is totally depraved:

Jer. 17:9; Rom. 7:18; "For I know that no good thing dwells in me, that is, in my flesh: for to will is present with me, but to do what is good [is] not."

8:5. Compare under b. above.

g. That sin is universal:

I Kings 8:46. "For there is no man that does not sin."

Ps. 143:2. "And do not enter into judgment with your servant; for in your sight no living man is righteous."

Rom. 3:12. "They have all turned aside, they have become unprofitable; there is none that does good, no, not so much as one."

1John 1:8. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."

For Further Study:

a. Can you give some other scriptural names for sin?

Job 15:5; "For your iniquity teaches your mouth, And you choose the tongue of the crafty."

Job 33:9; "I am clean, without transgression; I am innocent, nor is there iniquity in me;"

Ps. 32:1, 2; "1 Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered. 2 Blessed is the man to whom Jehovah does not impute iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no guile."

Ps. 55:15; "Let death come suddenly on them, Let them go down alive into Sheol; For wickedness is in their dwelling, in the midst of them."

Rom. 1:18; "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hinder the truth in unrighteousness;"

5:15; “But unlike the trespass, thus indeed [is] the free gift. For if by the trespass of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God, and the gift by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many.”

1John 3:4. “Every one who sins also commits lawlessness; indeed sin is lawlessness.”

b. Does the word ‘evil’ ever mean anything else than sin in Scripture? If so, what?

Compare Ex. 5:19; “And the officers of the children of Israel saw that they were in an evil situation, when it was said, you will not diminish anything from your bricks, [your] daily tasks.”

2Kings 6:33; “And while he was still talking with them, behold, the messenger came down to him: and he said, Behold, this evil is from Jehovah; why should I wait for Jehovah any longer?”

2Kings 22:16; “Thus says Jehovah, Behold, I will bring evil on this place, and on its inhabitants, even all the words of the book which the king of Judah has read. (2 Kings 22:16)”

Ps. 41:8; “An evil disease, [say they], cleaves fast to him; And now that he lies he will rise up no more. (Ps. 41:8)”

Ps. 91:10; “There will no evil befall you, Nor will any plague come nigh your tent. (Ps. 91:10)”

Prov. 16:4. “Jehovah has made everything for its own end; Indeed, even the wicked for the day of evil. (Prov. 16:4)”

c. Does the Bible explicitly teach that man is a sinner from birth?

Ps. 51:5; “Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity; And in sin did my mother conceive me. (Ps. 51:5)”

Isa. 48:8. “Yes, you did not hear; yes, you did not know; yes, from of old your ear was not opened: for I knew that you did deal very treacherously, and were called a transgressor from the womb. (Isaiah 48:8)”

Questions for Review

1. What is the biblical view of the origin of sin?
2. What was the first sin, and what elements can be distinguished in it?
3. How would you prove that Satan was the real tempter?
4. What were the results of the first sin?
5. Do the words ‘sin’ and ‘evil’ mean the same Thing?
6. Where does sin have its seat in man?
7. Does sin consist only in outward acts?
8. What different views are there respecting the connection between Adam’s sin and that of his descendants?
9. What is original sin, and how does actual sin differ from it?
10. How do you conceive of total depravity?
11. What proof is there for the universality of sin?

Chapter 13: Man in the Covenant of Grace

For the sake of clearness we distinguish between the covenant of redemption and the covenant of grace. The two are so closely related that they can be and sometimes are, considered as one. The former is the eternal foundation of the latter.

1. The Covenant of Redemption. This is also called “the counsel of peace,” a name derived from Zech. 6:13. “even he will build the temple of Jehovah; and he will bear the glory, and will sit and rule on his throne; and he will be a priest on his throne; and the counsel of peace will be between them both. (Zec. 6:13)”

It is a covenant between the Father, representing the Trinity, and the Son as the representative of the elect.

a. The scriptural basis for it. It is clear that the plan of redemption was included in God’s eternal decree,

Eph. 1:4 ff.; 3:11; “according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:”

2Tim. 1:9. “who saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given to us in Christ Jesus before times eternal,”

Christ speaks of promises made to Him before He came into the world, and repeatedly refers to a commission which He received from the Father,

John 5:30, 43; “30 I can do nothing of myself: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is righteous; because I do not seek my own will, but the will of the one who sent me....43 I have come in my Father’s name, and you do not receive me: if another came in his own name, you would receive him.”

John 6:38-40; “38 For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of the one who sent me. 39 And this is the will of the one who sent me, that of all he has given me I should lose none, but should raise them up at the last day. 40 For this is the will of my Father, that every one who beholds the Son, and believes on him, should have eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.”

John 17:4-12.

He is evidently a covenant head,

Rom. 5:12-21; 1Cor. 15:22. “For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ will all be made alive.”

In [this verse]

Ps. 2:7-9 “7 I will tell of the decree: Jehovah said to me, you are my son; This day I have begotten you. 8 Ask of me, and I will give [you] the nations for your inheritance, And the furthest parts of the earth for your possession. 9 you will break them with a rod of iron; you will dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.”

the parties of the covenant are mentioned and a promise is indicated, and in

Ps. 40:7, 8 “7 Then I said, Lo, I have come; It is written of me in the roll of the book: 8 I delight to do your will, O my God; Yes, your law is within my heart.”

the Messiah expresses His readiness to do the Father’s will in becoming a sacrifice for sin.

b. The Son in the covenant of redemption. Christ is not only the Head but also the Surety of the covenant of redemption,

Heb. 7:22. “by so much also has Jesus become the surety of a better covenant. (Heb. 7:22)”

A surety is one who takes on himself the legal obligations of another. Christ took the place of the sinner, to bear the penalty of sin and to meet the demands of the law for His people. By so doing He became the last Adam, a life-giving spirit,

1Cor. 15:45. “So also it is written, The first man Adam became a living soul. The last Adam [became] a life-giving spirit.”

For Christ this covenant was a covenant of works, in which He met the requirements of the original covenant, but for us it is the eternal foundation of the covenant of grace. Its benefits are limited to the elect. They only obtain the redemption and inherit the glory which Christ merited for sinners.

c. Requirements and promises in the covenant of redemption.

(1) The Father required of the Son that He should assume human nature with its present infirmities, though without sin,

Gal. 4:4, 5; “4 but when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, 5 that he might redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.”

Heb. 2:10, 11, 14, 15; “10 For it became him, for whom all things exist, and through whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the author of their salvation perfect through sufferings. 11 For both the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, ... 14 Since then the children are sharers in flesh and blood, he also partook of the same in the same way; so that through death he might bring to nothing the one who had the power of death, that is, the devil; 15 and might deliver all those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.”

Heb. 4:15; “For we do not have a high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but one who has been in all points tempted like as [we are, yet] without sin.”

that He should place Himself under the law to pay the penalty and to merit eternal life for the elect,

Ps. 40:8; “I delight to do your will, O my God; Yes, your law is within my heart.”

John 10:11; “I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.”

Gal. 1:4; “who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us out of this present evil world, according to the will of our God and Father:”

Gal. 4:4, 5; “4 but when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, 5 that he might redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.”

and that He should apply His merits to His people by the renewing operation of the Holy Spirit, thus securing the consecration of their lives to God,

John 10:28; “and I give to them eternal life; and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.”

John 17:19-22; “19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they themselves may also be sanctified in truth. 20 Nor for these only do I pray, but also for those who believe on me through their word; 21 that they may all be one; even as you, Father, [are] in me, and I am in you, that they may also be in us: that the world may believe that you sent me. 22 And the glory which you have given me I have given to them; that they may be one, even as we [are] one;”

Heb. 5:7-9. “7 Who in the days of his flesh, having offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears to the one who was able to save him from death, and having been heard for his godly fear, 8 though he was a Son, yet learned obedience by the things which he suffered; 9 and having been made perfect, he became to all those who obey him the author of eternal salvation;”

(2) And the Father promised the Son that He would prepare a body for Him,

Heb. 10:5, “Which is why when he comes into the world, he says, Sacrifice and offering you would not have, But a body you prepared for me;”

would anoint Him with the Holy Spirit,

Isa. 42:1; “Behold, my servant, whom I uphold; my chosen, in whom my soul delights: I have put my Spirit on him; he will bring forth justice to the Gentiles.”

Isa. 61:1; “The Spirit of the Lord Jehovah is on me; because Jehovah has anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek; he has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening [of the prison] to those who are bound;”

John 3:34, “For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God: for he does not give the Spirit by measure.”

would support Him in His work,

Isa. 42:6, 7; “I Jehovah have called you in righteousness, and will hold your hand, and will keep you, and give you for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; 7 to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, and those who sit in darkness out of the prison-house.”

Luke 22:43 “And an angel appeared to him from heaven, strengthening him.”

would deliver Him from the power of death and place Him at His own right hand,

Ps. 16:8-11; “8 I have set Jehovah always before me: Because he is at my right hand, I will not be moved. 9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will dwell in safety. 10 For you will not leave my soul to Sheol; Nor will you suffer your holy one to see corruption. 11 you will show me the path of life: there is fulness of joy in your presence; In your right hand there are pleasures for evermore.”

Phil. 2:9-11, “9 Which is also why God highly exalted him, and gave to him the name which is above every name; 10 that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of [things] in heaven and [things] on earth and [things] under the earth, 11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

would enable Him to send the Spirit for the formation of the Church,

John 14:26; “But the Comforter, [even] the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.”

John 15:26; “But when the Comforter has come, whom I will send to you from the Father, [even] the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness of me: “

Jn. 16:13, 14, “13 Nonetheless when he, the Spirit of truth, has come, he will guide you into all the truth: for he will not speak from himself; but he will speak whatever things he hears: and he will declare to you the things that are to come. 14 He will glorify me: for he will take of mine, and will declare [it] to you.”

would draw and preserve the elect,

John 6:37, 39, 40, 44, 45, “37 All that the Father gives me will come to me; and the one who comes to me I will in no way cast out. ...39 And this is the will of the one who sent me, that of all what he has given me I should lose none, but should raise them up at the last day. 40 For this is the will of my Father, that every one who beholds the Son, and believes on him, should have eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. ...44 No man can come to me, unless the Father who sent me draw him: and I will raise him up in the last day. 45 It is written in the prophets, And they will all be taught of God. Every one who has heard from the Father, and has learned, comes to me.”

and would grant Him a numerous seed,

Ps. 22:27; “All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to Jehovah; And all the kindreds of the nations will worship before you.”

Ps. 72:17 “His name will endure for ever; His name will be continued as long as the sun: And men will be blessed in him; All nations will call him happy.”

2. The Covenant of Grace.

On the basis of the covenant of redemption God established the covenant of grace. Several particulars call for consideration here.

a. The contracting parties. God is the first party in the covenant. He establishes the covenant and determines the relation in which the second party will stand to Him. It is not so easy to determine who the second party is. The prevailing opinion in Reformed circles is that it is the elect sinner in Christ. We should bear in mind, however, that the covenant may be viewed in two different ways:

(1) As an end in itself, a covenant of mutual friendship or communion of life, which is realized in the course of history through the operation of the Holy Spirit. It represents a condition in which privileges are improved for spiritual ends, the promises of God are embraced by a living faith, and the promised blessings are fully realized. So conceived, it may be defined as that gracious agreement between God and the elect sinner in Christ, in which God gives Himself with all the blessings of salvation to the elect sinner, and the latter embraces God and all His gracious gifts by faith.

Deut. 7:9; 2Chron. 6:14; Ps. 25:10, 14; 103:17, 18. “17 But the lovingkindness of Jehovah is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him, And his righteousness to children’s children; 18 To such as keep his covenant, And to those who remember to do his precepts. (Ps. 103:17-18)”

(2) As a means to an end, a purely legal arrangement for the realization of a spiritual end. It is evident that the Bible sometimes speaks of the covenant as including some in whom the promises are never realized, such as Ishmael, Esau, the wicked sons of Eli, and the rebellious Israelites who died in their sins. The covenant may be regarded as a purely legal agreement, in which God guarantees the blessings of salvation to all who believe. If we think of the covenant in this broader sense, we can say that God established it with believers and their children,

Gen. 17:7; “And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your seed after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God to you and to your seed after you.”

Acts 2:39; “For the promise is to you, and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God would call to him.”

Rom. 9:1-4. “1 I say the truth in Christ, I do not lie, my conscience bearing witness with me in the Holy Spirit, 2 that I have great sorrow and unceasing pain in my heart. 3 For I could wish that I myself were anathema from Christ for my brethren’s sake, my kinsmen according to the flesh: 4 who are Israelites; whose is the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service [of God], and the promises;”

b. The promises and requirements of the covenant. Every covenant has two sides; it offers certain privileges and imposes certain obligations.

(1) The promises of the covenant. The main promise of the covenant, which includes all others, is contained in the oft repeated words, “I will be a God to you and to your seed after you,”

Jer. 31:33; “But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says Jehovah: I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they will be my people.”

Jer. 32:38-40; “38 and they will be my people, and I will be their God: 39 and I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for their good, and *the good* of their children after them: 40 and I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from following them, to do them good; and I will put my fear in their hearts, so that they may not depart from me.”

Ezek. 34:23-25, 30, 31; “23 And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he will feed them, even my servant David; he will feed them, and he will be their shepherd. 24 And I, Jehovah, will be their God, and my servant David prince among them; I, Jehovah, have spoken it. 25 And I will make a covenant of peace with them, and will cause evil beasts to cease out of the land; and they will dwell securely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods. ...30 And they will know that I, Jehovah, their God am with them, and that they, the house of Israel, are my people, says the Lord Jehovah. 31 And you my sheep, the sheep of my pasture, are men, and I am your God, says the Lord Jehovah.”

Ezek. 36:25-28; “25 And I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean: I will cleanse you from all your filthiness, and from all your idols., 26 I will also give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take away the stony heart from your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. 27 And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and you will keep my ordinances, and do them. 28 And you will dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and you will be my people, and I will be your God.”

Heb. 8:10; “For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel After those days, says the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, And I will also write them on their heart: And I will be a God to them, And they will be a people to me:”

2Cor. 6:16-18. “16 And what agreement does a temple of God have with idols? for we are a temple of the living God; even as God said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they will be my people. 17 Therefore come out from among them, and be separate, says the Lord, And touch no unclean thing; And I will receive you, 18 And I will be a Father to you, And you will be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty.”

This promise includes all others, such as the promise of temporal blessings, of justification, of the Spirit of God, and of final glorification in a life that never ends.

Job 19:25-27; “25 But as for me I know that my Redeemer lives, And at last he will stand up on the earth: 26 And after my skin, [even] this [body], is destroyed, Then without my flesh will I see God; 27 Whom I, even I, will see, on my side, And my eyes will behold, and not as a stranger. My heart is consumed within me. (Job 19:25-27)”

Ps. 16:11; “you will show me the path of life: In your presence is fulness of joy; In your right hand there are pleasures for evermore. (Ps. 16:11)”

73:24-26; “24 you will guide me with your counsel, And afterward receive me to glory. 25 Whom do I have in heaven [but you]? And there is none on earth that I desire besides you. 26 My flesh and my heart faileth; [But] God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever. (Ps. 73:24-26)”

Isa. 43:25; “I, even I, am the one who blots out your transgressions for my own sake; and I will not remember your sins. (Isaiah 43:25)”

Jer. 31:33, 34; “33 But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says Jehovah: I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they will be my people: 34 and they will teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says Jehovah: for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more. (Jeremiah 31:33-34)”

Ezek. 36:27; “And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and you will keep my ordinances, and do them. (Ezekiel 36:27)”

Dan. 12:2, 3; “2 And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. 3 And those who are wise will shine as the brightness of the firmament; and those who turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever. (Daniel 12:2-3)”

Gal. 4:4, 5, 6; “4 but when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, 5 that he might redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. 6 And because you are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father. (Galatians 4:4-6)”

Tit, 3:7; “that, being justified by his grace, we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. (Titus 3:7)”

Heb. 11:7; “By faith Noah, being warned [of God] concerning things not seen as yet, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; through which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith. (Heb. 11:7)”

Jas. 2:5. “Listen, my beloved brethren; did not God choose those who are poor as to the world [to be] rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he promised to those who love him? (James 2:5)”

(2) The requirements of the covenant. The covenant of grace is not a covenant of works; it requires no work with a view to merit. However, it does contain requirements and imposes obligations on man. By meeting the demands of the covenant man earns nothing, but merely puts himself in the way in which God will communicate to him the promised blessings. Moreover, it should be borne in mind that even the requirements are covered by the promises: God gives man all that He requires of him. The two things which He demands of those who stand in covenant relationship to Him are

(a) that they accept the covenant and the covenant promises by faith, and thus enter on the life of the covenant; and

(b) that from the principle of the new life born within them, they consecrate themselves to God in new obedience.

c. The characteristics of the covenant. The covenant of grace is a GRACIOUS covenant, because it is a fruit and manifestation of the grace of God to sinners. It is grace from start to finish. It is also an eternal and inviolable covenant, to which God will always be true, though men may break it. Even in its widest extent it includes only a part of mankind, and is therefore PARTICULAR. If its New Testament dispensation is called universal, this is done only in view of the fact that it is not limited to the Jews, as the Old Testament dispensation was. This covenant is also characterized by UNITY. It is essentially the same in all dispensations, though the form of its administration changes. The essential promise is the same,

Gen. 17:7; “And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your seed after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God to you and to your seed after you. (Gen. 17:7)”

Heb. 8:10, “For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel After those days, says the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, And on their heart also will I write them: And I will be to them a God, And they will be to me a people: (Heb. 8:10)”

the gospel is the same,

Gal. 3:8, “And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, [saying,] In you will all the nations be blessed. (Galatians 3:8)”

the requirement of faith is the same, Gal. 3:6, 7, “6 Even as Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him for righteousness. 7 Know therefore that those who are of faith, the same are sons of Abraham. (Galatians 3:6-7)”

and the Mediator is the same,

Heb. 13:8. “Jesus Christ [is] the same yesterday and today, [yea] and for ever. (Heb. 13:8)”

The covenant is both CONDITIONAL and UNCONDITIONAL. It is conditional because it is dependent on the merits of Christ and because the enjoyment of the life it offers depends on the exercise of faith. But it is unconditional in the sense that it does not depend on any merits of man. And, finally, it is testamentary as a free and sovereign disposition on the part of God. It is called a ‘testament’ in

Heb. 9:16, 17. “16 For where a testament is, there must of necessity be the death of the one who made it. 17 For a testament is of force where there has been death: for it never avails while the one who made it lives. (Heb. 9:16-17)”

This name stresses the facts,

- (1) that it is a free arrangement of God;
- (2) that its New Testament dispensation was ushered in by the death of Christ; and
- (3) that in it God gives what He demands. The covenant of grace differs from the covenant of works in that it has a mediator. Christ is represented as the Mediator of the new covenant,

1Tim. 2:5; “For there is one God, one mediator also between God and men, [himself] man, Christ Jesus, (1Tim. 2:5)”

Heb. 8:6; “But now has he obtained a ministry the more excellent, by so much as he is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises. (Heb. 8:6)”

9:15; “And for this cause he is the mediator of a new covenant, that a death having taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. (Heb. 9:15)”

12:24. “and to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better than [that of] Abel. (Heb. 12:24)”

He is Mediator, not only merely in the sense that He intervenes between God and man to sue for peace and to persuade to it, but in the sense that He is armed with full power to do all that is necessary for the actual establishment of peace. As our Surety,

Heb. 7:22, “by so much also has Jesus become the surety of a better covenant. (Heb. 7:22)”

He assumes our guilt, pays the penalty of sin, fulfills the law, and thus restores peace.

d. Membership in the covenant. Adults can enter the covenant as a purely legal arrangement only by faith. And when they so enter it, they at the same time gain entrance into the covenant as a communion of life. They therefore enter on the full covenant life at once. Children of believers, however, enter the covenant as a legal arrangement by birth, but this does not necessarily mean that they also at once enter it as a communion of life, nor even that they will ever enter it in that sense. Yet the promise of God gives a reasonable assurance that the covenant life will be realized in them. As long as they do not manifest the contrary we may proceed on the assumption that they possess the new life. When they grow up, they must accept their covenant responsibilities voluntarily by a true confession of faith. Failure to do this makes them covenant breakers. From the preceding it follows that unregenerate persons may temporarily be in the covenant as a purely legal relationship,

Rom. 9:4. “who are Israelites; whose is the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service [of God], and the promises; (Rom. 9:4)”

They are recognized as covenant children, are subject to its requirements and share its ministrations. They receive the seal of baptism, enjoy the common blessings of the covenant, and may even partake of some special operations of the Holy Spirit. If they do not accept the corresponding responsibilities, they will be judged as breakers of the covenant. The different dispensations of the covenant.

(1) The first revelation of the covenant is found in

Gen. 3:15, “and I will put hatred between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed: he will bruise your head, and you will bruise his heel. (Gen. 3:15)”

which is usually called the proto-evangel or the maternal promise. This does not yet refer to the formal establishment of the covenant.

(2) The covenant with Noah is of a very general nature as a covenant with all flesh. It conveys only natural blessings, and is therefore often called the covenant of nature or of common grace. It is close connected, however, with the covenant of grace. It is also a fruit of the grace of God and guarantees those natural and temporal blessings which are absolutely necessary for the realization of the covenant of grace.

(3) The covenant with Abraham marks its formal establishment. It is the beginning of the Old Testament particularistic administration of the covenant, which is now limited to Abraham and his descendants, Faith stands out prominently as its necessary requirement, and circumcision becomes its seal.

(4) The covenant at Sinai is essentially the same as that established with Abraham, but now takes in the whole nation of Israel, and thus became a national covenant. Though it strongly stresses the keeping of the law, it should not be regarded as a renewed covenant of works. The law increased the consciousness of sin,

Rom. 3:20, “because by the works of the law will no flesh be justified in his sight; for through the law [comes] the knowledge of sin. (Rom. 3:20)”

and became a tutor to Christ, Gal. 3:24. “So that the law has become our tutor [to bring us] to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. (Galatians 3:24)”

Passover was added as a second sacrament.

(5) The new covenant, as revealed in the New Testament,

Jer. 31:31; “Behold, the days come, says Jehovah, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: (Jeremiah 31:31)”

Heb. 8:8, 13, “8 For finding fault with them, he says, Behold, the days come, says the Lord, That I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; ...13 In that he says, A new [covenant] he has made the first old. But what is becoming old and waxes aged is nigh to vanishing away. (Heb. 8:8,13)”

is essentially the same as that of the Old Testament, Rom. 4; Gal. 3. It now breaks through the barriers of particularism and becomes universal in the sense that its blessings are extended to people of all nations. Its blessings become fuller and more spiritual, and baptism and the Lord's Supper are substituted for the Old Testament sacraments.

To memorize. Passages bearing on:

a. The parties of the covenant:

Gen. 3:15. “And I will put hatred between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed: he will bruise your head, and you will bruise his heel.”

Gen 17:7. “And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your seed after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God to you and to your seed after you.”

Ex. 19:5, 6a. “Now therefore, if you will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then will you be my own possession from among all peoples: for all the earth is mine: and you will be to me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation.”

Jer. 31:31-33, “Behold, the days come, says Jehovah, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband to them, says Jehovah. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says Jehovah: I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they will be my people.”

Acts 2:39. “For to you is the promise, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God will call to Him.”

b. Its promises and requirements:

Compare Gen. 17:7; “And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your seed after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God to you and to your seed after you. (Gen. 17:7)”

Ex. 19:5; 6a; “5 Now therefore, if you will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then you will be my own possession from among all peoples: for all the earth is mine: 6 and you will be to me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation... (Exodus 19:5-6a)”

Jer. 31:33 under a. above, for the essential promise.

Gen. 15:6. “And he (Abraham) believed in Jehovah, and He reckoned it to him for righteousness.”

Ex. 19:5. “Now therefore, if you will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then you will be my own possession from among all peoples.”

Ps. 25:14. “The friendship of Jehovah is with those who fear Him; and He will show them His covenant.”

Ps. 103:17, 18. “But the lovingkindness of Jehovah is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him, and His righteousness to children’s children; to such as keep His covenant, and to those that remember His precepts to do them.”

Gal. 3:7, 9. “Know therefore that those who are of faith, the same are sons of Abraham.... So then those who are of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.”

c. Characteristics of the covenant:

Eternal.

Gen. 17:19b. “And I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant for his seed after him.”

Isa. 54:10. “For the mountains may depart, and the hills be removed; but my lovingkindness will not depart from you, nor will my covenant of peace be removed, says Jehovah that has mercy on you.”

Isa. 24:5. “The earth also is polluted under its inhabitants; because they have transgressed the laws, violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant.”

Unity.

Gal. 3:7, 9 under b. above.

Rom. 4:11. “And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while he was in uncircumcision; that he might be the father of all those who believe, though they be in uncircumcision, that righteousness might be reckoned to them”

Testamentary.

Heb. 9:17, 18. “For a testament is of force where there has been death; for it never avails while the one who made it lives. Which is why even the first covenant has not been dedicated without blood.”

d. The Mediator of the covenant:

1Tim. 2:5. "For there is one God, one Mediator also between God and men, Himself man, Christ Jesus."

Heb. 7:22. "By so much also has Jesus become the Surety of a better covenant."

Heb. 8:6. "But now He has obtained a ministry the more excellent, by so much as He is also the Mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises."

For Further Study:

a. Can you name some special covenants mentioned in the Bible?

Gen. 31:44; "And now come, let us make a covenant, I and thou; and let it be for a witness between me and you. (Gen. 31:44)"

Deut. 29:1; "These are the words of the covenant which Jehovah commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, besides the covenant which he made with them in Horeb. (Deut. 29:1)"

1Sa. 18:3; "Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul. (1Sa. 18:3)"

2Sa. 23:5. "Truly my house is not so with God; Yet he has made with me an everlasting covenant, Ordered in all things, and sure: For it is all my salvation, and all [my] desire, Although he makes it not to grow. (2Sa. 23:5)"

b. Can you name instances of covenant breaking?

Gen. 25:32-34, "32 And Esau said, Behold, I am about to die. And what profit will the birthright do to me? 33 And Jacob said, Swear to me first. And he swore to him. And he sold his birthright to Jacob. 34 And Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentils. And he ate and drink, and rose up, and went his way. So Esau despised his birthright. (Gen. 25:32-34)"

compare Heb. 12:16, 17; "16 lest [there be] any fornication, or profane person, as Esau, who for one mess of meat sold his own birthright. 17 For you know that even when he afterward desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place for a change of mind [in his father,] though he sought it diligently with tears. (Heb. 12:16-17)"

Ex. 32:1-14; Num. 14; Num. 16; Judg. 2:11 ff.; 1Sa. 2:12 ff.; Isa. 24:5; "The earth also is polluted under its inhabitants; because they have transgressed the laws, violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant. (Isaiah 24:5)"

Ezek. 16:59; "For thus says the Lord Jehovah: I will also deal with you as you have done, who have despised the oath in breaking the covenant. (Ezekiel 16:59)"

Hos. 6:7; "But they like Adam have transgressed the covenant: there have they dealt treacherously against me. (Hosea 6:7)"

8:1; "[Set] the trumpet to your mouth. As an eagle [he comes] against the house of Jehovah, because they have transgressed my covenant, and trespassed against my law. (Hosea 8:1)"

10:4. "They speak [vain] words, swearing falsely in making covenants: therefore judgment springs up as hemlock in the furrows of the field. (Hosea 10:4)"

c. Did the giving of the law change the covenant essentially?

Rom. 4:13-17; “13 For not through the law was the promise to Abraham or to his seed that he should be heir of the world, but through the righteousness of faith. 14 For if those who are of the law are heirs, faith is made void, and the promise is made of none effect: 15 for the law produces wrath; but where there is no law, nor is there transgression. 16 For this cause [it is] of faith, that [it may be] according to grace; to the end that the promise may be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all 17 (as it is written, A father of many nations I havemade you) before the one whom he believed, [even] God, who gives life to the dead, and calls the things that are not, as though they were. (Rom. 4:13-17)”

Gal. 3:17-24. “17 Now this I say: A covenant confirmed beforehand by God, the law, which came four hundred and thirty years after, does not disannul, so as to make the promise of none effect. 18 For if the inheritance is of the law, it is no more of promise: but God has granted it to Abraham by promise. 19 What then is the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise has been made; [and it was] ordained through angels by the hand of a mediator. 20 Now a mediator is not [a mediator] of one; but God is one. 21 Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could make alive, truly righteousness would have been of the law. 22 But the scriptures enclose all things under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. 23 But before faith came, we were kept inward under the law, closed to the faith which would afterwards be revealed. 24 So that the law has become our tutor [to bring us] to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. (Galatians 3:17-24)”

Questions for Review

1. What is the covenant of redemption? By what other name is it known, and how is it related to the covenant of grace?
2. What scriptural evidence is there for it?
3. What is the official position of Christ in this covenants?
4. Was it for Christ a covenant of grace or a covenant of works?
5. Whom does Christ represent in this covenant?
6. What did the Father require of Christ, and what did He promise Him?
7. What distinction do we apply to the covenant of grace?
8. How does this affect the question, who is the second party in the covenant?
9. What is the all-embracing promise of the covenant?
10. What does God require of those who are in the covenant?
11. What are the characteristics of the covenant?
12. In what sense is the covenant unbreakable, and in what sense breakable?
13. How can you prove the unity of the covenants?
14. In what sense is it conditional, and in what sense unconditional?
15. Why can it be called a testament?

16. Where do we find the first revelation of the covenant?
17. What was the nature of the covenant with Noah?
18. How did the covenant with, Abraham and the Sinaitic covenant differ?
19. What characterized the New Testament dispensation of the covenants?
20. What is the position of Christ in the covenant of grace?
21. How can adults become covenant members?
22. How do children of believers enter the covenant?
23. What is expected of them?
24. Can unregenerate persons be members of the covenant?

Chapter 14: The Names and Nature of Christ

1. The Names of Christ. The most important names of Christ are the following:

a. Jesus. This is the Greek form of the Hebrew Joshua, Jos. 1:1; Zech. 3:1, or Jeshua, Ezra 2:2.

Derived from the Hebrew word ‘to save,’ it designates Christ as the Savior,

Matt. 1:21. “And she will bring forth a son; and you will call his name JESUS; for he is the one who will save his people from their sins. (Mat. 1:21)”

Two types of Christ bore the same name in the Old Testament, namely, Joshua the son of Nun and Joshua the son of Jehozadak.

b. Christ. This is the New Testament form for the Old Testament ‘Messiah,’ which means ‘the anointed one.’ According to the Old Testament, prophets, I Kings 19:16, priests, Ex. 29:7, and kings, 1Sa. 10:1, were anointed with oil, which symbolized the Holy. By this anointing they were set aside for their respective offices, and were qualified for them. Christ was anointed with the Holy Spirit for the threefold office of prophet, priest, and king. Historically, this anointing took place when He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and when He was baptized.

c. Son of Man. This name, as applied to Christ, was derived from Dan. 7:13. It is the name which Jesus generally applies to Himself, while others seldom use it. While it does contain an indication of the humanity of Jesus, in the light of its historical origin in points far more to His superhuman character and to His future coming with the clouds of heaven in majesty and glory,

Dan. 7:13; “I saw in the night-visions, and, behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like to a son of man, and he came even to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. (Daniel 7:13)”

Matt. 16:27, 28; “27 For the Son of man will come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then will he render to every man according to his deeds. 28 Truly I say to you, there are some of those who stand here, who will in no way taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom. (Mat. 16:27-28)”

26:64; “Jesus said to him, you have said: nevertheless I say to you, Henceforth you will see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven. (Mat. 26:64)”

Luke 21:27. “And then will they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. (Luke 21:27)”

d. Son of God. Christ is called ‘the Son of God’ in more than one sense. He is so called, because He is the second Person of the Trinity, and therefore Himself God,

Matt. 11:27, “All things have been delivered to me of my Father: and no one knows the Son, save the Father; nor does any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomever the Son wills to reveal [him.] (Mat. 11:27)”

but also because He is the appointed Messiah,

Matt. 24:36, “But no one knows of that day and hour, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only. (Mat. 24:36)”

and because His birth to the supernatural activity of the Holy Spirit,

Luke 1:35. “And the angel answered and said to her, The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you: which is also why the holy thing which is begotten will be called the Son of God. (Luke 1:35)”

e. Lord. Jesus’ contemporaries sometimes applied this name to Jesus as a form of polite address, just as we use the word ‘sir.’ It is especially after the resurrection of Christ that the name acquires a deeper meaning. In some passages it designates Christ as the Owner and Ruler of the Church,

Rom. 1:7; “To all that are in Rome, beloved of God, called [to be] saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. (Rom. 1:7)”

Eph. 1:17, “that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; (Eph. 1:17)”

and in others it really stands for the name of God,

1Cor. 7:34; “... [So] also the woman that is unmarried and the virgin is careful for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit: but one who is married is careful for the things of the world, how she may please her husband. (1Co. 7:34)”

Phil. 4:4, 5. “4 Rejoice in the Lord always: again I will say, Rejoice. 5 Let your forbearance be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. (Phil. 4:4-5)”

2. The Natures of Christ. The Bible represents Christ as a Person having two natures, the one divine and the other human. This is the great mystery of godliness, God manifested in the flesh,

1Tim. 3:16. “And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness; He who was manifested in the flesh, Justified in the spirit, Seen of angels, Preached among the nations, Believed on in the world, Received up in glory. (1Tim. 3:16)”

a. The two natures. Since many in our day deny the DEITY of Christ, it is necessary to stress the Scripture proof for it. Some old Testament passages clearly point to it, Such as

Isa. 9:6; “For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government will be on his shoulder: and his name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 9:6)”

Jer. 23:6; “In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell safely; and this is his name by which he will be called: Jehovah our righteousness. (Jeremiah 23:6)”

Micah 5:2; “But you, Beth-lehem Ephrathah, which are little to be among the thousands of Judah, out of you will one come forth to me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting. (Micah 5:2)”

Mal. 3:1. “Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, behold, he comes, says Jehovah of hosts. (Malachi 3:1)”

The New Testament proofs are even more abundant,

Matt. 11:27; “All things have been delivered to me of my Father: and no one knows the Son, save the Father; nor does any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomever the Son wills to reveal [him.] (Mat. 11:27)”

16:16; “And Simon Peter answered and said, you are the Christ, the Son of the living God. (Mat. 16:16)”

26:63, 64; “63 But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest said to him, I adjure you by the living God, that you tell us whether you are the Christ, the Son of God. 64 Jesus said to him, you have said: nevertheless I say to you, Henceforth you will see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven. (Mat. 26:63-64)”

John 1:1, 18; “1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ... 18 No man has seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has declared [him]. (John 1:1,18)”

Rom. 9:5; “whose are the fathers, and of whom is Christ as concerning the flesh, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen. (Rom. 9:5)”

1Cor. 2:8; “which none of the rulers of this world has known: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory: (1Co. 2:8)”

2Cor. 5:10; “For we must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things [done] in the body, according to what he has done, whether [it be] good or bad. (2Co. 5:10)”

Phil. 2:6; “who, existing in the form of God, did not count being equal with God a thing to be grasped, (Phil. 2:6)”

Col. 2:9; “for in him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, (Col. 2:9)”

Heb. 1:1-3; “1 God, having of old time spoken to the fathers in the prophets by diverse portions and in diverse ways, 2 has at the end of these days spoken to us in [his] Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the worlds; 3 who being the bright radiance of his glory, and the very image of his substance, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; (Heb. 1:1-3)”

Rev. 19:16. “And he has on his garment and on his thigh a name written, KINGS OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. (Rev. 19:16)”

The HUMANITY of Jesus is not called in question. In fact, the only divinity many still ascribe to Him is that of His PERFECT humanity. There is abundant proof for the humanity of Jesus. He speaks of Himself as man,

John 8:40, “But now you seek to kill me, a man [Gk: ANTHRWPON] that has told you the truth, which I heard from God: this did not Abraham. (John 8:40)”

and is so called by others,

Acts 2:22; “You men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God to you by mighty works and wonders and signs which God did by him in the midst of you, even as you yourselves know; (Acts 2:22)”

Rom. 5:15; “But unlike the trespass, thus indeed [is] the free gift. For if by the trespass of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God, and the gift by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many. (Rom. 5:15)”

1Cor. 15:21. “For since by man [came] death, by man [came] also the resurrection of the dead. (1Co. 15:21)”

He had the essential elements of human nature, namely, a body and a soul,

Matt. 26:26, 38; “And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it; and he gave to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. (Mat. 26:26)”

Luke 24:39; “See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit does not have flesh and bones, as you behold me having. (Luke 24:39)”

Heb. 2:14. “Since then the children are sharers in flesh and blood, he also himself in the same way partook of the same; that through death he might bring to nothing the one who had the power of death, that is, the devil; (Heb. 2:14)”

Moreover, He was subject to the ordinary laws of human development,

Luke 2:40, 52, “40 And the child grew, and waxed strong, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was on him. ...52 And Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men. (Luke 2:40,52)”

and to human wants and sufferings,

Matt. 4:2; “And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he afterward hungered. (Mat. 4:2)”

8:24; “And behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the boat was covered with the waves: but he was asleep. (Mat. 8:24)”

Luke 22:44; “And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became as it were great drops of blood falling down on the ground. (Luke 22:44)”

John 4:6; “and Jacob’s well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour. (John 4:6)”

11:35; “Jesus wept. (John 11:35)”

12:27; “Now is my soul troubled; and what will I say? Father, save me from this hour. But for this cause came I to this hour. (John 12:27)”

Heb. 2:10, 18; “10 For it became him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the author of their salvation perfect through sufferings. ...18 For in that he himself has suffered being tempted, he is able to relieve those who are tempted. (Heb. 2:10,18)”

Heb. 5:7, 8. “7 Who in the days of his flesh, having offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears to the one who was able to save him from death, and having been heard for his godly fear, 8 though he was a Son, yet learned obedience by the things which he suffered; (Heb. 5:7-8)”

Yet though He was a real man, HE WAS WITHOUT SIN; He did no sin and could not sin,

John 8:46; “Which of you convicts me of sin? If I say truth, why do you not believe me? (John 8:46)”

2Cor. 5:21; “Him who knew no sin he made [to be] sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in him. (2Co. 5:21)”

Heb. 4:15; “For we do not have a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but one that has been in all points tempted like as [we are, yet] without sin. (Heb. 4:15)”

9:14; “how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? (Heb. 9:14)”

1Pet. 2:22; “who did no sin, nor was guile found in his mouth: (1Pet. 2:22)”

1John 3:5. “And you know that he was manifested to take away sins; and in him is no sin. (1 John 3:5)”

It was necessary that Christ should be both God and man. It was only AS MAN that He could be our substitute, and could suffer and die; and only as SINLESS MAN that He could atone for the

sins of others. And it was only AS GOD that He could give His sacrifice infinite value, and bear the wrath of God so as to deliver others from it,

Ps. 40:7-10; “7 Then I said, Lo, I have come; In the roll of the book it is written of me: 8 I delight to do your will, O my God; Yes, your law is within my heart. 9 I have proclaimed glad tidings of righteousness in the great assembly; Lo, I will not refrain my lips, O Jehovah, you know. 10 I have not hidden your righteousness within my heart; I have declared your faithfulness and your salvation; I have not concealed your lovingkindness and your truth from the great assembly. (Ps. 40:7-10)”

130:3. “If you, Jehovah, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand? (Ps. 130:3)”

b. The two natures united in one Person. Christ has a human nature, but He is not a human person. The Person of the Mediator is the unchangeable Son of God. In the incarnation He did not change into a human person; nor did He adopt a human person. He simply assumed, in addition to His divine nature, a human nature, which did not develop into an independent personality, but became personal in the Person of the Son of God. After this assumption of human nature the Person of the Mediator is not only divine but DIVINE-HUMAN; He is the God-man, possessing all the essential qualities of both the human and the divine nature. He has both a divine and a human consciousness, as well as a human and a divine will. This is a mystery which we cannot fathom. Scripture clearly points to the unity of the Person of Christ. It is always the same Person who speaks, whether the mind that finds utterance be human or divine,

John 10:30; “I and the Father are one. (John 10:30)”

17:5 “And now, Father, glorify you me with your own self with the glory which I had with you before the world was. (John 17:5)”

as compared with

Matt. 27:46; “And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? (Mat. 27:46)”

John 19:28. “After this Jesus, knowing that all things are now finished, that the scripture might be accomplished, says, I thirst. (John 19:28)”

Human attributes and actions are sometimes ascribed to the Person designated by a divine title,

Acts 20:28; “Take heed to yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you bishops, to feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood. (Acts 20:28)”

1Cor. 2:8; “which none of the rulers of this world has known: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory: (1Co. 2:8)”

Col. 1:13, 14; “13 who delivered us out of the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love; 14 in whom we have our redemption, the forgiveness of our sins: (Col. 1:13-14)”

and divine attributes and actions are sometimes ascribed to the Person designated by a human title,

John 3:13; “And no one has ascended into heaven, but the one who descended out of heaven, [even] the Son of man, who is in heaven. (John 3:13)”

6:62; “[What] then if you should behold the Son of man ascending where he was before? (John 6:62)”

Rom. 9:5. “whose are the fathers, and of whom is Christ as concerning the flesh, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen. (Rom. 9:5)”

c. Some of the most important errors concerning this doctrine. The Alogi and the Ebionites denied the DEITY of Christ in the early Church. This denial was shared by the Socinians of the days of the Reformation, and by the Unitarians and Modernists of our day. In the early Church Arius failed to do justice to the FULL DEITY of Christ and regarded Him as a demi-God, while Apollinaris did not recognize His FULL HUMANITY, but held that the divine Logos took the place of the human spirit in Christ. The Nestorians denied the unity of the two natures in one Person, and the Eutychians failed to distinguish properly between the two natures.

To memorize. Passages to prove:

a. The deity of Christ.

Isa. 9:6. “For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government will be on His shoulder: and His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”

Jer. 23:6. “In His days will Judah be saved, and Israel will dwell safely; and this is His name by which He will be called: Jehovah our righteousness.”

John 1:1. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

Rom. 9:5. “Whose are the fathers, and of whom is Christ as concerning the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever.”

Col. 2:9. “For in Him dwells all the fullness of the God”

b. The humanity of Christ.

John 8:40. “But now you seek to kill me, a man that has told you the truth, which I heard from God.”

Matt. 26:38. “Then he said to them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even to death: abide here and watch with me.”

Luke 24:39. “See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself”. handle me, and see; for a spirit does not have flesh and bones, as you behold me having.”

Heb. 2:14. “Since then the children are sharers in flesh and blood, He also Himself in the same way partook of the same; that through death He might bring to nothing the one who had the power of death, that is, the devil.”

e. The unity of the Person.

John 17:5. “And now, Father, glorify you me with 70a your own self with the glory which I had with You before the world was.”

John 3:13. “And no one has ascended into heaven, but the One who descended out of heaven, even the Son of Man, who is in heaven.”

1Cor.2:8. “Which none of the rulers of this world has known: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.”

For Further Study:

a. In what respect was Joshua the son of Nun a type of Christ; and in what respect Joshua the son of Jehozadak?

Zech. 3:8, 9; “8 Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, you and your fellows that sit before you; for they are men that are a sign: for, behold, I will bring forth my servant the Branch. 9 For, behold, the stone that I have set before Joshua; on one stone are seven eyes: behold, I will engrave its graving, says Jehovah of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day. (Zec. 3:8-9)”

Heb. 4:8. “For if Joshua had given them rest, he would not have spoken afterward of another day. (Heb. 4:8)”

b. What do the following passages teach us respecting the anointing of Christ?

Ps. 2:2; “The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against Jehovah, and against his anointed, [saying], (Ps. 2:2)”

45:7; “you have loved righteousness, and hated wickedness: Therefore God, your God, has anointed you With the oil of gladness above your fellows. (Ps. 45:7)”

Prov. 8:23 (compare Auth. Ver.), “I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, Before the earth was. (Prov. 8:23)”

Isa. 61:1. “The Spirit of the Lord Jehovah is on me; because Jehovah has anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek; he has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening [of the prison] to those who are bound; (Isaiah 61:1)”

c. What divine attributes are ascribed to Christ?

Isa. 9:6; “For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government will be on his shoulder: and his name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 9:6)”

Prov. 8:22-31; Micah 5:2; “But you, Beth-lehem Ephrathah, which are little to be among the thousands of Judah, out of you will one come forth to me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting. (Micah 5:2)”

John 5:26; “For as the Father has life in himself, even so he gave the Son to have life in Himself: (John 5:26)”

21:17. “He says to him the third time, Do you love me? And he said to him, Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you. Jesus says to him, Feed my sheep. (John 21:17)”

What divine works?

Mark 2:5-7; “5 And Jesus seeing their faith says to the sick of the palsy, Son, your sins are forgiven. 6 But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts, 7 Why does this man thus speak? he blasphemers: who can forgive sins but one, [even] God? (Mark 2:5-7)”

John 1:1-3; “1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through him; and without him nothing was made that has been made. (John 1:1-3)”

Col. 1:16, 17; “16 for in him all things were created, in the heavens and on the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through him, and for him; 17 and he is before all things, and in him all things consist. (Col. 1:16-17)”

Heb. 1:1-3. “1 God, having of old time spoken to the fathers in the prophets by diverse portions and in diverse ways, 2 has at the end of these days spoken to us in [his] Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the worlds; 3 who being the bright radiance of his glory, and the very image of his substance, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; (Heb. 1:1-3)”

What divine honor?

Matt. 28:19; “Go therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: (Mat. 28:19)”

John 5:19-29; 14:1; 2Cor. 13:14. “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. (2Co. 13:14)”

Questions for Review

1. Which are the most important names of Christ? What is the meaning of each?
2. What elements are included in Christ's anointing? When did it take place?
3. From where is the name 'Son of Man' derived? What does the name express?
4. In what sense is the name 'Son of God' applied to Christ?
5. What different meanings has the name 'Lord' as applied to Christ?
6. What Bible proof is there for the deity and humanity of Christ?
7. What is the nature of the Person of Christ, divine, human, or divine-human?
8. How can the unity of the Person of Christ be proved from Scripture.?
9. What are the main errors respecting the Person of Christ?

Chapter 15: The States of Christ

We often use the words ‘state’ and ‘condition’ interchangeably. When we speak of the states of Christ, however, we use the word ‘state’ in a more specific sense, to denote the relation in which He stood and stands to the law. In the days of His humiliation He was a servant under the law; in His exaltation He is Lord, and as such above the law. Naturally these two states carried with them corresponding conditions of life, and these are discussed as the various stages of these states.

1. The State of Humiliation.

The state of humiliation consists in this that Christ laid aside the divine majesty which was His as the sovereign Ruler of the universe, and assumed human nature in the form of a servant; that He, the supreme Lawgiver, became subject to the demands and curse of the law.

Matt. 3:15; “But Jesus answering said to him, Suffer [it] now: for thus it becomes us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffers him. (Mat. 3:15)”

Gal. 3:13; “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one who hangs on a tree: (Galatians 3:13)”

4:4; “but when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, (Galatians 4:4)”

Phil. 2:6-8. “6 who, existing in the form of God, did not count being equal with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; 8 and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient [even] to death, indeed, the death of the cross. (Phil. 2:6-8)”

This state is reflected in the corresponding condition, in which we usually distinguish several stages.

a. The incarnation and birth of Christ. In the incarnation the Son of God became flesh by assuming human nature,

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

1John 4:2. “By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God: (1 John 4:2)”

He really became one of the human race by being born of Mary. This would not have been true, if He had brought His humanity from heaven, as the Anabaptists claim. The Bible teaches the virgin birth in

Isa. 7:14; “Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: behold, a virgin will conceive, and bear a son, and will call his name Immanuel. (Isaiah 7:14)”

Matt. 1:20; “But when he thought on these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, Joseph, you son of David, fear not to take to you Mary your wife: for what is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. (Mat. 1:20)”

Luke 1:34, 35. “34 And Mary said to the angel, How will this be, seeing I do not know a man? 35 And the angel answered and said to her, The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you: which is also why the holy thing which is begotten will be called the Son of God. (Luke 1:34-35)”

This wonderful birth was due to the supernatural influence of the Holy Spirit, who also kept the human nature of Christ free from the pollution of sin from its very inception, Luke 1:35.

b. The sufferings of Christ. We sometimes speak as if the sufferings of Christ were limited to His final agonies, but this is not correct. His whole life was a life of suffering. It was the servant life of the Lord of Hosts, the life of the sinless One in a sin-cursed world. Satan assaulted Him, His people rejected Him, and His enemies persecuted Him. The sufferings of the soul were even more intense than those of the body. He was tempted by the devil, was oppressed by the world of iniquity round about Him, and staggered by the burden of sin resting on Him,--

“a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.” Isa. 53:3.

c. The death, of Christ. When we speak of the death of Christ, we naturally have in mind His physical death. He did not die as the result of an accident, nor by the hand of an assassin, but under a judicial sentence, and was thus counted with the transgressors,

Isa. 53:12. “Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he will divide the spoil with the strong; because he poured out his soul to death, and was numbered with the transgressors: yet he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors. (Isaiah 53:12)”

By suffering the Roman punishment of crucifixion He died an accursed death, bearing the curse for us,

Deut. 21:23; “his body will not remain all night on the tree, but you will surely bury him the same day; for one who is hanged is accursed of God; that you defile not your land which Jehovah your God gives you for an inheritance. (Deut. 21:23)”

Gal. 3:13. “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one who hangs on a tree: (Galatians 3:13)”

d. The burial of Christ. It might seem as if the death of Christ was the last stage of His sufferings. Did He not cry out on the cross, “It is finished”? But these words probably refer to His active suffering. His burial certainly was a part of His humiliation, of which He as Son of God was also conscious. Man’s returning to the dust is a punishment for sin,

Gen. 3:19. “in the sweat of your face you will eat bread, till you return to the ground; for you were taken out of it: for dust you are, and to dust will you return. (Gen. 3:19)”

That the Savior’s abode in the grave was a humiliation, is evident from

Ps. 16:10; “For you will not leave my soul to Sheol; Nor will you suffer your holy one to see corruption. (Ps. 16:10)”

Acts 2:27, 31; “27 Because you will not leave my soul to Hades, Nor will you give your Holy One to see corruption. ...31 he foreseeing [this] spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that neither was he left to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. (Acts 2:27,31)”

13:34, 35. “34 And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he has spoken on this wise, I will give you the holy and sure [blessings] of David. 35 Because he says also in another [psalm], you will not give your Holy One to see corruption. (Acts 13:34-35)”

It removed for us the terrors of the grave.

e. The descent into Hades. The words of the Apostolic Confession, “He descended into Hades,” are variously interpreted. Roman Catholics say that He went down into the Limbus Patrum, where the Old Testament saints were confined, to release them; and the Lutherans that, between His death and resurrection, He went down to hell to preach and to celebrate his victory over the powers of darkness. In all probability it is a figurative expression to denote (1) that He suffered the pangs of hell in the garden and on the cross, and (2) that He entered the deepest humiliation of the state of death,

Ps. 16:8-10; “8 I have set Jehovah always before me: Because he is at my right hand, I will not be moved. 9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will dwell in safety. 10 For you will not leave my soul to Sheol; Nor will you suffer your holy one to see corruption. (Ps. 16:8-10)”

Eph. 4:9. “Now this, He ascended, what is it but that he also descended into the lower parts of the earth? (Eph. 4:9)”

2. The State of Exaltation.

In the state of exaltation Christ passed from under the law as a covenant obligation, having paid the penalty of sin and merited righteousness and eternal life for the sinner. Moreover, He was crowned with a corresponding honor and glory. Four stages must be distinguished here.

a. The resurrection. The resurrection of Christ did not consist in the mere re-union of body and soul, but especially in this that in Him human nature, both body and soul, was restored to its original beauty and strength, and even raised to a higher level. In distinction from all those who had been raised up before Him He arose with a spiritual body,

1Cor. 15:44, 45. “44 it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual [body]. 45 So also it is written, The first man Adam became a living soul. The last Adam [became] a life-giving spirit. (1Co. 15:44-45)”

For that reason He can be called

“the first fruits of those who slept,” 1Cor. 15:20, and “the firstborn of the dead,” Col. 1:18; Rev. 1:5.

The resurrection of Christ has a threefold significance:

(1) It was a declaration of the Father that Christ met all the requirements of the law,

Phil. 2:9. “Which is also why God highly exalted him, and gave to him the name which is above every name; (Phil. 2:9)”

(2) It symbolized the justification, regeneration, and final resurrection of believers,

Rom. 6:4, 5, 9; “4 We were buried therefore with him through baptism to death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have become united with [him] in the likeness of his death, we will be also [in the likeness] of his resurrection; ...9 knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dies no more; death no more has dominion over him. (Rom. 6:4-5,9)”

1Cor. 6:14; “and God both raised the Lord, and will raise up as through his power. (1Co. 6:14)”

15:20-22. “20 But now has Christ been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who are asleep. 21 For since by man [came] death, by man [came] also the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ will all be made alive. (1Co. 15:20-22)”

(3) It was the cause of our justification, regeneration, and resurrection,

Rom. 4:25; “who was delivered up for our trespasses, and was raised for our justification. (Rom. 4:25)”

5:10; “For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, will we be saved by his life; (Rom. 5:10)”

Eph. 1:20; “which he worked in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly [places], (Eph. 1:20)”

Phil. 3:10; “that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, becoming conformed to his death; (Phil. 3:10)”

1Pet. 1:3. “Blessed [be] the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy begat us again to a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, (1Pet. 1:3)”

b. The ascension. The ascension was in a sense the necessary completion of the resurrection, but it also had independent significance. We have a double account of it, namely, in Luke 24:50-53; Acts 1:6-11. Paul refers to it in

Eph. 1:20; “which he worked in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly [places], (Eph. 1:20)”

4:8-10; “8 Which is why he says, When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, And gave gifts to men. 9 (Now this, He ascended, what is it but that he also descended into the lower parts of the earth? 10 The One who descended is the same also that ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.) (Eph. 4:8-10)”

1Tim. 3:16, “And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness; He who was manifested in the flesh, Justified in the spirit, Seen of angels, Preached among the nations, Believed on in the world, Received up in glory. (1Tim. 3:16)”

and the Epistle to the Heb. stresses its significance, 1:3; 4:14; 6:20; 9:24.

“ who being the bright radiance of his glory, and the very image of his substance, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; (Heb. 1:3)

Having then a great high priest, who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. (Heb. 4:14) where as a forerunner Jesus entered for us, having become a high priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. (Heb. 6:20) For Christ entered not into a holy place made with hands, like in pattern to the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear before the face of God for us: (Heb. 9:24)

It was a visible ascent of the Mediator, according to His human nature, from earth to heaven, a going from one place to another. It included a further glorification of the human nature of Christ. The Lutherans have a different view of it. They conceive of it as a change of condition, by which the human nature of Jesus passed into the full enjoyment of certain divine attributes, and became

permanently omnipresent. In the ascension Christ as our great high priest enters the inner sanctuary to present His sacrifice to the Father and begin His work as intercessor at the throne,

Rom. 8:34; “who is the one who condemns? It is Christ Jesus who died, yes rather, that was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. (Rom. 8:34)”

Heb. 4:14; 6:20; 9:24. He ascended to prepare a place for us, John 14:1-3. With Him we are already set in heavenly places, and in His ascension we have the assurance of a place in heaven,

Eph. 2:6; “and raised us up with him, and made us to sit with him in the heavenly [places], in Christ Jesus: (Eph. 2:6)”

John 17:24. “Father, I desire that they also whom you have given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which you have given me: for you loved me before the foundation of the world. (John 17:24)”

c. The session at God’s right hand. After His ascension Christ is seated at the right hand of God,

Eph. 1:20; “which he worked in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly [places], (Eph. 1:20)”

Heb. 10:12; “but he, when he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; (Heb. 10:12)”

1Pet. 3:22. “who is one the right hand of God, having gone into heaven; angels and authorities and powers being made subject to him. (1Pet. 3:22)”

Naturally, the expression ‘right hand of God’ cannot be taken literally, but should be understood as a figurative indication of the place of power and glory. During His session at God’s right hand Christ rules and protects His Church, governs the universe in its behalf, and intercedes for His people on the basis of His completed sacrifice.

d. The physical return. The exaltation of Christ reaches its climax, when He returns to judge the living and the dead. Evidently His return will be bodily and visible,

Acts 1:11; “who also said, you men of Galilee, why stand you looking into heaven? this Jesus, who was received up from you into heaven will so come in the same way as you beheld him going into heaven. (Acts 1:11)”

Rev. 1:7. “Behold, he comes with the clouds; and every eye will see him, and those who pierced him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over him. Even so, Amen. (Rev. 1:7)”

That He will come as Judge is evident from such passages as

John 5:22, 27; “22 For neither does the Father judge any man, but he has given all judgment to the Son;... 27 and he gave him authority to execute judgment, because he is a son of man. (John 5:22,27)”

Acts 10:42; “And he charged us to preach to the people, and to testify that this is he who is ordained of God [to be] the Judge of the living and the dead. (Acts 10:42)”

Rom. 2:16; “in the day when God will judge the secrets of men, according to my gospel, by Jesus Christ. (Rom. 2:16)”

2Cor. 5:10; “For we must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things [done] in the body, according to what he has done, whether [it be] good or bad. (2Co. 5:10)”

2Tim. 4:1. “I charge [you] in the sight of God, and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: (2Tim. 4:1)”

The time of His second coming is not known to us. He will come for the purpose of judging the world and perfecting the salvation of His people. This will mark the complete victory of His redemptive work.

1Cor. 4:5; “Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then will each man have his praise from God. (1Co. 4:5)”

Phil. 3:20; “For our citizenship is in heaven; from where also we wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ: (Phil. 3:20)”

Col. 3:4; “When Christ, [who is] our life, will be manifested, then will you also with him be manifested in glory. (Col. 3:4)”

1Thess. 4:13-17; 2Thess. 1:7-10; 2Thess. 2:1-12; Tit. 2:13; “looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ; (Titus 2:13)”

Rev. 1:7. “Behold, He comes with the clouds; and every eye will see Him, and those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him.”

To memorize. Passages bearing on:

a. The state of humiliation:

Gal. 3:13. “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one who hangs on a tree.”

Gal. 4:4, 5. “But when the fullness of time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, that He might redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.”

Phil. 2:6-8. “Who, existing in the form of God, did not count being equal with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient even to death, indeed, the death of the cross.”

b. The incarnation:

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

Rom. 8:3. “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.”

c. The virgin birth:

Isa. 7:14. “Behold, a virgin will conceive, and bear a son, and will call His name Immanuel.”

Luke 1:35. “And the angel answered and said to her, The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you: which is also why the holy thing which is begotten will be called the Son of God.”

d. The descent into Hades:

Ps. 16:10. "For you will not leave my soul to Sheol (Hades, Acts 2:27); nor will you suffer your holy one to see corruption."

Eph. 4:9. "Now this, He ascended, what is it but that He also descended into the lower parts of the earth?"

e. The resurrection:

Rom. 4:25. "Who was delivered up for our trespasses, and was raised for our justification."

1Cor. 15:20. "But now has Christ been raised from the dead, the first-fruits of those who are asleep."

f. The ascension:

Luke 24:51. "And it came to pass, while He blessed them, He was parted from them, and was carried up into heaven."

Acts 1:11. "Who also said, you men of Galilee, why stand you looking into heaven? This same Jesus, who was received up from you into heaven, will so come in the same way as you have beheld Him going into heaven."

g. The session:

Eph. 1:20. "Which He worked in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and made Him to sit at His right hand in the heavenly places."

Heb. 10:12. "But He, when He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God."

h. The return:

Acts 1:11. Compare above under f.

Rev. 1:7. "Behold, He comes with the clouds; and every eye will see Him, and those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him."

For Further Study:

a. What does the Old Testament tell us about the humiliation of Christ in the following passages:

Ps. 22:6-20; 69:7-9; "7 Because for your sake I have borne reproach; Shame has covered my face. 8 I am become a stranger to my brethren, And an alien to my mother's children. 9 For the zeal of your house has eaten me up; And the reproaches of those who reproach you are fallen on me. (Ps. 69:7-9)"

20:21; [sic] Isa. 52:14, 15; "14 Like as many were astonished at you (his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men), 15 so will he sprinkle many nations; kings will shut their mouths at him: for what had not been told them will they see; and what they had not heard will they understand. (Isaiah 52:14-15)"

53:1-10; Zech. 11:12, 13. "12 And I said to them, If you think good, give me my hire; and if not, refrain. So they weighed for my hire thirty [pieces] of silver. 13 And Jehovah said to me, Cast it to the potter, the goodly price that I was prized at by them. And I took the thirty [pieces] of silver, and cast them to the potter, in the house of Jehovah. (Zec. 11:12-13)"

b. What was the special value of Christ's temptations for us?

Heb. 2:18; “For in that he himself has suffered being tempted, he is able to relieve those who are tempted. (Heb. 2:18)”

4:15; “For we do not have a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but one that has been in all points tempted like as [we are, yet] without sin. (Heb. 4:15)”

5:7-9. “7 Who in the days of his flesh, having offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears to the one who was able to save him from death, and having been heard for his godly fear, 8 though he was a Son, yet learned obedience by the things which he suffered; 9 and having been made perfect, he became to all those who obey him the author of eternal salvation; (Heb. 5:7-9)”

c. How do the following passages prove that heaven is a place rather than a condition?

Deut. 30:12; “It is not in heaven, that you should say, Who will go up for us to heaven, and bring it to us, and make us to hear it, that we may do it? (Deut. 30:12)”

Josh. 2:11; “And as soon as we had heard it, our hearts did melt, nor did there remain any more spirit in any man, because of you: for Jehovah your God, he is God in heaven above, and on earth beneath. (Joshua 2:11)”

Ps. 139:8; “If I ascend up into heaven, you are there: If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, you are there. (Ps. 139:8)”

Eccl. 5:2; “Do not be rash with your mouth, and let not your heart be hasty to utter anything before God; for God is in heaven, and you on earth: therefore let your words be few. (Ecclesiastes 5:2)”

Isa. 66:1; “Thus says Jehovah, Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: what manner of house will you build to me? and what place will be my rest? (Isaiah 66:1)”

Rom. 10:6, 7. “6 But the righteousness which is of faith says thus, Say not in your heart, Who will ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down:) 7 or, Who will descend into the abyss? (That is, to bring Christ up from the dead.) (Rom. 10:6-7)”

Questions for Review

1. What is meant by the states of the Mediator?
2. How would you define the states of humiliation and exaltation?
3. What took place at the incarnation?
4. How did Christ receive His human nature?
5. What proof have we for the virgin birth?
6. How was the Holy Spirit connected with the birth, of Christ?
7. Were the sufferings of Christ limited to the end of His life?
8. Did it make any difference how Christ died?
9. What different views are there respecting the descent into Hades?
10. What was the nature of Christ’s resurrection? What change did He undergo?
11. What was the significance of the resurrection?

12. How would you prove that the ascension was a going from place to place?
13. What is its significance, and how do Lutherans conceive of it?
14. What is meant by the session at God's right hand? What does Christ do there?
15. How will Christ return, and what is the purpose of His coming?

PART IV – THE DOCTRINE OF THE PERSON AND WORK OF CHRIST

Chapter 16: The Offices of Christ

The Bible ascribes a threefold office to Christ, speaking of Him as Prophet, Priest, and King.

1. The Prophetic Office.

The Old Testament predicted the coming of Christ as a prophet,

Deut. 18:15 “Jehovah your God will raise up to you a prophet from the midst of you, of your brethren, like to me; to him you will listen; (Deut. 18:15)”

(comp. Acts 3:23). “And it will be, that every soul that will not listen to that prophet, will be utterly destroyed from among the people. (Acts 3:23)”

He speaks of Himself as a prophet in

Luke 13:33, “Nevertheless I must go on my way today and to-morrow and the [day] following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem. (Luke 13:33)”

claims to bring a message from the Father,

John 8:26-28; “26 I have many things to speak and to judge concerning you: moreover the one who sent me is true; and the things which I heard from him, these speak I to the world. 27 They perceived not that he spoke to them of the Father. 28 Jesus therefore said, When you have lifted up the Son of man, then will you know that I am [he], and [that] I do nothing of myself, but as the Father taught me, I speak these things. (John 8:26-28)”

12:49, 50; “49 For I spoke not from myself; but the Father who sent me, he has given me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. 50 And I know that his commandment is life eternal: the things therefore which I speak, even as the Father has said to me, so I speak. (John 12:49-50)”

14:10, 24, “10 Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I say to you I do not speak from myself: but the Father abiding in me does his works. ... 24 One 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 14:10,24)”

foretells future things, Matt. 24:3-35; Luke 19:41-44, and speaks with singular authority,

Matt. 7:29. “for he taught them as [one] having authority, and not as their scribes. (Mat. 7:29)”

It is no wonder, therefore, that the people recognized Him as a prophet,

Matt. 21:11, 46; “And the multitudes said, This is the prophet, Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee. ... And when they sought to lay hold on him, they feared the multitudes, because they took him for a prophet. (Mat. 21:11,46)”

Luke 7:16; “And fear took hold on all: and they glorified God, saying, A great prophet is arisen among us: and, God has visited his people. (Luke 7:16)”

24:19; “And he said to them, What things? And they said to him, The things concerning Jesus the Nazarene, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: (Luke 24:19)”

John 6:14; “When therefore the people saw the sign which he did, they said, This is of a truth the prophet that comes into the world. (John 6:14)”

7:40; “[Some] of the multitude therefore, when they heard these words, said, This is of a truth the prophet. (John 7:40)”

9:17. “They say therefore to the blind man again, What do you say of him, in that he opened your eyes? And he said, He is a prophet. (John 9:17)”

A prophet is one who receives divine revelations in dreams, visions, or verbal communications; and passes these on to the people either orally or visibly in prophetic actions.

Ex. 7:1; “And Jehovah said to Moses, See, I have made you as God to Pharaoh; and Aaron your brother will be your prophet. (Exodus 7:1)”

Deut. 18:18; “I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like to you; and I will put my words in his mouth, and he will speak to them all that I will command him. (Deut. 18:18)”

Num. 12:6-8; “6 And he said, Hear now my words: if there is a prophet among you, I Jehovah will make myself known to him in a vision, I will speak with him in a dream. 7 My servant Moses is not so; he is faithful in all my house: 8 with him will I speak mouth to mouth, even manifestly, and not in dark speeches; and the form of Jehovah will he behold: why then were you not afraid to speak against my servant, against Moses? (Numbers 12:6-8)”

Isa. 6; Jer. 1:4-10; Ezek. 3:1-4, 17. His work may pertain to the past, the present, or the future. One of his important tasks was to interpret the moral and spiritual aspects of the law for the people. Christ functioned as prophet already in the Old Testament, 1Pet. 1:11; “searching what [time] or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them pointed to, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow them. (1Pet. 1:11)”

3:18-20. “18 Because Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God; being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; 19 in which also he went and preached to the spirits in prison, 20 who beforehand were disobedient, when the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water: (1Pet. 3:18-20)”

He did it while He was on earth, and continued it by the operation of the Holy Spirit and through the apostles after the ascension,

John 14:26; “But the Comforter, [even] the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you. (John 14:26)”

16:12-14; “12 I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 13 Nonetheless when he, the Spirit of truth, has come, he will guide you into all the truth: for he will not speak from himself; but whatever things he will hear, [these] will he speak: and he will declare to you the things that are to come. 14 He will glorify me: for he will take of mine, and will declare [it] to you. (John 16:12-14)”

Acts 1:1-2. The former treatise I made, O Theophilus, concerning all that Jesus began both to do and to teach, 2 until the day in which he was received up, after that he had given commandment through the Holy Spirit unto the apostles whom he had chosen:

And even now his prophetic ministry continues through the ministry of the Word and the spiritual illumination of believers. This is the only function of Christ which is recognized in modern liberal theology.

2. The Priestly Office.

The Old Testament also predicted and prefigured the priesthood of the coming Redeemer,

Ps. 110:4; “Jehovah has sworn, and will not repent: you are a priest for ever After the order of Melchizedek. (Ps. 110:4)”

Zech. 6:13; “even he will build the temple of Jehovah; and he will bear the glory, and will sit and rule on his throne; and he will be a priest on his throne; and the counsel of peace will be between them both. (Zec. 6:13)”

Isa. 53. In the New Testament there is only a single book in which He is called priest, namely, Heb., but there the name is found repeatedly,

3:1; 4:14; 5:5; 6:20; 7:26; 8:1. “Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, [even] Jesus; (Heb. 3:1)

Having then a great high priest, who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. (Heb. 4:14)

So Christ also did not glorify himself to be made a high priest, but the one who spoke to him, you are my Son, This day I have begotten you: (Heb. 5:5)

where as a forerunner Jesus entered for us, having become a high priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. (Heb. 6:20)

For such a high priest became us, holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; (Heb. 7:26)

Now in the things which we are saying the chief point [is this]: We have such a high priest, who sat down on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, (Heb. 8:1)”

However, other books refer to His priestly work,

Mark 10:45; “For the Son of man also did not come to be ministered to, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many. (Mark 10:45)”

John 1:29; “On the morrow he sees Jesus coming to him, and says, Behold, the Lamb of God, that takes away the sin of the world! (John 1:29)”

Rom. 3:24, 25; “24 being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: 25 whom God set forth [to be] a propitiation, through faith, in his blood, to show his righteousness because of the passing over of the sins done previously, in the forbearance of God; (Rom. 3:24-25)”

1Cor. 5:7; “Purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, even as you are unleavened. For our Passover also has been sacrificed, [even] Christ: (1Co. 5:7)”

1John 2:2; “and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world. (1 John 2:2)”

1Pet. 2:24; “who Himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live to righteousness; by whose stripes you were healed. (1Pet. 2:24)”

3:18. “Because Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God; being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; (1Pet. 3:18)”

While a prophet represented God among the people, a priest represented the people before God. Both were teachers, but while the former taught the moral, the latter taught the ceremonial law. Moreover, the priests had the special privilege of approach to God, and of speaking and acting in behalf of the people.

Heb. 5:1, 3 “1 For every high priest, being taken from among men, is appointed for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins: ... 3 and for that reason he is bound to offer for sins for himself just as *he does* for the people. (Heb. 5:1,3)”

teaches us that a priest is taken from among men to be their representative, is appointed by God, is active before God in the interests of men, and offers gifts and sacrifices for sins. He also makes intercession for the people. The priestly work of Christ was, first of all, to bring a sacrifice for sin. The Old Testament sacrifices were types pointing forward to the great sacrifice of Christ,

Heb. 9:23, 24; “23 It was necessary therefore that the copies of the things in the heavens should be cleansed with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. 24 For Christ entered not into a holy place made with hands, like in pattern to the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear before the face of God for us: (Heb. 9:23-24)”

10:1, “For the law having a shadow of the good [things] to come, not the very image of the things, can never with the same sacrifices year by year, which they offer continually, make perfect those who draw nigh. (Heb. 10:1)”

13:11, 12. “11 For the bodies of those beasts whose blood is brought into the holy place by the high priest [as an offering] for sin, are burned without the camp. 12 Therefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people through his own blood, suffered outside the gate. (Heb. 13:11-12)”

Hence Christ is also called “the Lamb of God,” John 1:29, and “our Passover,” 1Cor. 5:7. The New Testament speaks very clearly of the priestly work of Christ in numerous passages:

Mark 10:45; “For the Son of man also did not come to be ministered to, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many. (Mark 10:45)”

John 1:29; “On the morrow he sees Jesus coming to him, and says, Behold, the Lamb of God, that takes away the sin of the world! (John 1:29)”

Rom. 3:24, 25; “24 being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: 25 whom God set forth [to be] a propitiation, through faith, in his blood, to show his righteousness because of the passing over of the sins done previously, in the forbearance of God; (Rom. 3:24-25)”

5:6-8; “6 For while we were yet weak, in due season Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: for peradventure for the good man some one would even dare to die. 8 But God commands his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. (Rom. 5:6-8)”

1Cor. 5:7; “Purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, even as you are unleavened. For our Passover also has been sacrificed, [even] Christ: (1Co. 5:7)”

15:3; “For I delivered to you first of all what also I received: that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; (1Co. 15:3)”

Gal. 1:4; “who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us out of this present evil world, according to the will of our God and Father: (Galatians 1:4)”

Eph. 5:2; “and walk in love, even as Christ also loved you, and gave himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for an odor of a sweet smell. (Eph. 5:2)”

1Pet. 2:24; “who Himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live to righteousness; by whose stripes you were healed. (1Pet. 2:24)”

3:18; “Because Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God; being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; (1Pet. 3:18)”

1John 2:2; “and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world. (1 John 2:2)”

4:10; “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son [to be] the propitiation for our sins. (1 John 4:10)”

Rev. 5:12. “saying with a great voice, Worthy is the Lamb that has been slain to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and might and honor, and glory, and blessing. (Rev. 5:12)”

The references are most frequent in the Epistle to the

Heb., 5:1-10; 7:1-28; 9:11-15, 24-28; 10:11-14, 19-22; 12:24; “and to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better than [that of] Abel. (Heb. 12:24)”

13:12. “Therefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people through his own blood, suffered outside the gate. (Heb. 13:12)”

Besides bringing the great sacrifice for sins, Christ as priest also makes intercession for His people. He is called our parakletos by implication in

John 14:16, “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Comforter, that he may be with you for ever, (John 14:16)”

and explicitly in

1John 2:1-2. “My little children, these things write I to you that you may not sin. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world. (1 John 2:1-2)”

The term means ‘one who is called in to help, an advocate, one who pleads the cause of another.’ The New Testament refers to Christ as our intercessor in

Rom. 8:34; “who is the one who condemns? It is Christ Jesus who died, yes rather, that was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. (Rom. 8:34)”

Heb. 7:25; “Which is also why he is able to save completely those who draw near to God through him, seeing he ever lives to make intercession for them. (Heb. 7:25)”

9:24; “For Christ entered not into a holy place made with hands, like in pattern to the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear before the face of God for us: (Heb. 9:24)”

1John 2:1. His intercessory work is based on His sacrifice, and is not limited, as is sometimes thought, to intercessory prayer. He presents His sacrifice to God, on the ground of it claims all spiritual blessings for His people, defends them against the charges of Satan, the law, and conscience, secures forgiveness for everything justly charged against them, and sanctifies their worship and service through the operation of the Holy Spirit. This intercessory work is limited in character; it has reference only to the elect, but includes all the elect, whether they are already believers or still live in unbelief, John 17:9, 20. “I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for those whom you have given me; for they are yours:... Nor for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; (John 17:9,20)”

3. The Kingly Office.

As Son of God Christ naturally shares in the universal dominion of God. In distinction from this we speak of a kingship that was conferred on Him as Mediator. This kingship is twofold, namely, His spiritual kingship over the Church, and His kingship over the universe.

a. His spiritual kingship. The Bible speaks of this in many places,

Ps. 2:6; “Yet I have set my king on my holy hill of Zion. (Ps. 2:6)”

132:11; “Jehovah has sworn to David in truth; He will not turn from it: Of the fruit of your body will I set on your throne. (Ps. 132:11)”

Isa. 9:6, 7; “6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government will be on his shoulder: and his name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David, and on his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform this. (Isaiah 9:6-7)”

Micah 5:2; “But you, Beth-lehem Ephrathah, which are little to be among the thousands of Judah, out of you will one come forth to me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth are from old, from everlasting. (Micah 5:2)”

Zech. 6:13; “even he will build the temple of Jehovah; and he will bear the glory, and will sit and rule on his throne; and he will be a priest on his throne; and the counsel of peace will be between them both. (Zec. 6:13)”

Luke 1:33; “and he will reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there will be no end. (Luke 1:33)”

19:38; “saying, Blessed [is] the King that comes in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest. (Luke 19:38)”

John 18:36, 37; “36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. 37 Pilate therefore said to him, are you a king then? Jesus answered, you say that I am a king. To this end I have been born, and to this end am I come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Every one who is of the truth hears my voice. (John 18:36-37)”

Acts 2:30-36. The kingship of Christ is His royal rule over His people. It is called spiritual, because it relates to a spiritual realm, is established in the hearts and lives of believers, has a spiritual end in view, the salvation of sinners, and is administered by spiritual means, the Word and the Spirit. It is exercised largely in the gathering, the government, the protection, and the perfection of the Church. This kingship as well as the realm over which it extends is called in the New Testament “the kingdom of God” or “the kingdom of heaven.” In the strict sense of the word only believers, members of the invisible Church, are citizens of the kingdom. But the term ‘kingdom of God’ is sometimes used in a broader sense, as including all who live under the proclamation of the gospel, all who have a place in the visible Church, Matt. 13:24-30, 47-50. This kingdom of God is on the one hand a PRESENT, spiritual reality in the hearts and lives of men,

Matt. 12:28; “But if I by the Spirit of God cast out demons, then is the kingdom of God come on you. (Mat. 12:28)”

Luke 17:21; “nor will they say, Lo, here! or, There! for lo, the kingdom of God is within you. (Luke 17:21)”

Col. 1:13; “who delivered us out of the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love; (Col. 1:13)”

but on the other hand a FUTURE hope, which will not be realized until the return of Jesus Christ,

Matt. 7:21; “Not every one who says to me, Lord, Lord, will enter into the kingdom of heaven; but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. (Mat. 7:21)”

Luke 22:29; “and I appoint to you a kingdom, even as my Father appointed to me, (Luke 22:29)”

1Cor. 15:50; “Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. (1Co. 15:50)”

2Tim. 4:18; “The Lord will deliver me from every evil work, and will save me to his heavenly kingdom: to whom [be] the glory forever and ever. Amen. (2Tim. 4:18)”

2Pet. 1:11. “for thus will be richly supplied to you the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (2Pet. 1:11)”

The future kingdom will be essentially the same as the present, namely, the rule of God established and acknowledged in the hearts of men. It will differ, however, in that it will be VISIBLE and PERFECT. Some are of the opinion that this kingship of Christ will cease at His return, but the Bible would seem to teach explicitly that it will endure forever,

Ps. 45:6; “Your throne, O God, is for ever and ever: A scepter of equity is the scepter of your kingdom. (Ps. 45:6)”

72:17; “His name will endure for ever; His name will be continued as long as the sun: And men will be blessed in him; All nations will call him happy. (Ps. 72:17)”

89:36; 37; “36 His seed will endure for ever, And his throne as the sun before me. 37 It will be established for ever as the moon, And [as] the faithful witness in the sky. [Selah (Ps. 89:36-37)”

Isa. 9:6; “For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government will be on his shoulder: and his name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 9:6)”

Dan. 2:44; “And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, nor will its sovereignty be left to another people; instead, it will break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it will stand for ever. (Daniel 2:44)”

2Sam. 7:13, 16; “13 He will build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever.... 16 And your house and your kingdom will be made sure for ever before you: your throne will be established for ever. (2Sa. 7:13,16)”

Luke 1:33; 2Pet. 1:11.

b. His universal kingship, After the resurrection Christ said to His disciples: “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.” Matt. 28:18. The same truth is taught in

1Cor. 15:27; “For, He put all things in subjection under his feet. But when he says, All things are put in subjection, it is evident that he is excepted who subjected all things to him. (1Co. 15:27)”

Eph. 1:20-22. “20 which he worked in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly [places], 21 far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and

every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in what is to come: 22 and he put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, (Eph. 1:20-22)"

This kingship should not be confused with the original kingship of Christ AS THE SON OF GOD, though it pertains to the same realm. It is the kingship of the universe entrusted to Christ as Mediator in behalf of His Church. As Mediator He now guides the destiny of individuals and nations, controls the life of the world and makes it subservient to His redemptive purpose, and protects His Church against the dangers to which it is exposed in the world. This kingship will last until the victory over the enemies of the kingdom of God is complete. When the end is accomplished, it will be returned to the Father. 1Cor. 15:24-28.

To memorize. Passages pointing to:

a. Christ as prophet:

Deut. 18:18. "I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like to you; and I will put my words in his mouth, and he will speak to them all that I will command him."

Luke 7:16. "And fear took hold on them all; and they glorified God, saying, A great prophet is arisen among us: and God has visited His people."

b. Christ as priest:

Ps. 110:4. "Jehovah has sworn, and will not repent: you are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek."

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

Heb. 4:14. "Having then a great high priest, who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession."

c. His characteristics as priest:

Heb. 5:1, 5. "For every high priest, being taken from among men, is appointed for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins... So Christ also did not glorify Himself to be made a high priest, but the One who spoke to Him, you are My Son, this day I have begotten You."

d. His sacrificial work:

Isa. 53:5. "But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was on Him; and with his stripes we are healed."

Mark 10:45. "For the Son of Man also did not come to be ministered to, but to minister, and to give His soul a ransom for many."

John 1:29. "Behold, the Lamb of God, that takes away the sin of the world."

1Pet. 2:24. "Who Himself bare sins in His body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live to righteousness."

1John 2:2. "And He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but for the whole world."

e. His intercessory work:

Rom. 8:34. "It is Christ Jesus who died, yes rather, that was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us."

Heb. 7:25. “Which is also why He is able to save completely “103” those who draw near to God through Him, seeing He ever lives to make intercession for them.”

1John 2:1b. “And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.”

f. Christ as King of Zion:

Ps. 2:6. “Yet I have set my king on my holy hill of Zion.”

Isa. 9:7. “Of the increase of His government and of peace there will be no end on the throne of David, and on His kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even for ever.”

Luke 1:32, 33. “He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High: and the Lord God will give to Him the throne of His father David: and He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there will be no end.”

g. Christ as king of the universe:

Matt. 28:18. “And Jesus came to them and spoke to them, saying, All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth.”

Eph. 1:22. “And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the Church.”

1Cor. 15:25. “For He must reign, till He has put all His enemies under His feet.”

For Further Study:

a. What do the following passages tell us respecting the nature of the prophetic work? Ex. 7:1;

Deut. 18:18; “I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like to you; and I will put my words in his mouth, and he will speak to them all that I will command him. (Deut. 18:18)”

Ezek. 3:17. “Son of man, I have made you a watchman to the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. (Ezekiel 3:17)”

b. What Old Testament types of Christ are indicated in the following passages:

John 1:29; “On the morrow he sees Jesus coming to him, and says, Behold, the Lamb of God, that takes away the sin of the world! (John 1:29)”

1Cor. 5:7; “Purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, even as you are unleavened. For our Passover also has been sacrificed, [even] Christ: (1Co. 5:7)”

Heb. 3:1; “Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, [even] Jesus; (Heb. 3:1)”

4:14; “Having then a great high priest, who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. (Heb. 4:14)”

8:3-5; “3 For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices: therefore it is necessary that this [high priest] also have somewhat to offer. 4 Now if he were on earth, he would not be a priest at all, seeing there are those who offer the gifts according to the law; 5 who serve [what is] a copy and shadow of the heavenly things, even as Moses is warned [of God] when he is about to make the tabernacle: for, See, says he, that you make all things according to the pattern that was showed you in the mount. (Heb. 8:3-5)”

9:13, 14; “13 For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled, sanctify to the cleanness of the flesh: 14 how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? (Heb. 9:13-14)”

10:1-14; 13:11, 12. “11 For the bodies of those beasts whose blood is brought into the holy place by the high priest [as an offering] for sin, are burned without the camp. 12 Therefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people through his own blood, suffered outside the gate. (Heb. 13:11-12)”

c. What do the following passages teach us respecting the kingdom of God?

John 3:3, 5; “3 Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, Except one be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God. ...5 Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God! (John 3:3,5)”

18:36, 37; “36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. 37 Pilate therefore said to him, are you a king then? Jesus answered, you say that I am a king. To this end I have been born, and to this end am I come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Every one who is of the truth hears my voice. (John 18:36-37)”

Rom. 14:17; “for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. (Rom. 14:17)”

1Cor. 4:20. “For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power. (1Co. 4:20)”

Questions for Review

1. What threefold office has Christ?
2. What is a prophet, and what proof is there that Christ is a prophet?
3. How did Christ function as prophet in various periods of history?
4. What is a priest in distinction from a prophet? How did their teaching differ?
5. What Scriptural proof is there for the priestly character of Christ?
6. What are the characteristics of a priest?
7. What was the nature of Christ’s sacrificial work? How was it foreshadowed in the Old Testaments?
8. In what does the work of Christ as intercessor consist?
9. For whom does Christ intercede?
10. What is the spiritual kingship of Christ, and over what realm does it extend?
11. How is the present kingdom of Christ related to His future kingdom?
12. How long will His spiritual kingship lasts?
13. What is the nature and purpose of His universal kingdoms?

14. How long will this last?

Chapter 17: The Atonement Through Christ

There is one part of Christ's priestly work that calls for further consideration, namely, the atonement.

1. The Moving Cause and Necessity of the Atonement.

It is sometimes represented as if the moving cause of the atonement lay in Christ's sympathy for sinners. God in His anger, it is said, was bent on the sinner's destruction, but the loving Christ steps in between and saves the sinner. Christ receives all the glory, and the Father is robbed of His honor. The Bible teaches us that the atonement finds its moving cause in the good pleasure of God,

Isa. 53:10; "Yet it pleased Jehovah to bruise him; he has put him to grief: when you will make his soul an offering for sin, he will see [his] seed, he will prolong his days, and the pleasure of Jehovah will prosper in his hand. (Isaiah 53:10)"

Luke 2:14; "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace among men in whom he is well pleased. (Luke 2:14)"

Eph. 1:6-9; Col. 1:19, 20. "19 For it was the good pleasure [of the Father] that in him should all the fulness dwell; 20 and through him to reconcile all things to himself, having made peace through the blood of his cross; through him, [I say], whether things on the earth, or things in the heavens. (Col. 1:19-20)"

It is best to say that the atonement is rooted in the love and justice of God: love offered sinners a way of escape, and justice demanded that the requirements of the law should be met,

John 3:16; "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes on him would not perish, but have eternal life. (John 3:16)"

Rom. 3:24-26. "24 being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: 25 whom God set forth [to be] a propitiation, through faith, in his blood, to show his righteousness because of the passing over of the sins done previously, in the forbearance of God; 26 for the showing, [I say], of his righteousness at this present season: that he might himself be just, and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. (Rom. 3:24-26)"

Some deny the necessity of the atonement, and hold that God could have pardoned the sinner without receiving any satisfaction. The Bible teaches however, that a righteous and holy God cannot simply overlook sin, but reacts against it,

Ex. 20:5; "you will not bow down yourself to them, nor serve them, for I Jehovah your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and on the fourth generation of those who hate me, (Exodus 20:5)"

23:7; "Keep you far from a false matter; and the innocent and righteous slay you not: for I will not justify the wicked. (Exodus 23:7)"

Ps. 5:5, 6; "5 The arrogant will not stand in your sight: you hate all workers of iniquity. 6 you will destroy those who speak lies: Jehovah abhors the blood-thirsty and deceitful man. (Ps. 5:5-6)"

Nah. 1:2; "2 Jehovah is a jealous God and avenges; Jehovah avenges and is full of wrath; Jehovah takes vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserves [wrath] for his enemies. 3 Jehovah is slow to anger, and great in power, and will by no means clear [the guilty]. (Nahum 1:2-3a)"

Rom. 1:18, 32. “18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hinder the truth in unrighteousness;...32 who, knowing the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but also consent with those who practice them. (Rom. 1:18,32)”

Moreover, He had pronounced the sentence of death on the sinner,

Gen. 3:3; “but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, you will not eat of it, nor will you touch it, lest you die. (Gen. 3:3)”

Rom. 6:23. “For the wages of sin is death; but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rom. 6:23)”

2. The Nature of the Atonement.

The following particulars should do not beed here:

a. It served to render satisfaction to God. It is often said that the atonement served primarily, if not exclusively, to influence the sinner, to awaken repentance in his heart, and thus to bring him back to God. But this is clearly wrong, for if a person offends another, amends should be made, not to the offender, but to the offended party. This means that the primary purpose of the atonement was to reconcile God to the sinner. The reconciliation of the sinner to God may be regarded as its secondary purpose.

b. It was a vicarious atonement. God might have demanded a personal atonement of the sinner, but the latter would not have been able to render it. In view of this fact God graciously ordained that Christ should take the place of man as his vicar or substitute. Christ as our vicar atoned for the sin of mankind by bearing the penalty of sin and meeting the demands of the law, and thus worked an eternal redemption for man. For that reason we speak of the atonement as a VICARIOUS atonement. The offended party Himself made provision for the atonement in this case. The Old Testament sacrifices prefigured the atoning work of Christ,

Lev. 1:4; “And he will lay his hand on the head of the burnt-offering; and it will be accepted for him to make atonement for him. (Leviticus 1:4)”

4:20, 31, 35; “20 Thus will he do with the bullock; as he did with the bullock of the sin-offering, so will he do with this; and the priest will make atonement for them, and they will be forgiven....31 And all its fat he will take away, just as the fat is taken away from the sacrifice of peace-offerings; and the priest will burn it on the altar for a sweet savor to Jehovah; and the priest will make atonement for him, and he will be forgiven. ...35 and all its fat he will take away, just as the fat of the lamb is taken away from the sacrifice of peace-offerings; and the priest will burn them on the altar, on the offerings of Jehovah made by fire; and the priest will make atonement for him as touching his sin that he has sinned, and he will be forgiven. (Leviticus 4:20,31,35)”

5:10, 16; “10 And he will offer the second for a burnt-offering, according to the ordinance; and the priest will make atonement for him as concerning his sin which he has sinned, and he will be forgiven. ...16 and he will make restitution for what he has done amiss in the holy thing, and will add the fifth part thereto, and give it to the priest; and the priest will make atonement for him with the ram of the trespass-offering, and he will be forgiven. (Leviticus 5:10,16)”

6:7; “and the priest will make atonement for him before Jehovah; and he will be forgiven concerning whatever he does so as to be guilty thereby. (Leviticus 6:7)”

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

We are taught that our sins were laid on Christ,

Isa. 53:6, “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and Jehovah has laid on him the iniquity of us all. (Isaiah 53:6)”

He bore them, John 1:29,

Heb. 9:28, “so Christ also, having been once offered to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, apart from sin, to those who wait for him, unto salvation. (Heb. 9:28)”

and gave His life for sinners,

Mark 10:45; “For the Son of man also did not come to be ministered to, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many. (Mark 10:45)”

Gal. 1:4; “who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us out of this present evil world, according to the will of our God and Father: (Galatians 1:4)”

1Pet. 3:18. “Because Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God; being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; (1Pet. 3:18)”

c. It included Christ’s active and passive obedience. It is customary to distinguish a twofold obedience of Christ. His active obedience consists in all that He did to observe the law in behalf of sinners, as a condition for obtaining eternal life; and His passive obedience in all that He suffered in paying the penalty of sin and discharging the debt of His people. But while we distinguish these two, we should never separate them. Christ was active also in His suffering, and passive also in His submission to the law. Scripture teaches us that He paid the penalty of the law,

Isa. 53:8; “By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who [among them] considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living for the transgression of my people to whom the stroke [was due]? (Isaiah 53:8)”

Rom. 4:25; “who was delivered up for our trespasses, and was raised for our justification. (Rom. 4:25)”

Gal. 3:13; “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one who hangs on a tree: (Galatians 3:13)”

1Pet. 2:24, “who Himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live to righteousness; by whose stripes you were healed. (1Pet. 2:24)”

and merited eternal life for the sinner,

Rom. 8:4; “that the ordinance of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. (Rom. 8:4)”

10:4; “For Christ is the end of the law to righteousness to every one who believes. (Rom. 10:4)”

2Cor. 5:21; “Him who knew no sin he made [to be] sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in him. (2Co. 5:21)”

Gal. 4:4-7. “4 but when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, 5 that he might redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

6 And because you are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father. 7 So that you are no longer a bondservant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God. (Galatians 4:4-7)"

3. The Extent of the Atonement.

Roman Catholics, Lutherans, and Arminians of every description regard the atonement of Christ as universal. This does not mean that in their estimation all men will be saved, but merely that Christ suffered and died FOR THE PURPOSE OF SAVING ALL WITHOUT ANY EXCEPTION. They admit that the intended effect is not achieved. Christ did not actually save, but made salvation possible for all. Their actual redemption is dependent on their own choice. Reformed Churches on the other hand believe in a limited atonement. Christ suffered and died FOR THE PURPOSE OF SAVING ONLY THE ELECT, AND THAT PURPOSE IS ACTUALLY ACCOMPLISHED. Christ not merely made salvation possible but really saves completely every one of those for whom he laid down His life,

Luke 19:10; "For the Son of man came to seek and to save what was lost. (Luke 19:10)"

Rom. 5:10; "For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, will we be saved by his life; (Rom. 5:10)"

2Cor. 5:21; "Him who knew no sin he made [to be] sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in him. (2Co. 5:21)"

Gal. 1:4; "who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us out of this present evil world, according to the will of our God and Father: (Galatians 1:4)"

Eph. 1:7. "in whom we have our redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, (Eph. 1:7)"

The Bible indicates that Christ laid down His life for His people.

Matt. 1:21, "And she will bring forth a son; and you will call his name JESUS; for he is the one who will save his people from their sins. (Mat. 1:21)"

for His sheep,

John 10:11, 15, "11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ...15 even as the Father knows me, and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. (John 10:11,15)"

for the Church,

Acts 20:28; "Take heed to yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you bishops, to feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood. (Acts 20:28)"

Eph. 5:25-27, "25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it; 26 that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word, 27 that he might present the church to himself a glorious [church], not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. (Eph. 5:25-27)"

or for the elect,

Rom. 8:32-35. "32 The one who did not spare his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how will he not also with him freely give us all things? 33 Who will lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifies; 34 who is the one who condemns? It is Christ Jesus who died, yes rather, that was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. 35 Who will separate us from

the love of Christ? will tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? (Rom. 8:32-35)"

If the Bible sometimes says that Christ died FOR THE WORLD,

John 1:29; "On the morrow he sees Jesus coming to him, and says, Behold, the Lamb of God, that takes away the sin of the world! (John 1:29)"

1John 2:2; "and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world. (1 John 2:2)"

4:14, "And we have beheld and bear witness that the Father has sent the Son [to be] the Savior of the world. (1 John 4:14)"

or FOR ALL,

1Tim. 2:6; "who gave himself a ransom for all; the testimony [to be borne] in its own times; (1Tim. 2:6)"

Tit. 2:11; "For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, (Titus 2:11)"

Heb. 2:9, "But we behold him who has been made a little lower than the angels, [even] Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of God he should taste of death for every [man]. (Heb. 2:9)"

this evidently means that He died for people of all nations of the world, or (in some instances) for all kinds or classes of people.

To memorize. Passages bearing on:

a. The cause of the atonement.

Isa. 53:10. "Yet it pleased Jehovah to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief: when you will make His soul an offering for sin, He will see His seed, He will prolong his days, and the pleasure of Jehovah will prosper in His hand."

Col. 1:19, 20. "For it was the good pleasure of the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell; and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross."

b. Vicarious atonement.

Isa. 53:6. "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and Jehovah has laid on Him the iniquity of us all."

Mark 10:45. "For the Son also did not come to be ministered to, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many."

2Cor. 5:21. "Him who knew no sin He made to be sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

1Pet. 2:24. "Who Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live to righteousness."

c. Active obedience and the gift of eternal life.

Matt. 3:15. "But Jesus answering said to him, Suffer it now: for thus it becomes us to fulfill all righteousness."

Matt. 5:17. “Do not think that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I did not come to destroy, but to fulfill.”

Gal. 4:4, 5. “But when the fullness of time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, that He might redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.”

John 10:28. “And I give to them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.”

Rom. 6:23. “For the wages of sin is death; but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Limited atonement.

Matt. 1:21. “And she will bring forth a son; and you will call His name Jesus; for he is the one who will save His people from their sins.”

John 10:26-28. “But you believe not, because you are not of my sheep. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give to them eternal life; and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.”

Acts 20:28. “Take heed to yourselves, and to all the flocks, in which the Holy Spirit has made you bishops, to feed the Church of the Lord which He purchased with His own blood.”

For Further Study:

a. What is the difference between atonement and reconciliation?

b. How do the following passages prove the vicarious nature of Old Testament sacrifices?

Lev. 1:4; “And he will lay his hand on the head of the burnt-offering; and it will be accepted for him to make atonement for him. (Leviticus 1:4)”

3:2; “And he will lay his hand on the head of his oblation, and kill it at the door of the tent of meeting: and Aaron’s sons the priests will sprinkle the blood on the altar round about. (Leviticus 3:2)”

4:15; “And the elders of the congregation will lay their hands on the head of the bullock before Jehovah; and the bullock will be killed before Jehovah. (Leviticus 4:15)”

16:21, 22. “21 and Aaron will lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions, even all their sins; and he will put them on the head of the goat, and will send him away by the hand of a man that is in readiness into the wilderness: 22 and the goat will bear on him all their iniquities to a solitary land: and he will let go the goat in the wilderness. (Leviticus 16:21-22)”

c. Does John 17:9 teach us anything respecting the extent of the atonement?

“I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for those whom you have given me; for they are yours: (John 17:9)”

Questions for Review

1. What was the moving cause of the atonement?
2. Why was the atonement necessary?
3. What was the primary purpose of the atonement?

4. What is the difference between personal and vicarious atonement?
5. How was Christ's vicarious atonement prefigured in the Old Testament?
6. What Scripture proof is there for it?
7. What is the difference between the active and passive obedience of Christ?
8. What did each one of these effect?
9. What difference of opinion is there respecting the extent of the atonement?
10. What is meant by universal atonement, and who teach it?
11. What is limited atonement, and what Scripture proof is there for it?
12. What objections are raised against this, and how can they be answered?

PART V - THE DOCTRINE OF THE APPLICATION OF THE WORK OF REDEMPTION

Chapter 18: The Common Operation of the Holy Spirit: Common Grace

The study of the work of redemption worked by Christ is naturally followed by a discussion of the application of this redemption to the hearts and lives of sinners by the special operation of your Holy Spirit. Before taking this up a brief chapter will be devoted to the general operations of the Holy Spirit, as these are seen in common grace.

1. Nature of Common Grace. When we speak of common grace, we have in mind either

- (a) those general operations of the Holy Spirit by which He, without renewing the heart, exercises such a moral influence on man that sin is restrained, order is maintained in social life, and civil righteousness is promoted; or
- (b) those general blessings which God imparts to all men without any distinction as He sees fit.

In distinction from the Arminians we maintain that common grace does not enable the sinner to perform any spiritual good, nor to turn to God in faith and repentance. It can be resisted by man, and is always more or less resisted, and at best affects only the externals of social, civil, moral, and religious life. While Christ died for the purpose of saving only the elect, nevertheless the whole human race, including the impenitent and the reprobate, derive great benefits from His death. The blessings of common grace may be regarded as indirect results of the atoning work of Christ.

2. Means of Common Grace.

Several means may be distinguished:

- (a) The most important of these is the light of God's general revelation. Without this all other means would be impossible and ineffective. It lightens every man, and serves to guide the conscience of the natural man.
- (b) Human governments also serve this purpose. According to our Confession they are instituted to curb evil tendencies, and to promote good order and decency.
- (c) Public opinion is another important means wherever it is in harmony with the law of God. It has a tremendous influence on the conduct of men who are very sensitive to the judgment of public opinion.
- (d) Finally, divine punishments and rewards also serve to encourage moral goodness in the world. The punishments often check the sinful deeds of men, and the rewards spur them on to do what is good and right.

3. The Effects of Common Grace.

The following effects may be ascribed to the operation of common grace:

(a) The execution of the sentence of death on man is deferred. God did not at once fully execute the sentence of death on the sinner, and does not do so now, but gives him time for repentance,

Rom. 2:4; “Or do you despise the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?”

2Pet. 3:9. “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some count slackness; but is longsuffering toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”

(b) Sin is restrained in the lives of individuals and nations The corruption that entered human life through sin is retarded and not yet permitted to complete its destructive work,

Gen. 20:6; “And God said to him in the dream, Yes, I know that in the integrity of your heart you have done this, and I also withheld you from sinning against me. Therefore I suffered you not to touch her.”

Gen. 31:7; “And your father has deceived me, and changed my wages ten times; but God suffered him not to hurt me.”

Job 1:12; “And Jehovah said to Satan, Behold, all that he has is in your power; only do not put your hand on his person. So Satan went forth from the presence of Jehovah.”

Job 2:6. “And Jehovah said to Satan, Behold, he is in your hand; only spare his life.”

(c) Man still has some sense of the true, the good, and the beautiful, appreciates this in a measure, and reveals a desire for truth, morality, and certain forms of religion,

Rom. 2:14, 15; “14 (for when Gentiles who do not have the law do by nature the things of the law, those not having the law, are the law to themselves; 15 in that they show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness with it, and their thoughts one with another accusing or else excusing [them]); “

Acts 17:22. “And Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus, and said, you men of Athens, in all things, I perceive that you are very religious.”

(d) The natural man is still able to perform natural good or civil righteousness, works that are outwardly in harmony with the law, though without spiritual value,

2Kings 10:29, 30; “29 Nonetheless from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, with which he made Israel sin, Jehu did not depart from the golden calves that were in Beth-el, and that were in Dan. 30 And Jehovah said to Jehu, Because you have done well in executing what is right in my eyes, [and] have done to the house of Ahab according to all that was in my heart, your sons of the fourth generation will sit on the throne of Israel.”

2Kings 12:2; “And Jehoash did what was right in the eyes of Jehovah all his days in which Jehoiada the priest instructed him.”

2Kings 14:3; “And he did what was right in the eyes of Jehovah, yet not like David his father: he did according to all that Joash his father had done.”

Luke 6:33. “And if you do good to those who do good to you, what thanks do you have? for even sinners do the same.”

(e) All men receive numerous undeserved blessings from God,

Ps. 145:9, 15, 16; “9 Jehovah is good to all; And his tender mercies are over all his works. ...15 The eyes of all wait for you; And you give them their food in due season. 16 you open your hand, And satisfy the desire of every living thing. (Ps. 145:9, 15-16)”

Matt. 5:44, 45; “44 but I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you; 45 that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven: for he makes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the just and the unjust. (Mat. 5:44-45)”

Luke 6:35, 36; “35 But love your enemies, and do [them] good, and lend, never despairing; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High: for he is kind toward the unthankful and evil. 36 Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful. (Luke 6:35-36)”

Acts 14:16, 17; “16 who in the generations gone by suffered all the nations to walk in their own ways. 17 And yet He did not leave himself without witness, in that he did good and gave you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling your hearts with food and gladness. (Acts 14:16-17)”

1Tim. 4:10. “For to this end we labor and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, specially of those who believe. (1Tim. 4:10)”

To memorize. Passages proving:

a. A general striving of the Spirit with men:

Gen. 6:3. “And Jehovah said, My Spirit will not strive with man for ever, for that he also is flesh.”

Isa. 63:10. “But they rebelled, and grieved His Holy Spirit: therefore He was turned to be their enemy, and fought against them Himself.”

Rom. 1:28, “And even as they refused to have God in their knowledge, God gave them up to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not fitting.”

b. Restraint of sin:

Gen. 20:6. “And God said to him (Abimelech) in the dream, Yes, I know that in the integrity of your heart you have done this, and I also withheld you from sinning against me.”

Gen. 31:7. “And your father has deceived me, and changed my wages ten times; but God suffered him not to hurt me.”

Ps. 105:14. “He suffered no man to do them wrong; indeed, He reproved kings for their sakes.”

c. Good works on the part of unregenerate:

2Kings 10:30. “And Jehovah said to Jehu, because you have done well in executing what is right in my eyes, and have done to the house of Ahab according to all that was in my heart, your sons of the fourth generation will sit on the throne of Israel.” Compare vs. 31.

“But Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of Jehovah, the God of Israel, with all his heart: he did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam, with which he made Israel to sin. (2 Kings 10:31)”

Luke 6:33. “And if you do good to those who do good to you, what thanks do you have? for even sinners do the same.”

Rom. 2:14, 15. “For when Gentiles who do not have the law do by nature the things of the law, those not having the law, are the law to themselves; in that they show the work of the law written in their hearts.”

d. Unmerited blessings on all men:

Ps. 145:9. "Jehovah is good to all; and His tender mercies are over all His works."

Matt. 5:44, 45. "But I say to you, Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you; that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven: for He makes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the just and the unjust."

1Tim. 4:10. "For to this end we labor and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe."

For Further Study:

a. Which are the three points emphasized by our Church as to common grace?

b. How do [these verses] show the restraining influence of public opinion?

Matt. 21:26, 46; "But if we will say, From men; we fear the multitude; for all hold John as a prophet. ... And when they sought to lay hold on him, they feared the multitudes, because they took him for a prophet. (Mat. 21:26,46)"

Mark 14:2 "for they said, Not during the feast, lest by chance there will be a tumult of the people. (Mark 14:2)"

c. How does [this verse]

Rom. 1:24, 26, 28, "24 Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to uncleanness, that their bodies should be dishonored among themselves:...26 For this cause God gave them up to vile passions: for their women changed the natural use into what is against nature: ...28 And even as they refused to have God in [their] knowledge, God gave them up to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not fitting; (Rom. 1:24,26,28)"

and [this one]

Heb. 6:4-6 "4 For as touching those who were once enlightened and tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, 5 and tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the age to come, 6 and [then] fell away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. (Heb. 6:4-6)"

prove common grace?

Questions for Review

1. What is common grace?
2. What is our view in distinction from the Arminian?
3. Does common grace have any spiritual and saving effect?
4. Is it in any way connected with the redemptive work of Christ?
5. By what means does common grace work?
6. What are the effects of common grace?

Chapter 19: Calling and Regeneration

1. Calling.

Calling in general may be defined as that gracious act of God by which He invites sinners to accept the salvation that is offered in Christ Jesus.

It may be either external or internal.

a. External calling. The Bible speaks of this or refers to it in several passages,

Matt. 28:19; “Go therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: (Mat. 28:19)”

22:14; “For many are called, but few chosen. (Mat. 22:14)”

Luke 14:16-24; Acts 13:46; “And Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first be spoken to you. Seeing you thrust it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. (Acts 13:46)”

2Thess. 1:8; “rendering vengeance to those who do not know God, and to those who obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus: (2 Thessalonians 1:8)”

1John 5:10. “One who believes on the Son of God has the witness in him: one who does not believe God has made him a liar; because he has not believed in the witness that God has borne concerning his Son. (1 John 5:10)”

It consists in the presentation and offering of salvation in Christ to sinners, together with an earnest exhortation to accept Christ by faith in order to obtain the forgiveness of sins and eternal life. From the definition it already appears that it contains three elements, namely, (1) A presentation of the gospel facts and ideas; (2) an invitation to repent and believe in Jesus Christ, and (3) a promise of forgiveness and salvation. The promise is always conditional; its fulfillment can be expected only in the way of true faith and repentance. The external call is universal in the sense that it comes to all men to whom the gospel is preached. It is not limited to any age or nation or class of men, and comes to the reprobate as well as to the elect,

Isa. 45:22; “Look to me, and be saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else. (Isaiah 45:22)”

55:1; “Ho, every one who thirsts, come to the waters, and one who has no money; come, buy, and eat; yes, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. (Isaiah 55:1)”

Ezek. 3:19; “Yet if you warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he will die in his iniquity; but you have delivered your soul. (Ezekiel 3:19)”

Joel 2:32; “And it will come to pass, that whoever will call on the name of Jehovah will be delivered; for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be those that escape, as Jehovah has said, and among the remnant those whom Jehovah does call. (Joel 2:32)”

Matt. 22:2-8, 14; Rev. 22:17. “And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And one who hears, let him say, Come. And one who is thirsty, let him come: one who will, let him take the water of life freely. (Rev. 22:17)”

Naturally this call, as coming from God, is seriously meant. He calls sinners in good faith, earnestly desires that they accept the invitation, and in all sincerity promises eternal life to those who repent and believe.

Num. 23:19; “God is not a man, that he should lie, Nor the son of man, that he should repent: has he said, and not done it? Or has he spoken, and not made it good? (Numbers 23:19)”

Ps. 81:13-16; Prov. 1:24; “Because I have called, and you have refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man has regarded; (Prov. 1:24)”

Isa. 1:18-20; “18 Come now, and let us reason together, says Jehovah: though your sins be as scarlet, they will be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they will be as wool. 19 If you be willing and obedient, you will eat the good of the land: 20 but if you refuse and rebel, you will be devoured with the sword; for the mouth of Jehovah has spoken it. (Isaiah 1:18-20)”

Ezek. 18:23, 32; “Do I have any pleasure in the death of the wicked? says the Lord Jehovah; and not rather that he should return from his way, and live?...For I have no pleasure in the death of the one who dies, says the Lord Jehovah: therefore turn yourselves, and live. (Ezekiel 18:18, 32)”

33:11; “Say to them, As I live, says the Lord Jehovah, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn you, turn you from your evil ways; for why will you die, O house of Israel? (Ezekiel 33:11)”

Matt. 23:37; “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that kills the prophets, and stones those who are sent to her! how often would I have gathered your children together, even as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, and you would not! (Mat. 23:37)”

2Tim. 2:13. “if we are faithless, he remains faithful; for he cannot deny himself. (2Tim. 2:13)”

In the external call God maintains His claim on the sinner. If man does not accept the call, he slights the claim of God and thus increases his guilt. It is also the appointed means by which God gathers the elect out of all the nations of the world, Rom. 10:14-17, and should be regarded as a blessing for sinners, though they may turn it into a curse,

Isa. 1:18-20; Ezek. 3:18, 19; “18 When I say to the wicked, you will surely die; and you do not give him warning, nor speak to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man will die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at your hand. 19 Yet if you warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he will die in his iniquity; but you have delivered your soul. (Ezekiel 3:18-19)”

Amos 8:11; “Behold, the days come, says the Lord Jehovah, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of Jehovah. (Amos 8:11)”

Matt. 11:20-24; “20 Then began he to upbraid the cities in which most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not. 21 Woe to you, Chorazin! woe to you, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon which were done in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. 22 But I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you. 23 And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven? you will go down to Hades: for if the mighty works had been done in Sodom which were done in you, it would have remained until this day. 24 But I say to you that it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for you. (Mat. 11:20-24)”

23:37. “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that kills the prophets, and stones those who are sent to her! how often would I have gathered your children together, even as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, and you would not! (Mat. 23:37)”

Finally, it also serves to justify God in the condemnation of sinners. If they despise the offer of salvation, their guilt stands out in the clearest light,

John 5:39, 40; “39 you search the scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and these are they which bear witness of me; 40 and you will not come to me, that you may have life. (John 5:39-40)”

Rom. 3:5, 6, 19. “5 But if our righteousness commends the righteousness of God, what will we say? Is God unrighteous who visits with wrath? (I speak after the manner of men.) 6 God forbid: for then how will God judge the world? 19 Now we know that whatever things the law says, it speaks to those who are under the law; that every mouth may be shut, and all the world may be brought under the judgment of God: (Rom. 3:5-6, 19)”

b. Internal calling. While we distinguish two aspects of the calling of God, this calling is really one. The internal call is really the external call made effective by the operation of the Holy Spirit. It always comes to the sinner through the Word of God, savingly applied by the operation of the Holy Spirit,

1Cor. 1:23, 24. “23 but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumblingblock, and to Gentiles foolishness; 24 but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. (1Co. 1:23-24)”

In distinction from the external call, it is a powerful calling that is effectual unto salvation,

Acts 13:48; “And as the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of God: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. (Acts 13:48)”

1Cor. 1:23, 24. Moreover, it is a calling without repentance, one that is not subject to change, and is never withdrawn, Rom. 11:29. “For the gifts and the calling of God are not repented of. (Rom. 11:29)”

The person called will surely be saved. The Spirit operates through the preaching of the Word by making its persuasions effective, so that man listens to the voice of His God. It addresses itself to the understanding enlightened by the Holy Spirit, so that man is conscious of it. And it is always directed to a certain end. It is a calling to the fellowship of Jesus Christ,

1Cor. 1:9, “God is faithful, through whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord. (1Co. 1:9)”

to inherit blessing,

1Pet. 3:9, “not rendering evil for evil, or reviling for reviling; but contrariwise blessing; for hereunto were you called, that you should inherit a blessing. (1Pet. 3:9)”

to liberty,

Gal. 5:13, “For you, brethren, were called for freedom; only [use] not your freedom for an occasion to the flesh, but through love be servants one to another. (Galatians 5:13)”

to peace,

1Cor. 7:15; “Yet if the unbelieving departs, let him depart: the brother or the sister is not under bondage in such [cases]: but God has called us in peace. (1Co. 7:15)”

to holiness,

1Thess. 4:7; “For God called us not for uncleanness, but in sanctification. (1 Thessalonians 4:7)”

to one hope,

Eph. 4:4, “[There is] one body, and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling; (Eph. 4:4)”

to eternal life,

1Tim. 6:12, “Fight the good fight of the faith, lay hold on the life eternal, to which you were called, and did confess the good confession in the sight of many witnesses. (1Tim. 6:12)”

and to God’s kingdom and glory,

1Thess. 2:12. “to the end that you should walk worthily of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory. (1 Thessalonians 2:12)”

2. Regeneration.

Divine calling and regeneration stand in the closest possible relation to each other. With respect to regeneration several points deserve consideration:

a. Its nature. The word ‘regeneration’ is not always used in the same sense. Our Confession uses it in a broad sense, as including even conversion. At present it has a more restricted meaning. In the most restricted sense it denotes that act of God by which the principle of the new life is implanted in man, and the governing disposition of the soul is made holy. In a slightly more comprehensive sense it designates, in addition to the preceding, the new birth or the first manifestation of the new life. It is a fundamental change in the principle of life and the governing disposition of the soul, and therefore affects the whole man,

1Cor. 2:14; “Now the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually judged. (1Co. 2:14)”

2Cor. 4:6; “Seeing it is God, that said, Light will shine out of darkness, who shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. (2Co. 4:6)”

Phil. 2:13; “for it is God who works in you both to will and to work, for his good pleasure. (Phil. 2:13)”

1Pet. 1:8. “whom not having seen you love; on whom, though now you see him not, yet believing, you rejoice greatly with joy unspeakable and full of glory: (1Pet. 1:8)”

It is completed in a moment of time, and is not a gradual process like sanctification. Through it we pass from death into life,

1John 3:14. “We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. One who does not love abides in death. (1 John 3:14)”

It is a secret and inscrutable work of God that is never directly perceived by man, but can be known only by its effects.

b. Its author. God is the author of regeneration. Scripture represents it as the work of the Holy Spirit,

John 1:13; “who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. (John 1:13)”

Acts 16:14; “And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple of the city of Thyatira, one that worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened to give heed to the things which were spoken by Paul. (Acts 16:14)”

John 3:5, 8. “5 Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God! ...8 The wind blows where it will, and you hear its voice, but do not know where it comes from, and where it goes: so is every one who is born of the Spirit. (John 3:5,8)”

Over against the Arminians we maintain that it is exclusively the work of the Spirit of God, and not in part the work of man. There is no co-operation of God and man in the work of regeneration, as there is in the work of conversion. Moreover, it should be said that regeneration in the most restricted sense of the word, that is, as the implanting of the new life, is a direct and immediate work of the Holy Spirit. It is a creative work in which for that very reason the word of the gospel cannot very well be used as an instrument. It may be said that

Jas. 1:18 “Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures. (James 1:18)”

and

1Pet. 1:23 “having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God, which lives and abides. (1Pet. 1:23)”

prove that the word of preaching is used as an instrument in regeneration, but these passages refer to regeneration in a broader sense, as including the new birth. In that more inclusive sense regeneration is undoubtedly worked through the instrumentality of the Word.

c. Its necessity and place in the order of salvation. Scripture leaves no doubt as to the absolute necessity of regeneration, but asserts this in the clearest terms,

John 3:3, 5, 7; “3 Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, Except one be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God. ...5 Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God! ...7 Do not marvel that I said to you, you must be born anew. (John 3:3,5,7)”

1Cor. 2:14; “Now the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually judged. (1Co. 2:14)”

Gal. 6:15. “For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. (Galatians 6:15)”

This follows from the fact that we are by nature dead in trespasses and sin, and must be endowed with new spiritual life, in order to enjoy the divine favor and communion with God. The question is often raised which of the two is first, calling or regeneration. In answer to this it may be said that in the case of adults external calling usually precedes or coincides with regeneration in the restricted sense. Regeneration, as the implanting of the new life, precedes internal calling, and internal calling precedes regeneration in the broader sense, or the new birth. We find the greater part of this order indicated in the record of the conversion of Lydia,

Acts 16:14, “And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, one that worshipped God, heard us (external call): whose heart the Lord opened (regeneration in the restricted sense) to give heed to the things which were spoken by Paul (internal call).”

To memorize. Passages proving:

a External calling:

Mark 16:15, 16. “And He said to them, Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation (“every creature,” Auth. Ver.). One who believes and is baptized will be saved; but one who disbelieves will be condemned.”

Matt. 22:14. “For many are called, but few are chosen.”

Acts 13:46. “And Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first be spoken to you. Seeing you thrust it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.”

b. Calling of the reprobate:

Prov. 1:24-26. “Because I have called, and you have refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man has regarded; but you have set at nothing all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh in the day of your calamity; I will mock when your fear comes.”

1Pet. 3:19, 20a. “In which also He (Christ) went and preached to the spirits in prison, that previously were disobedient, when the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah.”

Confer also the parables in Matt. 22:1-8, 14; Luke 14:16-24.

c. Seriousness of this calling:

Prov. 1:24-26, compare above under b.

Ezek. 18:23, 32. “Do I have any pleasure in the death of the wicked? said the Lord Jehovah; and not rather that he should return from his way and, live?... For I have no pleasure in the death of the one who dies, says the Lord Jehovah: therefore turn yourselves, and live.” Compare also 33:11.

Matt. 23:37. “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, .that kills the prophets, and stones those who are sent to her! how often would I have gathered your children together, even as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, and you would not.”

d. The necessity of regeneration:

Jer. 13:23, “Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may you also do good, that are accustomed to do evil.”

John 3:3, 7. “Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, Except one be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.... Do not marvel that I said to you, you must be born again.”

e. Regeneration and the Word.

Jas. 1:18. “Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of His creatures.”

1Pet. 1:23. “Having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God, which lives and abides.”

For Further Study:

a. Is calling a work of one Person of the Trinity or of all three?

1Cor. 1:9; “God is faithful, through whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord. (1Co. 1:9)”

1Thess. 2:12; “to the end that you should walk worthily of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory. (1 Thessalonians 2:12)”

Matt. 11:28; “Come to me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. (Mat. 11:28)”

Luke 5:32; “I am not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. (Luke 5:32)”

Matt. 10:20; “For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaks in you. (Mat. 10:20)”

Acts 5:31, 32. “31 Him did God exalt with his right hand [to be] a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins. 32 And we are witnesses of these things; and [so is] the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him. (Acts 5:31-32)”

b. Is the word ‘regeneration’ used in the Bible?

Tit. 3:5. “not by works [done] in righteousness, which we did ourselves, but according to his mercy he saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, (Titus 3:5)”

What other terms does it use to express this idea?

John 3:3, 5, 7, 8; “3 Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, Except one be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God. ...5 Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God! ...7 Do not marvel that I said to you, you must be born anew. 8 The wind blows where it will, and you hear its voice, but do not know where it comes from, and where it goes: so is every one who is born of the Spirit. (John 3:3,5,7-8)”

2Cor. 5:17; “Therefore if any man is in Christ, [he is] a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they have become new. (2Co. 5:17)”

Eph. 2:5; “even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), (Eph. 2:5)”

Col. 2:13; “And you, being dead through your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, you, [I say], did he make alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses; (Col. 2:13)”

Jas. 1:18; “Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures. (James 1:18)”

1Pet. 1:23. “having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God, which lives and abides. (1Pet. 1:23)”

c. Does this verse prove that we are regenerated by baptism? If not, how would you explain it?

Tit. 3:5 “not by works [done] in righteousness, which we did ourselves, but according to his mercy he saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, (Titus 3:5)”

Questions for Review

1. What do we mean by calling?
2. How do external and internal calling differ?
3. What elements are included in external calling?
4. In what sense is it universals?
5. What purpose does it serve?
6. How is the internal related to the external calling?
7. Are we conscious of it?
8. To what end is it directed?
9. What different meanings has the word 'regeneration'?
10. What is it in the most restricted sense?
11. What is the nature of the change worked in regeneration?
12. Is regeneration a work of God alone or of God and man?
13. Is the Word used as an instrument in regeneration?
14. Is regeneration absolutely necessary? Proof.
15. What is the order of calling and regeneration?

Chapter 20: Conversion - Repentance and Faith

When the change worked in regeneration begins to manifest itself in the conscious life, we speak of conversion.

1. Conversion in General.

The Bible does not always speak of conversion in the same sense. The conversion we have in mind here may be defined as that act of God by which He causes the regenerated, in their conscious life, to turn to Him in faith and repentance. From this definition it already appears that God is the author of conversion. This is clearly taught in Scripture,

Acts 11:18; “And when they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then to the Gentiles also has God granted repentance to life. (Acts 11:18)”

2Tim. 2:25. “in meekness correcting those who oppose themselves; if peradventure God may give them repentance to the knowledge of the truth, (2Tim. 2:25)”

The new life of regeneration does not of itself issue in a conscious change of life, but only through a special operation of the Holy Spirit,

John 6:44; “No man can come to me, unless the Father who sent me draw him: and I will raise him up in the last day. (John 6:44)”

Phil. 2:13. “for it is God who works in you both to will and to work, for his good pleasure. (Phil. 2:13)”

But while in regeneration God only works and man is passive, in conversion man is called on to co-operate,

Isa. 55:7; “let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to Jehovah, and he will have mercy on him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. (Isaiah 55:7)”

Jer. 18:11; “Now therefore, speak to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying, Thus says Jehovah: Behold, I frame evil against you, and devise a device against you: return you now every one from his evil way, and amend your ways and your doings. (Jeremiah 18:11)”

Acts 2:38; “And Peter [said] to them, Repent you, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ to the remission of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:38)”

17:30. “The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked; but now he commands men that they should all everywhere repent: (Acts 17:30)”

But even so man can only work with the power which God imparts to him. Like regeneration conversion too consists in a momentary change, and is not a process like sanctification; but in distinction from regeneration it is a change in the conscious rather than in the unconscious life of man. While conversion is necessary in the case of all adults,

Ezek. 33:11; “Say to them, As I live, says the Lord Jehovah, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn you, turn you from your evil ways; for why will you die, O house of Israel? (Ezekiel 33:11)”

Matt. 18:3, “and said, Truly I say to you, Except you turn, and become as little children, you will in no way enter into the kingdom of heaven. (Mat. 18:3)”

it need not appear in the life of each one of them as a sharply marked crisis. The Bible mentions instances of conversion, such as Naaman,

2Kings 5:15; “And he returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and came, and stood before him; and he said, Behold now, I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel: now therefore, I pray you, take a present of your servant. (2 Kings 5:15)”

Manasseh,

2Chron. 33:12, 13; “12 And when he was in distress, he besought Jehovah his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers. 13 And he prayed to him; and he was entreated of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that Jehovah he was God. (2 Chronicles 33:12-13)”

Zacchaeus,

Luke 19:8, 9; “8 And Zacchaeus stood, and said to the Lord, Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have wrongfully exacted anything of any man, I restore fourfold. 9 And Jesus said to him, Today is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham. (Luke 19)”

the eunuch,

Acts 8:30 ff.; Cornelius, Acts 10:44 ff.; Paul, Acts 9:5 ff.; Lydia, Acts 16:14, and so on. “And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple of the city of Thyatira, one that worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened to give heed to the things which were spoken by Paul. (Acts 16:14)”

Besides this it also speaks of a NATIONAL CONVERSION, as in Jonah 3:10, a temporary conversion, which includes no change of heart,

Matt. 13:20, 21; “20 And the one who was sown on the rocky places, this is the one who hears the word, and straightway with joy receives it; 21 yet has he not root in himself, but endures for a while; and when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, straightway he stumbles. (Mat. 13:20-21)”

1Tim. 1:19. 20; “19 holding faith and a good conscience; which some having thrust from them made shipwreck concerning the faith: 20 of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I delivered to Satan, that they might be taught not to blaspheme. (1Tim. 1:19-20)”

2Tim. 4:10; “for Demas forsook me, having loved this present world, and went to Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia. (2Tim. 4:10)”

Heb. 6:4-6, “4 For as touching those who were once enlightened and tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, 5 and tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the age to come, 6 and [then] fell away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. (Heb. 6:4-6)”

and a repeated conversion,

Luke 22:32; “but I made supplication for you, that your faith fail not; and do you, when once you have turned again, establish your brethren. (Luke 22:32)”

Rev. 2:5, 16, 21, 22; “5 Remember therefore from where you are fallen, and repent and do the first works; or else I come to you, and will move your candlestick out of its place, except you repent. ...16 Repent therefore; or else I come to you quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of my mouth. ...21 And I gave her time that she should repent; and she wills not to repent of her fornication. 22 Behold, I cast her into a bed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of her works. (Rev. 2:5,16,21,22)”

3:3, 19. “Remember therefore how you have received and did hear; and keep [it], and repent. If therefore you will not watch, I will come as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come on you. ...As many as I love, I reprove and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. (Rev. 3:3,19)”

This is not a repetition of conversion in the strict sense of the word, which does not admit of repetition, but a revived activity of the new life after it has suffered eclipse. Conversion comprises two elements, the one negative and the other positive, namely repentance and faith, which call for separate discussion.

2. Repentance, the Negative Element of Conversion.

Repentance looks to the past, and may be defined as that change worked in the conscious life of the sinner by which he turns away from sin. It includes three elements, namely, (a) an intellectual element, in which the past life is viewed as a life of sin, involving personal guilt, defilement, and helplessness; (b) an emotional element, a sense of sorrow for sin as committed against a holy and just God; and (c) an element of the will, consisting in a change of purpose, an inward turning from sin and a disposition to seek pardon and cleansing.

Rom. 3:20; “because by the works of the law will no flesh be justified in his sight; for through the law [comes] the knowledge of sin. (Rom. 3:20)”

2Cor. 7:9, 10; “9 I now rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that you were made sorry to repentance; for you were made sorry after a godly sort, that you might suffer loss by us in nothing. 10 For godly sorrow works repentance unto salvation, [a repentance] which brings no regret: but the sorrow of the world works death. (2Co. 7:9-10)”

Rom. 2:4. “Or do you despise the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance? (Rom. 2:4)”

It is worked in man primarily by the law of God. Roman Catholics have an external conception of repentance. According to them it comprises a sorrow, not for inborn sin, but for personal transgressions, which may merely result from the fear of eternal punishment; a confession made to the priest, who can forgive sin; and a measure of satisfaction by external deeds of penance, such as fastings, scourgings, pilgrimages, and so on. The Bible, on the other hand, views repentance wholly as an inward act, an act of real sorrow on account of sin, and does not confuse this with the change of life in which it results.

3. Faith, the Positive Element of Conversion.

In distinction from repentance, faith has a forward look.

a. Different kinds of faith. The Bible does not always speak of faith in the same sense. It refers to a HISTORICAL FAITH, consisting in an intellectual acceptance of the truth of Scripture without any real moral or spiritual response. Such a faith does not take the truth seriously and shows no real interest in it.

Acts 26:27, 28; “27 King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you believe. 28 And Agrippa [said] to Paul, With but little persuasion you would fain make me a Christian. (Acts 26:27-28)”

Jas. 2:19. “you believe that God is one; you do well: the demons also believe, and shudder. (James 2:19)”

It also speaks of a TEMPORAL FAITH, which embraces the truths of religion with some promptings of conscience and a stirring of the affections, but is not rooted in a regenerated heart. It is called temporal faith,

Matt. 13:20, 21, “20 And the one who was sown on the rocky places, this is the one who hears the word, and straightway with joy receives it; 21 yet has he not root in himself, but endures for a while; and when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, straightway he stumbles. (Mat. 13:20-21)”

because it has no abiding character and fails to maintain itself in days of trial and persecution. Compare also

Heb. 6:4-6; “4 For as touching those who were once enlightened and tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, 5 and tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the age to come, 6 and [then] fell away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. (Heb. 6:4-6)”

1Tim. 1:19, 20; “19 holding faith and a good conscience; which some having thrust from them made shipwreck concerning the faith: 20 of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I delivered to Satan, that they might be taught not to blaspheme. (1Tim. 1:19-20)”

1John 2:19. “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us: but [they went out], that they might be made manifest that they all are not of us. (1 John 2:19)”

Moreover, it makes mention of a MIRACULOUS FAITH, that is a person's conviction that a miracle will be performed by him or in his behalf.

Matt. 8:11-13; “11 And I say to you, that many will come from the East and the West, and will sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven: 12 but the sons of the kingdom will be cast forth into the outer darkness: there will be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth. 13 And Jesus said to the centurion, Go your way; as you have believed, [so] be it done to you. And the servant was healed in that hour. (Mat. 8:11-13)”

17:20; “And he says to them, Because of your little faith: for truly I say to you, If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it will remove; and nothing will be impossible to you. (Mat. 17:20)”

Mark 16:17, 18; “17 And these signs will accompany those who believe: in my name will they cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; 18 they will take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it will in no way hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover. (Mark 16:17-18)”

John 11:22, 40; “And even now I know that, whatever you will ask of God, God will give you.... Jesus says to her, Did I not say to you, that, if you believed, you should see the glory of God? (John 11:22,40)”

Acts 14:9. “The same heard Paul speaking, who, fastening eyes on him, and seeing that he had faith to be made whole, (Acts 14:9)”

This faith may or may not be accompanied with saving faith. Finally, it not only names, but stresses the necessity of, SAVING FAITH. This has its seat in the heart and is rooted in the regenerated life. Its seed is implanted in regeneration and gradually blossoms into an active faith. It may be defined as a positive conviction, worked in the heart by the Holy Spirit, as to the truth of the gospel, and a hearty reliance on the promises of God in Christ.

b. The elements of faith. We distinguish three elements in true saving faith.

(1) An intellectual element. There is a positive recognition of the truth revealed in the Word of God, a spiritual insight which finds response in the heart of the sinner. It is an absolutely certain knowledge, based on the promises of God. While it need not be comprehensive, it should be sufficient to give the believer some idea of the fundamental truths of the gospel.

(2) An emotional element (assent). This is not mentioned separately by the Heidelberg Catechism, because it is virtually included in the knowledge of saving faith. It is characteristic of this knowledge that it carries with it a strong conviction of the importance of its object, and this is assent. The truth grips the soul.

(3) An element of the will (trust). This is the crowning element of saving faith. It is a personal trust in Christ as Savior and Lord, which includes a surrender of the soul as guilty and defiled to Christ, and a reliance on Him as the source of pardon and spiritual life. In the last analysis the object of saving faith is Jesus Christ and the promise of salvation in Him.

John 3:16, 18, 36; “16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes on him would not perish, but have eternal life....18 One who believes on him is not judged: one who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God.... 36 One who believes on the Son has eternal life; but one who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him. (John 3:16,18,36)”

6:40; “For this is the will of my Father, that every one who beholds the Son, and believes on him, should have eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. (John 6:40)”

Acts 10:43; “To him bear all the prophets witness, that through his name every one who believes on him will receive remission of sins. (Acts 10:43)”

Rom. 3:22; “even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ to all those who believe; for there is no distinction; (Rom. 3:22)”

Gal. 2:16. “yet knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we believed on Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the law: because by the works of the law will no flesh be justified. (Galatians 2:16)”

This faith is not of human origin, but is a gift of God,

1Cor. 12:8, 9; “8 For to one is given through the Spirit the word of wisdom; and to another the word of knowledge, according to the same Spirit: 9 to another faith, in the same Spirit; and to another gifts of healings, in the one Spirit; (1Co. 12:8-9)”

Gal. 5:22; “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, (Galatians 5:22)”

Eph. 2:8. “for by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, [it is] the gift of God; (Eph. 2:8)”

But its exercise is a human activity, to which the children of God are repeatedly exhorted,

Rom. 10:9; “because if you will confess with your mouth Jesus [as] Lord, and will believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved: (Rom. 10:9)”

1Cor. 2:5; “that your faith would not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. (1Co. 2:5)”

Col. 1:23; “if so be that you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached in all creation under heaven; of which I Paul was made a minister. (Col. 1:23)”

1Tim. 1:5; “But the end of the charge is love out of a pure heart and a good conscience and faith unfeigned: (1Tim. 1:5)”

6:11. “But you, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. (1Tim. 6:11)”

c. The assurance of faith. Methodists maintain that he who believes is at once sure that he is a child of God, but that this does not mean that he is also certain of ultimate salvation, since he may fall from grace. The correct view is that true faith including, as it does, trust in God, naturally carries with it a sense of safety and security, though this may vary in degree. This assurance is not the permanent conscious possession of the believer, He does not ever live the full-orbed life of faith, and as a result is not always conscious of his spiritual riches. He may be swayed by doubts and uncertainties, and is therefore urged to cultivate assurance,

2Cor. 13:5; “Try your own selves, whether you are in the faith; prove your own selves. Or do you not know as to your own selves, that Jesus Christ is in you? unless indeed you be reprobate. (2Co. 13:5)”

Heb. 6:11; “And we desire that each one of you may show the same diligence to the fulness of hope even to the end: (Heb. 6:11)”

2Pet. 1:10; “Therefore, brethren, give the more diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if you do these things, you will never stumble: (2Pet. 1:10)”

1John 3:19. “By this will we know that we are of the truth, and will assure our heart before him: (1 John 3:19)”

It can be cultivated by prayer, by meditating on the promises of God, and by the development of a truly Christian life.

To memorize. Passages showing:

a. That God is the author of conversion:

Acts 11:18. “And when they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then to the Gentiles also has God granted repentance to life.”

2Tim. 2:25. “In meekness correcting those who oppose themselves; if peradventure God may give them repentance to the knowledge of the truth.”

b. That man co-operates in conversion:

Isa. 55:7. “Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to Jehovah, and He will have mercy on him; and to our God, and He will abundantly pardon.”

Acts 17:30. “The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked; but now He commands men that they should all everywhere repent.”

c. The necessity of conversion:

Ezek. 33:11. "Say to them, As I live, says the Lord Jehovah, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn you, turn you from your evil ways; for why will you die, O house of Israel?"

Matt. 18:3. "Truly I say to you, Except you turn, and become as little children, you will in no way enter into the kingdom of heaven."

d. Historical faith:

Acts 26:27, 28. "King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you believe. And Agrippa said to Paul, With but little persuasion you would fain make me a Christian."

Jas. 2:19. "you believe that God is one; you do well; the demons also believe, and shudder."

e. temporal faith:

Matt. 13:20, 21. "And the one who was sown on the rocky places, this is the one who hears the word, and straightway with joy receives it; yet has he not root in himself, but endures for a while; and when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, straightway he stumbles."

1John 2:19. "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they all are not of us."

f. Miraculous faith:

Matt. 17:20b. "If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place: and it will remove; and nothing will be impossible to you."

Acts 14:9, 10. "The same heard Paul speaking: who fastening his eyes on him, and seeing that he had faith to be made whole, said with a loud voice, Stand upright on your feet. And he leaped up and walked."

g. Christ as the object of easing faith:

John 3:16. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes on him would not perish, but have eternal life."

John 6:40. "For this is the will of my Father, that every one who beholds the Son, and believes on Him, should have eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

h. The necessity of cultivating assurance:

Heb. 6:11. "And we desire that each one of you may show the same diligence to the fullness of hope even to the end."

2Pet. 1:10. "Therefore, brethren, give the more diligence to make your calling and election sure."

For Further Study:

a. What kind of repentance is mentioned in

Matt. 27:3; "Then Judas, who betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, (Mat. 27:3)"

2Cor. 7:10b. "For godly sorrow works repentance unto salvation, [a repentance] which brings no regret: but the sorrow of the world works death. (2Co. 7:10)"

b. Can you name biblical persons in whose lives conversion in the sense of an outstanding crisis could hardly be expected?

Compare Jer. 1:4; "Now the word of Jehovah came to me, saying, (Jeremiah 1:4)"

Luke 1:5; "There was in the days of Herod, king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abijah: and he had a wife of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth. (Luke 1:5)"

2Tim. 3:15. "And that from a babe you have known the sacred writings which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. (2Tim. 3:15)"

c. Can you name some of the great words of assurance found in the Bible?

Compare Heb. 3:17, 18; "17 And with whom was he displeased forty years? was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? 18 And to whom he swore that they would not enter into his rest, but to those who were disobedient? (Heb. 3:17-18)"

2Cor. 4:16--5:1; 2Tim. 1:12. "For which cause I suffer also these things: yet I am not ashamed; for I know the one whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to guard what I have committed to him against that day. (2Tim. 1:12)"

Questions for Review

1. In how many different senses does the Bible speak of conversion
2. How do temporary and repeated conversion differ?
3. What is true conversions? What elements does it include?
4. What elements are included in repentance?
5. How do the Roman Catholics conceive of repentance?
6. How does conversion differ from regeneration?
7. Who is the author of conversion? Does man co-operate in it?
8. Is conversion as a sharp crisis always necessary?
9. Of how many different kinds of faith does the Bible speak?
10. What is characteristic of historical, temporal, and miraculous faith?
11. How does temporal faith differ from saving faith?
12. What elements are included in faith? How much knowledge is needed?
13. What is the crowning element of saving faith?
14. Who is the object of saving faith?
15. Does the Christian always have the assurance of salvation?
16. How can he cultivate this assurance?

Chapter 21: Justification

1. The Nature and Elements of Justification,

Justification may be defined as that legal act of God by which He declares the sinner righteous on the basis of the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ. It is not an act or process of renewal, such as regeneration, conversion, or sanctification, and does not affect the condition but the-state of the sinner. It differs from sanctification in several particulars. Justification takes place outside of the sinner in the tribunal of God, removes the guilt of sin, and is an act which is complete at once and for all time; while sanctification takes place in man, removes the pollution of sin, and is a continuous and lifelong process. We distinguish two elements in justification, namely:

(a) The forgiveness of sins on the basis of the righteousness of Jesus Christ. The pardon granted applies to all sins, past, present, and future, and therefore does not admit of repetition,

Ps. 103: 12; “As far as the East is from the West, So far has he removed our transgressions from us. (Ps. 103:12)”

Isa. 44:22; “I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, your transgressions, and, as a cloud, your sins: return to me; for I have redeemed you. (Isaiah 44:22)”

Rom. 5:21; “that, as sin reigned in death, even so might grace reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Rom. 5:21)”

8:1, 32-34; “1 There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus... 32 The one who did not spare his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how will he not also with him freely give us all things? 33 Who will lay anything to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifies; 34 who is the one who condemns? It is Christ Jesus who died, yes rather, that was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. (Rom. 8:1, 32-34)”

Heb. 10:14. “For by one offering he has perfected for ever those who are sanctified. (Heb. 10:14)”

This does not mean that we need no more pray for forgiveness, for the consciousness of guilt remains, creates a feeling of separation, and makes it necessary to seek repeatedly the comforting assurance of forgiveness,

Ps. 25:7; “Do not remember the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: According to your lovingkindness remember you me, For your goodness’ sake, O Jehovah. (Ps. 25:7)”

32:5; “I acknowledged my sin to you, And my iniquity did I not hide: I said, I will confess my transgressions to Jehovah; And you forgave the iniquity of my sin. [Selah (Ps. 32:5)”

51:1; “Have mercy on me, O God, according to your lovingkindness: According to the multitude of your tender mercies blot out my transgressions. (Ps. 51:1)”

Matt. 6:12; “And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. (Mat. 6:12)”

Jas. 5:15; “and the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up; and if he have committed sins, it will be forgiven him. (James 5:15)”

1John 1:9. “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9)”

(b) The adoption as children of God. In justification God adopts believers as His children, that is, places them in the position of children and gives them all the rights of children, including the right to an eternal inheritance,

Rom. 8:17; “and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with [him], that we may be also glorified with [him]. (Rom. 8:17)”

1Pet. 1:4. “unto an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, (1Pet. 1:4)”

This legal sonship of believers should be distinguished from their moral sonship through regeneration and sanctification. Both are indicated in the following passages:

John 1:12, 13; “12 But as many as received him, to them gave he the right to become children of God, [even] to those who believe on his name: 13 who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. (John 1:12-13)”

Rom. 8:15, 16; “15 For you did not receive the spirit of bondage to fear again; but you received the spirit of adoption, by which we cry, Abba, Father. 16 The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit, that we are children of God: (Rom. 8:15-16)”

Gal. 4:5, 6. “5 that he might redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. 6 And because you are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father. (Galatians 4:5-6)”

2. The Time of Justification.

The word ‘justification’ is not always used in the same sense. Some even speak of a fourfold justification: a justification from eternity, a justification in the resurrection of Christ, a justification by faith, and a public justification in the final judgment. In explanation of this it may be said that in an ideal sense the righteousness of Christ is already accounted to believers in the counsel of redemption, and therefore from eternity, but this is not what the Bible means when it speaks of the justification of the sinner. We must distinguish between what was decreed in the eternal counsel of God and what is realized in the course of history. Again, there is some reason for speaking of a justification in the resurrection of Christ. In a sense it may be said that the resurrection was the justification of Christ, and that in Him the whole body of believers was justified. But this was a general and purely objective transaction, which should not be confused with the personal justification of the sinner. When the Bible speaks of the justification of the sinner, it usually refers to the subjective and personal application and appropriation of the justifying grace of God. The usual representation is that we are justified by faith. This implies that it takes place at the time when we accept Christ by faith. Faith is called the instrument or the appropriating organ of justification. By faith man appropriates, that is, takes to himself, the righteousness of Christ, on the basis of which he is justified before God. Faith justifies insofar as it takes possession of Christ.

Rom. 4:5; “But to the one who does not work, but believes on the one who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned for righteousness. (Rom. 4:5)”

Gal. 2:16. “yet knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we believed on Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the law: because by the works of the law will no flesh be justified. (Galatians 2:16)”

We should guard against the error of the Roman Catholics and the Arminians, that man is justified on the basis of his own inherent righteousness, or of his faith. Man's own righteousness or faith can never be the ground of his justification. This can be found only in the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ,

Rom. 3:24; "being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: (Rom. 3:24)"

10:4; "For Christ is the end of the law to righteousness to every one who believes. (Rom. 10:4)"

2Cor. 5:21; "Him who knew no sin he made [to be] sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in him. (2Co. 5:21)"

Phil. 3:9. "and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own, [even] what is of the law, but what is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith: (Phil. 3:9)"

3. Objections to the Doctrine of Justification.

Various objections are raised to this doctrine. It is said that, if man is justified on the basis of the merits of Christ, he is not saved by grace. But justification, with all that it includes, is a gracious work of God. The gift of Christ, God's reckoning of His righteousness to us, and His dealing with sinners as righteous,-- it is all grace from start to finish. Again, it is said to be unworthy of God to declare sinners righteous. But God does not declare that they are righteous in themselves, but that they are clothed with the righteousness of Jesus Christ. And, finally, it is said that this doctrine is apt to make people indifferent as to their moral life. If they are justified apart from any consideration of works, why should they care for personal piety? But justification lays the foundation for a living relationship with Christ, and this is the surest guarantee for a truly godly life. The man who is really in living union with Christ cannot be morally indifferent.

Rom. 3:5-8. "5 But if our righteousness commends the righteousness of God, what will we say? Is God unrighteous who visits with wrath? (I speak after the manner of men.) 6 God forbid: for then how will God judge the world? 7 But if the truth of God through my lie abounded to his glory, why am I also still judged as a sinner? 8 and why not (as we are slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say), Let us do evil, that good may come? whose condemnation is just. (Rom. 3:5-8)"

To memorize. Passages speaking of:

a. Justification in general:

Rom. 3:24. "Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

2Cor. 5:21. "Him who knew no sin He made to be sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

b. Justification by faith, not by works:

Rom. 3:28. "We reckon therefore that a man is justified by faith apart from the works of the law."

Rom. 4:5. "But to the one who does not work, but believes on the One who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned for righteousness."

Gal. 2:16. "Yet knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we believed on Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the law: because by the works of the law will no flesh be justified."

c. Justification and the forgiveness of sins:

Ps. 32:1, 2. "Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man to whom Jehovah does not impute iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile."

Acts 13:38, 39. "Be it known to you therefore, brethren, that through this man is proclaimed to you remission of sins; and by Him every one who believes is justified from all things, from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses."

d. Adoption of children, heirs of eternal life:

John 1:12. "But as many as received Him, to them gave He the right to become children of God, even to those who believe on His name."

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

Rom. 8:17. "And if children, their heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified with Him."

e. Justification based on the righteousness of Christ:

Rom. 3:21, 22. "But now apart from the law a righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ to all those who believe."

Rom. 5:18. "So then as through one trespass condemnation [came] to all men; even so through one act of righteousness, justification of life [came] to all men."

For Further Study:

a. What fruits of justification are mentioned in

Rom. 5:1-5? "1 Being therefore justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; 2 through whom also we have had our access by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. 3 And not only so, but we also rejoice in our tribulations: knowing that tribulation works steadfastness; 4 then steadfastness, validation; then validation, hope: 5 then hope does not put to shame; because the love of God has been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which was given to us. (Rom. 5:1-5)"

b. Does not James teach that man is justified by works?

Jas. 2:21-25. "21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works, in that he offered up Isaac his son on the altar? 22 you see that faith worked with his works, and by works was faith made perfect; 23 and the scripture was fulfilled which says, And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him for righteousness; and he was called the friend of God. 24 you see that by works a man is justified, and not only by faith. 25 And in the same way was not also Rahab the harlot justified by works, in that she received the messengers, and sent them out another way? (James 2:21-25)"

c. With what objection to the doctrine of justification does Paul deal in Rom. 3:5-8?

Questions for Review

1. What is justification?

2. How does it differ from sanctification?

3. What elements does it comprise?
4. In how far are sins forgiven in justification?
5. Why must believers still pray for forgiveness?
6. What is included in the adoption of children?
7. Can we speak of justification from eternity and in the resurrection of Christ?
8. How is faith related to justification?
9. What is the ground of justification? What is the Arminian view?
10. What objections are raised to this doctrine? Can you answer them?

Chapter 22: Sanctification and Perseverance

The doctrine of justification naturally leads on to that of sanctification. The state of justification calls for a life of sanctification, consecrated to the service of God.

1. Nature and Characteristics of Sanctification.

Sanctification may be defined as that gracious and continuous operation of the Holy Spirit by which, He purifies the sinner, renews his whole nature in the image of God, and enables him to perform good works. It differs from justification in that it takes place in the inner life of man, is not a legal but a recreative act, is usually a lengthy process, and never reaches perfection in this life. While it is very decidedly a supernatural work of God, the believer can and should co-operate in it by a diligent use of the means which God has placed at his disposal,

2Cor. 7:1; “Having therefore these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. (2Co. 7:1)”

Col. 3:5-14; 1Pet. 1:22. “Seeing you have purified your souls in your obedience to the truth to unfeigned love of the brethren, love one another from the heart fervently: (1Pet. 1:22)”

Sanctification does not consist in a mere drawing out of what is already given in regeneration, but serves to strengthen, to increase, and to fortify the new life. It consists of two parts: the gradual removal of the pollution and corruption of human nature,

Rom. 6:6; “knowing this, that our old man was crucified with [him], that the body of sin might be done away, that so we should no longer be in bondage to sin; (Rom. 6:6)”

Gal. 5:24, “And those who are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and lusts. (Galatians 5:24)”

and the gradual development of the new life in consecration to God,

Rom. 6:4, 5; “4 We were buried therefore with him through baptism to death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have become united with [him] in the likeness of his death, we will be also [in the likeness] of his resurrection; (Rom. 6:4-5)”

Col. 2:12; “having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead. (Col. 2:12)”

3:1, 2; “1 If then you were raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are on the earth. (Col. 3:1-2)”

Gal. 2:19. “For I through the law died to the law, that I might live to God. (Galatians 2:19)”

While it takes place in the heart of man, it naturally affects the whole life,

Rom. 6:12; “Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that you should obey its lusts: (Rom. 6:12)”

1Cor. 6:15, 20; “15 Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? will I then take away the members of Christ, and make them members of a harlot? God forbid. ...20 for you were bought with a price: glorify God therefore in your body. (1Co. 6:15, 20)”

1Thess. 5:23. “And the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Thessalonians 5:23)”

The change in the inner man is bound to carry with it a change in the outer life. That man must co-operate in the work of sanctification follows from the repeated warnings against evils and temptations,

Rom. 12:9, 16, 17; “9 Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cleave to what is good. ...16 Be of the same mind one toward another. Set not your mind on high things, but condescend to things that are lowly. Do not be wise in your own conceits. 17 Render to no man evil for evil. Take thought for things honorable in the sight of all men. (Rom. 12:9, 16-17)”

1Cor. 6:9, 10; “9 Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with men, 10 nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, will inherit the kingdom of God. (1Co. 6:9-10)”

Gal. 5:16-23, “16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh. 17 For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary the one to the other; that you may not do the things that you would. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. 19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are [these]: fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, 20 idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions, parties, 21 envyings, drunkenness, revellings, and such like; of which I forewarn you, even as I did forewarn you, that they who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 meekness, self-control; against such there is no law. (Galatians 5:16-23)”

and from the constant exhortations to holy living,

Micah 6:8; “He has showed you, O man, what is good; and what does Jehovah require of you, but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? (Micah 6:8)”

John 15:4-7; Rom. 8:12, 13; “12 So then, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh: 13 for if you live after the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. (Rom. 8:12-13)”

12:1, 2; “1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, [which is] your spiritual service. 2 And do not be fashioned according to this world: but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, and you may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God. (Rom. 12:1-2)”

Gal. 6:7, 8, 15. “7 Do not be deceived; God is not mocked: for whatever a man sows, that will he also reap. 8 For the one who sows to his own flesh will of the flesh reap corruption; but the one who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap eternal life. 15 For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. (Galatians 6:7-8,15)”

2. The Imperfect Character of Sanctification in This Life.

While sanctification affects every part of man, yet the spiritual development of believers remains imperfect in this life. They must contend with sin as long as they live,

I Kings 8:46; “...(for there is no man that does not sin)...(1 Kings 8:46)”

Prov. 20:9; “Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin? (Prov. 20:9)”

Jas. 3:2; “For in many things we all stumble. If any stumbles not in word, the same is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body also. (James 3:2)”

1John 1:8. “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. (1 John 1:8)”

Their lives are characterized by a constant warfare between the flesh and the spirit, and even the best of them are still confessing sin,

Job 9:3, 20; “If he be pleased to contend with him, He cannot answer him one of a thousand. ...Though I be righteous, my own mouth will condemn me: Though I be perfect, it will prove me perverse. (Job 9:3,20)”

Ps. 32:5; “I acknowledged my sin to you, And my iniquity did I not hide: I said, I will confess my transgressions to Jehovah; And you forgave the iniquity of my sin. [Selah (Ps. 32:5)”

130:3; “If you, Jehovah, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand? (Ps. 130:3)”

Prov. 20:9; Isa. 64:6; “For we are all become as one that is unclean, and all our righteousnesses are as a polluted garment: and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. (Isaiah 64:6)”

Dan. 9:7; “O Lord, righteousness belongs to you, but to us confusion of face, as it is today; to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to all Israel, that are near, and that are far off, through all the countries where you have driven them, because of their trespass that they have trespassed against you. (Daniel 9:7)”

Rom. 7:14; “For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. (Rom. 7:14)”

1John 1:9, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9)”

praying for forgiveness,

Ps. 51:1, 2; “1 Have mercy on me, O God, according to your lovingkindness: According to the multitude of your tender mercies blot out my transgressions. 2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, And cleanse me from my sin. (Ps. 51:1-2)”

Dan. 9:16; “O Lord, according to all your righteousness, let your anger and your wrath, I pray you, be turned away from your city Jerusalem, your holy mountain; because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and your people have become a reproach to all that are round about us. (Daniel 9:16)”

Matt. 6:12, 13; “12 And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. 13 And bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil [one.] (Mat. 6:12-13)”

Jas. 5:15, “and the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up; and if he have committed sins, it will be forgiven him. (James 5:15)”

and striving for greater perfection,

Rom. 7:7-26; Gal. 5:17; “For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary the one to the other; that you may not do the things that you would. (Galatians 5:17)”

Phil. 3:12-14. “12 Not that I have already obtained, or am already made perfect: but I press on, if so be that I may lay hold on that for which also I was laid hold on by Christ Jesus. 13 Brethren, I could not myself yet to have laid hold: but one thing [I do], forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, 14 I press on toward the goal to the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. (Phil. 3:12-14)”

This truth is denied by the so-called Perfectionists, who maintain that man can reach perfection in this life. They appeal to the fact that the Bible commands believers to be perfect,

Matt. 5:48; "You therefore will be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect. (Mat. 5:48)"

1Pet. 1:16; "because it is written, you will be holy; for I am holy. (1Pet. 1:16)"

Jas. 1:4, "And let patience have [its] perfect work, that you may be perfect and entire, lacking in nothing. (James 1:4)"

speaks of some as perfect,

Gen. 6:9; "These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, [and] perfect in his generations: Noah walked with God. (Gen. 6:9)"

Job 1:8; "And Jehovah said to Satan, have you considered my servant Job? for there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that fears God, and turns away from evil. (Job 1:8)"

I Kings 15:14; "But the high places were not taken away: nevertheless the heart of Asa was perfect with Jehovah all his days. (1 Kings 15:14)"

Phil. 3:15, "Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, be thus minded: and if in anything you are otherwise minded, this also will God reveal to you: (Phil. 3:15)"

and declares that they who are born of God do not sin,

1John 3:6, 8, 9; "6 Whoever abides in him does not sin: whoever sins has not seen him, nor knows him. ...8 one who sins is of the devil; for the devil sins from the beginning. To this end was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. 9 Whoever is begotten of God does no sin, because his seed abides in him: and he cannot sin, because he is begotten of God. (1 John 3:6,8-9)"

5:18. "We know that whoever is begotten of God does not sin; but one who was begotten of God keeps himself, and the evil one touches him not. (1 John 5:18)"

But the fact that we must strive for perfection does not prove that some are already perfect. Moreover, the word 'perfect' does not always mean free from sin. Noah, Job, and Asa are called perfect, but history clearly proves that they were not without sin. And John evidently means either that the new man does not sin, or that believers do not live in sin. He himself says that, if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

1John 1:8. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. (1 John 1:8)"

3. Sanctification and Good Works.

Sanctification naturally leads to a life of good works. These may be called the fruits of sanctification. Good works are not perfect works, but works that spring from the principle of love to God or faith in Him,

Matt. 7:17, 18; "17 Even so every good tree brings forth good fruit; but the corrupt tree brings forth evil fruit. 18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, nor can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. (Mat. 7:17-18)"

12:33, 35; "33 Either make the tree good, and its fruit good; or make the tree corrupt, and its fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by its fruit. 34 you offspring of vipers, how can you, being evil, speak good things?"

for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. 35 The good man out of his good treasure brings forth good things: and the evil man out of his evil treasure brings forth evil things. (Mat. 12:33-35)"

Heb. 11:6, "And without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing [unto him]; for one who comes to God must believe that he is, and [that] he is a rewarder of those who seek after him. (Heb. 11:6)"

that are done in conscious conformity to the revealed will of God,

Deut. 6:2; "that you might fear Jehovah your God, to keep all his statutes and his commandments, which I command you, you, and your son, and your son's son, all the days of your life; and that your days may be prolonged. (Deut. 6:2)"

1Sa. 15:22; "And Samuel said, does Jehovah have as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of Jehovah? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen than the fat of rams. (1Sa. 15:22)"

Jas. 2:8, "Nonetheless if you fulfill the royal law, according to the scripture, you will love your neighbor as yourself, you do well: (James 2:8)"

and have as their final aim the glory of God,

1Cor. 10:31; "Whether therefore you eat, or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. (1Co. 10:31)"

Col. 3:17, 23. "And whatever you do, in word or in deed, [do] all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. ... whatever you do, work heartily, as to the Lord, and not to men; (Col. 3:17,23)"

Only they who are regenerated by the Spirit of God can perform such good works. This does not mean, however, that the unregenerate cannot do good in any sense of the word.

Compare 2Kings 10:29, 30; "29 Nonetheless from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, with which he made Israel to sin, Jehu did not depart from after them, [to wit], the golden calves that were in Beth-el, and that were in Dan. 30 And Jehovah said to Jehu, Because you have done well in executing what is right in my eyes, [and] have done to the house of Ahab according to all that was in my heart, your sons of the fourth generation will sit on the throne of Israel. (2 Kings 10:29-30)"

12:2; "And Jehoash did what was right in the eyes of Jehovah all his days in which Jehoiada the priest instructed him. (2 Kings 12:2)"

14:3; "And he did what was right in the eyes of Jehovah, yet not like David his father: he did according to all that Joash his father had done. (2 Kings 14:3)"

Luke 6:33; "And if you do good to those who do good to you, what thanks do you have? for even sinners do the same. (Luke 6:33)"

Rom. 2:14. "(for when Gentiles who do not have the law do by nature the things of the law, those not having the law, are the law to themselves; (Rom. 2:14)"

In virtue of the common grace of God they can perform works that are in external conformity to the law and serve a laudable purpose; but their works are always radically defective, because they are divorced from the spiritual root of love to God, represent no real inner obedience to the law of God, and do not aim at the glory of God. In opposition to the Roman Catholics it should be maintained that the good works of believers are not meritorious,

Luke 17:9, 10; “9 does he thank the servant because he did the things that were commanded? 10 Even so you also, when you will have done all the things that are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants; we have done what it was our duty to do. (Luke 17:9-10)”

Eph. 2:8-10; “8 for by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, [it is] the gift of God; 9 not of works, so that no man would boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them. (Eph. 2:8-10)”

Tit. 3:5, “not by works [done] in righteousness, which we did ourselves, but according to his mercy he saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, (Titus 3:5)”

though God promises to reward them with a reward of free grace,

1Cor. 3:14; “If any man’s work will abide which he built on it, he will receive a reward. (1Co. 3:14)”

Heb. 11:26; “accounting the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt: for he looked to the payment of reward. (Heb. 11:26)”

and in opposition to the Antinomians the necessity of good works must be asserted,

Col. 1:10; “to walk worthily of the Lord to all pleasing, bearing fruit in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; (Col. 1:10)”

2Tim. 2:21; “If a man therefore purge himself from these, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, fit for the master’s use, prepared for every good work. (2Tim. 2:21)”

Tit. 2:14; “who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a people for his own possession, zealous of good works. (Titus 2:14)”

Heb. 10:24. “and let us consider one another to provoke to love and good works; (Heb. 10:24)”

4. Perseverance of the Saints.

The expression ‘perseverance of the saints’ naturally suggests a continuous activity of believers by which they persevere in the way of salvation. As a matter of fact, however, the perseverance referred to is less an activity of believers than a work of God, in which believers must participate. Strictly speaking, the assurance of man’s salvation lies in the fact that God perseveres. Perseverance may be defined as THAT CONTINUOUS OPERATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE BELIEVER, BY WHICH THE WORK OF DIVINE GRACE THAT IS BEGUN IN THE HEART, IS CONTINUED AND BROUGHT TO COMPLETION. This doctrine is clearly taught in Scripture,

John 10:28, 29; “28 and I give to them eternal life; and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. 29 My Father, who has given [them] to me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch [them] out of the Father’s hand. (John 10:28-29)”

Rom. 11:29; “For the gifts and the calling of God are not repented of. (Rom. 11:29)”

Phil. 1:6; “being confident of this very thing, that he who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ: (Phil. 1:6)”

2Thess. 3:3; “But the Lord is faithful, who will establish you, and guard you from the evil [one]. (2 Thessalonians 3:3)”

2Tim. 1:12; “For which cause I suffer also these things: yet I am not ashamed; for I know the one whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to guard what I have committed to him against that day. (2Tim. 1:12)”

4:18. “The Lord will deliver me from every evil work, and will save me to his heavenly kingdom: to whom [be] the glory forever and ever. Amen. (2Tim. 4:18)”

And it is only when we believe in this perseverance of God that we can in this life attain to the assurance of salvation,

Heb. 3:14; “for we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our confidence firm to the end: (Heb. 3:14)”

6:11; “And we desire that each one of you may show the same diligence to the fulness of hope even to the end: (Heb. 6:11)”

10:22; “let us draw near with a true heart in fulness of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience: and having our body washed with pure water, (Heb. 10:22)”

2Pet. 1:10. “Therefore, brethren, give the more diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if you do these things, you will never stumble: (2Pet. 1:10)”

Outside of Reformed circles this doctrine finds no favor. It is said to be contradicted by Scripture, which warns against apostasy,

Heb. 2:1; “Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things that were heard, lest by chance we drift away [from them]. (Heb. 2:1)”

10:26, “For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more a sacrifice for sins, (Heb. 10:26)”

exhorts believers to continue in the way of salvation,

Matt. 24:13; “But one who endures to the end, the same will be saved. (Mat. 24:13)”

Col. 1:23; “if so be that you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached in all creation under heaven; of which I Paul was made a minister. (Col. 1:23)”

Heb. 3:14, “for we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our confidence firm to the end: (Heb. 3:14)”

and even records cases of apostasy,

1Tim. 1:19, 20; “19 holding faith and a good conscience; which some having thrust from them made shipwreck concerning the faith: 20 of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I delivered to Satan, that they might be taught not to blaspheme. (1Tim. 1:19-20)”

2Tim. 2:17, 18; “17 and their word will eat as does a gangrene: or whom is Hymenaeus an Philetus; 18 men who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already, and overthrow the faith of some. (2Tim. 2:17-18)”

4:10. “for Demas forsook me, having loved this present world, and went to Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia. (2Tim. 4:10)”

Such warnings and exhortations would seem to assume the possibility of falling away, and such cases would seem to prove it completely. But as a matter of fact the warnings and exhortations

prove only that God works immediately and wants man to co-operate in the work of perseverance: and there is no proof that the apostates mentioned were real believers.

Compare Rom. 9:6; “But [it is] not as though the word of God has come to nothing. For they are not all Israel, that are of Israel: (Rom. 9:6)”

1John 2:19; “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us: but [they went out], that they might be made manifest that they all are not of us. (1 John 2:19)”

Rev. 3:1. “And to the angel of the church in Sardis write: These things says the one who has the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars: I know your works, that you have a name that you live, and you are dead. (Rev. 3:1)”

To memorize: Passages to prove:

a. Sanctification as a work of God:

1Thess. 5:23. “And the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire, without blame, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Heb. 2:11. “For both the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren.”

b. Man’s co-operation in sanctification:

2Cor. 7:1. “Having therefore these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”

Heb. 12:14. “Follow after peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no man will see the Lord.”

c. The mortification of the old man:

Rom. 6:6. “Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away, so that we should no longer be in bondage to sin.”

Gal. 5:24: “And those who are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and lusts.”

d. The quickening of the new man:

Eph. 4:24. “And put on the new man, that after God has been created in righteousness and holiness of truth.”

Col. 3:10. “And have put on the new man, that is being renewed in knowledge after the image of the One who created him.”

e. Sanctification incomplete in this life:

Rom. 7:18. “For I know that no good thing dwells in me, that is, in my flesh: for to will is present with me, but to do what is good is not.”

Phil. 3:12. “Not that I have already obtained, or am already made perfect: but I press on, if so be that I may lay hold on that for which also I was laid hold on by Christ Jesus.”

f. The nature of good works:

1Sa. 15:22. "And Samuel said, does Jehovah have as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of Jehovah? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen than the fat of rams."

1Cor. 10:31. "Whether therefore you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God."

Heb. 11:6. "And without faith it is impossible to be well pleasing to Him; for the one who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek after Him."

g. Perseverance of the saints:

John 10:28, 29. "And I give to them eternal life; and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of my Father's hand."

2Tim. 1:12. "For which cause I suffer also these things: yet am I not ashamed; for I know the One whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that He is able to guard what I have committed to Him against that day."

2Tim. 4:18. "The Lord will deliver me from every evil work, and will save me to His heavenly kingdom: to whom be the glory for ever and ever."

For Further Study:

a. Can you infer anything from the following passages as to the time of complete sanctification?

Phil. 3:21; "who will fashion anew the body of our humiliation, [that it may be] conformed to the body of his glory, according to the working by which he is able even to subject all things to himself. (Phil. 3:21)"

Heb. 12:23; "to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, (Heb. 12:23)"

Rev. 14:5; "And in their mouth was found no lie: they are without blemish. (Rev. 14:5)"

21:27? "and there will in no way enter into it anything unclean, nor the one who makes an abomination and a lie: but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life. (Rev. 21:27)"

b. What parts of man does sanctification affect according to

Jer. 31:34; "and they will teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says Jehovah: for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more. (Jeremiah 31:34)"

Phil. 2:13; "for it is God who works in you both to will and to work, for his good pleasure. (Phil. 2:13)"

Gal. 5:24; "And those who are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and lusts. (Galatians 5:24)"

Heb. 9:14? "how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? (Heb. 9:14)"

c. What does the word 'perfect' (compare Authorized Version) mean in the following passages:

1Cor. 2:6; “We speak wisdom, however, among those who are full-grown: yet a wisdom not of this world, nor of the rulers of this world, who are coming to nothing: (1Co. 2:6)”

3:1, 2; “1 And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual, but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. 2 I fed you with milk, not with meat; for you were not yet able [to bear it]: nay, not even now are you able; (1Co. 3:1-2)”

Heb. 5:14; “But solid food is for full-grown men, [even] those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern good and evil. (Heb. 5:14)”

2Tim. 3:16? “Every scripture inspired of God [is] also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. (2Tim. 3:16)”

Questions for Review

1. What is sanctification, and how does it differ from justification?
2. Is it a work of God or of man?
3. Of what two parts does sanctification consists?
4. What proof is there that it is incomplete in this life?
5. Who deny this and on what ground? How can you answer them?
6. What are good works in the strict sense of the word?
7. In how far can the unregenerate perform good works?
8. Are good works meritorious or not? Are we not taught that they are rewarded?
9. In what sense are good works necessary?
10. What is meant by the perseverance of the saints?
11. How can this doctrine be proved?

PART VI - THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH AND THE MEANS OF GRACE

CHAPTER 23: THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH

1. GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE CHURCH. The principal Old Testament word for Church is derived from a verb meaning ‘to call’ and the principal New Testament word, from a verb meaning ‘to call out’. Both denote the Church as an assembly called by God.

a. DIFFERENT MEANINGS OF THE WORD IN THE NEW TESTAMENT. Most generally it denotes a local church, whether assembled for worship or not,

Acts 5:11; “And great fear came on the whole church, and on all that heard these things. (Acts 5:11)”

11:26; “and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. And it came to pass, that even for a whole year they were gathered together with the church, and taught many people, and that the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch. (Acts 11:26)”

Rom. 16:4; “who for my life laid down their own necks; to whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles: (Rom. 16:4)”

1Cor. 11:18; “For first of all, when you come together in the church, I hear that divisions exist among you; and I partly believe it. (1Co. 11:18)”

16:1. “Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I gave order to the churches of Galatia, so also do ye. (1Co. 16:1)”

Sometimes it designates a domestic church, or “the church in the house” of some individual,

Rom. 16:5,23; “and [salute] the church that is in their house. Salute Epaenetus my beloved, who is the first-fruits of Asia to Christ. ... Gaius my host, and of the whole church, salutes you. Erastus the treasurer of the city salutes you, and Quartus the brother. (Rom. 16:5,23)”

1Cor. 16:19 “The churches of Asia salute you. Aquila and Prisca salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house. (1Co. 16:19)”

Col 4:15. “Salute the brethren that are in Laodicea, and Nympha, and the church that is in their house. (Col. 4:15)”

In its most comprehensive sense it is a description of the whole body of believers, whether in heaven or on earth,

Eph. 1:22; “and he put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, (Eph. 1:22)”

3:10,21; “to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known through the church to the principalities and the powers in the heavenly [places], ... to him [be] the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations for ever and ever. Amen. (Eph. 3:10,21)”

5:23; “For the husband is the head of the wife, and Christ also is the head of the church, [being] himself the savior of the body. (Eph. 5:23)”

Col. 1:18,24. “18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. 24 Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and fill up on my part what is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body’s sake, which is the church; (Col. 1:18,24)”

B THE ESSENCE OF THE CHURCH. Roman Catholics and Protestants differ as to the essential nature of the Church. The former finds this in the Church as an external and visible organization, consisting primarily of the priest together with the higher orders of bishops, archbishops, cardinals, and the Pope. Protestants broke with this external conception and seek the essence of the Church in the invisible and spiritual communion of the saints. The Church in its essential nature includes the believers of all ages and no one else. It is the spiritual body of Jesus Christ, in which there is no place for unbelievers.

c. DISTINCTIONS APPLIED TO THE CHURCH. In speaking of the Church in general several distinctions come into consideration.

(1) **THE CHURCH MILITANT AND THE CHURCH TRIUMPHANT.** The Church as she now exists on earth is a militant Church, that is called to and is actually engaged in a holy war. The Church in heaven on the other hand is the triumphant Church, in which the sword is exchanged for the palm of victory.

(2) **THE VISIBLE AND THE INVISIBLE CHURCH.** This distinction applies to the Church as it exists on earth, which is invisible as far as her spiritual nature is concerned, so that it is impossible to determine precisely who do and who do not belong to her, but becomes visible in the profession and conduct of its members, in the ministry of the Word and the Sacraments, and in her external organization and government.

(3) **THE CHURCH AS AN ORGANISM AND AS AN INSTITUTION.** This distinction applies only to the visible Church. As an organism it is visible in the communal life of believers and in their opposition to the world, and as an organization, in the offices, the administration of the Word and the Sacraments, and in a certain form of Church government.

d. DEFINITIONS OF THE CHURCH. The invisible Church may be defined as the company of the elect who are called by the Spirit of God, or simply, as the communion of believers. And the visible Church may be defined as the community of those who profess the true faith together with their children. It should be noticed that the membership in both is not altogether alike.

2. THE ATTRIBUTES AND MARKS OF THE CHURCH. There are especially three attributes of the Church, and also three marks or external characteristics.

a. ITS ATTRIBUTES. These are the following three:

(1) **ITS UNITY.** According to the Roman Catholics this is the unity of an imposing world-wide organization, but according to the Protestants, the unity of the spiritual body of Jesus Christ.

(2) **ITS HOLINESS.** Roman Catholics find this in the holiness of its dogmas, its moral precepts, its worship, and its discipline; but Protestants locate it in the members of the Church as holy in Christ and as holy in principle, in the possession of the new life, which is destined for perfect holiness.

(3) **ITS CATHOLICITY.** Rome lays special claim to this, because its Church is scattered over the whole earth and has a greater number of members than all the sects taken together. Protestants claim that the invisible Church is the real catholic Church, because it includes all believers of all ages and all lands.

b. ITS MARKS OR EXTERNAL CHARACTERISTICS. While the attributes belong primarily to the invisible Church, the marks belong to the visible Church, and serve to distinguish the true from the false. These are also three in number:

(1) THE TRUE PREACHING OF THE WORD OF GOD. This is the most important mark of the Church, 1John 4:1-3; 2John 9. It does not mean that the preaching must be perfect and absolutely pure, but that it must be true to the fundamentals of the Christian religion, and must have a controlling influence on faith and practice.

“ 1 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world. 2 By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God: 3 and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not of God: and this is the [spirit] of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it comes; and now it is in the world already. (1 John 4:1-3)”

Whoever goes onward and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God: one who abides in the teaching, the same has both the Father and the Son. (2 John 1:9)”

(2) THE RIGHT ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS. The sacraments may not be divorced from the Word, as in the Roman Catholic Church, and should be administered by lawful ministers, in accordance with the divine institution, and only to believers and their seed,

Matt. 28:19; “Go therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: (Mat. 28:19)”

Mark 16:16; “One who believes and is baptized will be saved; but one who disbelieves will be condemned. (Mark 16:16)”

Acts 2:42; “And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers. (Acts 2:42)”

1Cor 11:23-30. For I received of the Lord what also I delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which he was betrayed took bread; 24 and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, This is my body, which is for you: do this in remembrance of me. 25 In the same way he also took the cup, after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood: do this, as often as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. 26 For as often as you eat this bread, and drink the cup, you are proclaiming the Lord’s death till he comes. 27 Therefore whoever might eat this bread or drink this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, will be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. 28 But let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of the bread, and drink of the cup. 29 For one who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself, if he does not discern the body. 30 For this reason, many among you are weak and sickly, and not a few sleep.

(3) THE FAITHFUL EXERCISE OF DISCIPLINE. This is necessary for maintaining purity of doctrine and safeguarding the holiness of the sacraments. The Word of God insists on this,

Matt. 18:18; “Truly I say to you, whatever things you will bind on earth will be bound in heaven; and whatever things you will loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. (Mat. 18:18)”

1Cor 5:1-5, 13; “1 It is actually reported that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not even among the Gentiles, that one [of you] has his father’s wife. 2 And you are puffed up, and did not rather mourn, that the one who had done this deed might be taken away from among you. 3 For I truly, being absent in body but present in spirit, have already as though I were present judged the one who has so worked this thing, 4 in the name of our Lord Jesus, you being gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus, 5 to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. ... But those who are without God judges. Put away the wicked man from among yourselves. (1Co. 5:1-5,13)

14:33, 40; “33 for God is not [a God] of confusion, but of peace. As in all the churches of the saints,... 39 Therefore, my brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues. 40 But let all things be done decently and in order. (1Co. 14:33,40)”

Rev. 2:14-15, 20. But I have a few things against you, because you have there some that hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit fornication. 15 So you also have some who hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans in the same way... 20 But I have this against you, that you suffer the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess; and she teaches and seduces my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to idols.

TO MEMORIZE: Passages testifying to:

a. THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH:

John 10:16. “And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they will hear my voice; and they will become one flock, one shepherd.”

John 17:20-21. “Nor for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may all be one; even as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us: that the world may believe that you sent me.”

Eph. 4:4-6. “There is one body, and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling; 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all.”

b. THE HOLINESS OF THE CHURCH:

Exodus 19:6. “And you will be to me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation.”

1Peter 2:9. “But you are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, that you may show forth the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.”

c. THE CATHOLICITY OF THE CHURCH:

Psalm 2:8. “Ask of me, and I will give you the nations for your inheritance, And the furthest parts of the earth for your possession.”

Rev. 7:9. “After these things I saw, and behold, a great multitude, which no man could number, out of every nation and of all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, arrayed in white robes, and palms in their hands.”

d. THE NECESSITY OF ADHERING TO THE TRUTH:

2Tim. 1:13. “Hold the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.”

2Tim. 2:15. “Give diligence to present yourself approved to God, a workman that need not be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth.”

Titus 2:1. “But speak you the things which befit the sound doctrine.”

e. THE NECESSITY OF THE RIGHT ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS:

Acts 19:4-5. “And Paul said, John baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on the one who should come after him, that is, on Jesus. And when they heard this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus.”

1Co. 11:28-30. “But let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of the bread, and drink of the cup. For one who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself, if he discern not the body. For this cause many among you are weak and sickly, and not a few sleep.”

f. THE NECESSITY OF DISCIPLINE:

Mat. 16:19. “I will give to you the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatever you will bind on earth will be bound in heaven; and whatever you will loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”

Titus 3:10-11. “A factious man after a first and second admonition refuse; knowing that such a one is perverted, and sins, being self-condemned.”

For Further Study:

- Did the Church exist before the day of Pentecost?

Compare Mat. 18:17; “And if he refuse to hear them, tell it to the church: and if he refuse to hear the church also, let him be to you as the Gentile and the publican. (Mat. 18:17)”

Acts 7:38. “This is the one who was in the church in the wilderness with the angel that spoke to him in the Mount Sinai, and with our fathers: who received living oracles to give to us: (Acts 7:38)”

- Is the word ‘church’ ever used in the singular in the New Testament to denote a group of churches?

Compare Acts 9:31. “So the church throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria had peace, being edified; and, walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, was multiplied. (Acts 9:31)”

- What causes for discipline were there in the Corinthian church? 1Corinthians 5:1-5, 13; 11:17-34; 2Corinthians 2:5-11.

Questions for Review

- What is the meaning of the word ‘church’ in Scripture according to its derivation?
- What different meanings has the word in the New Testament?
- How do Roman Catholics and Protestants differ as to the essence of the Church?
- What is the difference between the militant and the triumphant Church?
- To what Church does the distinction ‘visible and invisible’ apply?
- In what sense is the Church called invisible?
- How does the Church as an organism and as an institution differ?
- How can we define the invisible, and how the visible Church?
- Which are the attributes of the Church, and how does our conception of them differ from that of the Catholics?
- Which are the marks of the Church, and what purpose do they serve?

11. Do they belong to the invisible or to the visible Church?
12. How must we conceive of the true preaching of the Word?
13. What belongs to the right administration of the sacraments?
14. Why is discipline necessary?

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Chapter 24: The Government and Power of the Church

Christ is the Head of the Church and source of all its authority,

Matt. 23:10; “Nor be called masters: for one is your master, [even] the Christ. (Mat. 23:10)”

John 13:13; “You call me, Teacher, and, Lord: and you say well; for so I am. (John 13:13)”

1Cor 12:5; “And there are diversities of ministrations, and the same Lord. (1Co. 12:5)”

Eph. 1:20-23; “20 which he worked in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly [places], 21 far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in what is to come: 22 and he put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, 23 which is his body, the fulness of the one who fills all in all. (Eph. 1:20-23)”

4:11-12; “11 And he gave some [to be] apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 for the perfecting of the saints, to the work of ministering, to the building up of the body of Christ: (Eph. 4:11-12)”

5:23-24. “23 For the husband is the head of the wife, and Christ also is the head of the church, [being] himself the savior of the body. 24 But as the church is subject to Christ, so [let] the wives also [be] to their husbands in everything. (Eph. 5:23-24)”

He rules the Church, not by force, but by His Word and Spirit. All human officers in the Church are clothed with the authority of Christ and must submit to the control of His Word.

1. THE OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH. The officers of the Church mentioned in the New Testament are of two kinds:

a. EXTRAORDINARY OFFICERS. The most important of these were the apostles. In the strictest sense this name applies only to the Twelve chosen by Jesus and Paul, but it is also given to some apostolic men,

Acts 14:4, 14; “But the multitude of the city was divided; and part held with the Jews, and part with the apostles. ...But when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of it, they rent their garments, and sprang forth among the multitude, crying out (Acts 14:4,14)”

1Cor. 9:5-6; 2Cor. 8:23; “Whether [any inquire] about Titus, [he is] my partner and [my] fellow-worker toward you, or our brethren, [they are] the messengers of the churches, [they are] the glory of Christ. (2Co. 8:23)”

Gal. 1:19. “But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord’s brother. (Galatians 1:19)”

The apostles had certain special qualifications. They were directly called by Christ,

Gal. 1:1, “Paul, an apostle (not from men, nor through man, but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead), (Galatians 1:1)”

saw Christ after the resurrection,

1 Cor. 9:1, “Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are not you my work in the Lord? (1Co. 9:1)”

were conscious of being inspired,

1 Cor. 2:13, “Which things also we speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teaches, but which the Spirit teaches; combining spiritual things with spiritual [words]. (1Co. 2:13)”

performed miracles,

2 Cor. 12:12, “Truly the signs of an apostle were worked among you in all patience, by signs and wonders and mighty works. (2Co. 12:12)”

and were richly blessed in their labors,

1 Cor. 9:1. The New Testament also speaks of PROPHETS, men specially gifted to speak for the edification of the Church and occasionally predicting future things,

Acts 11:28; “And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be a great famine over all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius. (Acts 11:28)”

13:1-2; “1 Now there were at Antioch, in the church that was [there], prophets and teachers, Barnabas, and Symeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen the foster-brother of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. 2 And as they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them. (Acts 13:1-2)”

15:32; “And Judas and Silas, being themselves also prophets, exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed them. (Acts 15:32)”

Eph. 4:11. “And he gave some [to be] apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; (Eph. 4:11)”

And, finally, it also mentions EVANGELISTS, who assisted apostles in their work,

Acts 21:8; “And on the morrow we departed, and came to Caesarea: and entering into the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, we abode with him. (Acts 21:8)”

Eph 4:11; 2Tim 4:5. “But be sober in all things, suffer hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. (2Tim. 4:5)”

b. ORDINARY OFFICERS. Frequent mention is made of ELDERS, especially in the Acts of the Apostles, Acts 11:30; 14:23; 15:2, 6, 22; 16:4; 20:17; 21:18.

Alongside of it the name ‘bishop’ was used to designate the same kind of officers, Acts 20:17, 28; 1Tim. 3:1; 5:17, 19; Tit 1:5,7; 1 Pet. 5:1-2. While both names were applied to the same class of officers, the name ‘elder’ stressed their age, and the name ‘bishop’ their work as overseers. The elders were not originally TEACHERS, but gradually the teaching function was connected with their office, Eph. 4:11; 1Tim. 5:17; 2Tim. 2:2. From

1 Tim 5:17 “Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and in teaching. (1Tim. 5:17)”

it appears that some elders simply ruled, while others also taught. In addition to these the New Testament also speaks of DEACONS, Phil. 1:1; 1Tim 3:8, 10, 12. The prevailing opinion is that the institution of this office is recorded in Acts 6:1-6.

2. THE ECCLESIASTICAL ASSEMBLIES. The Reformed Churches have a number of governing bodies. Their relation to each other is marked by a careful graduation. They are known as consistory, classis, and synod. The consistory consists of the minister and the elders of the

local church; the classis, of one minister and one elder of each local church within a certain district; and the synod, of an equal number of ministers and elders from each classis.

a. **THE GOVERNMENT OF THE LOCAL CHURCH.** The government of the local church is of a representative character. The minister and the elders, chosen by the people, form a council or consistory for the government of the church, Acts 14:23; 20:17; Tit. 1:5. While the elders are chosen by the people, they do not receive their authority from the people, but directly from Jesus Christ, the Lord of the Church. every local church is a complete church, fully equipped to rule its own affairs. But since it affiliates with other churches on the basis of a common agreement, it is not entirely independent. The Church Order serves to guard the rights and interests of the local church, but also the collective rights and interests of the affiliated churches.

b. **THE MAJOR ASSEMBLIES.** When local churches affiliate to give greater expression to the unity of the Church, major assemblies, such as classes and synods become necessary. The council of Jerusalem, described in Acts 15, partook of the nature of a major assembly. The immediate representatives of the people, who form the consistories, are themselves represented by a limited number in classes, and these in turn are represented in synods. Ecclesiastical assemblies should naturally deal only with church matters, matters of doctrine and morals, of church government and discipline. But even so major assemblies must limit themselves to matters which as to their nature belong to the province of a minor assembly, but for some reason cannot be settled there; and matters which as to their nature belong to the province of a major assembly, because they pertain to the churches in general. The decisions on major assemblies are not merely advisory, but authoritative, unless they are explicitly declared to be only advisory.

3. **THE POWER OF THE CHURCH.** The power of the Church is spiritual, because it is given by the Holy Spirit,

Acts 20:28, “Take heed to yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you bishops, to feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood. (Acts 20:28)”

is a manifestation of the power of the Spirit, John 20:22-23, pertains exclusively to believers, 1Cor. 5:12-13, and can be exercised only in a spiritual way,

2 Cor 10:4. “(for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but mighty before God to the casting down of strongholds), (2Co. 10:4)”

It is also a purely ministerial power, which is derived from Christ and is exercised in His name. The power of the Church is threefold:

a. **A DOGMATIC OR TEACHING POWER.** The Church is commissioned to guard the truth, to hand it on faithfully from generation to generation, and to defend it against all forces of unbelief, 1Tim 1:3-4; 2Tim 1:13; Tit. 1:9-11. It must preach the Word unceasingly among all the nations of the world, Isa. 3:10-11; 2Cor 5:20; 1Tim 4:13; 2 Tim 2:15; 4:2; Tit 2:1-10, must draw up creeds and confessions, and must provide for the training of its future ministers,

2 Tim 2:2. “And the things which you have heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit you to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also. (2Tim. 2:2)”

b. **A GOVERNING POWER.** God is a God of order, who desire that all things in the Church be done decently and in order, 1Cor 14:33, 40. For that reason He made provision for the proper

regulation of the affairs of the Church, and gave the Church power to carry the laws of Christ into effect, John 21:15-17; Acts 20:28;

1 Pet. 5:2. “Tend the flock of God which is among you, exercising the oversight, not of constraint, but willingly, according to [the will of] God; nor yet for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; (1Pet. 5:2)”

This also includes the power of discipline, Matt. 16:19; 18:18; John 20:23; 1Cor 5:2, 7, 13; 2Thess. 3:14-15; 1Tim. 1:20; Tit. 3:10. The purpose of discipline in the Church is twofold, namely, to carry into effect the law of Christ concerning the admission and exclusion of members, and to promote the spiritual edification of the members of the Church by securing their obedience to the laws of Christ. If there are diseased members, the Church will first seek to effect a cure, but if this fails will put away the diseased members. It deals with public sins even when there is no formal accusation, but in the case of private sins insists on the application of the rule laid down in Matt 18:15-18.

c. A POWER OR MINISTRY OF MERCY. Christ sent out His disciples, not only to preach, but also to heal all manner of diseases, Matt. 10:1,8; Luke 9:1-2; 10:9, 17. And among the early Christians there were some who had the gift of healing, 1Cor. 12:9-10, 28, 30. This special gift came to an end with the passing of the apostolic age. From that time on the ministry of mercy was largely limited to the Church’s care for the poor. The Lord hinted at this task in Matt. 16:11; Mark 14:7. The early Church practiced a sort of communion of goods, so that to one wanted the necessities of life, Acts 4:34. Later on seven men were appointed to “serve the tables,” that is, to provide for a more equal distribution of what was brought for the poor, Acts 6:1-6. After that deacons are repeatedly mentioned, Rom. 16:1; Phil 1:1; 1Tim. 3:8-12. Great emphasis is placed on giving or collecting for the poor, Acts 11:29; 20:35; 1Cor. 16:1-2; 2Cor 8:13-15; 9:1, 6-7; Gal 2:10; 6:10; Eph. 4:28; 1Tim. 5:10, 16; Jas 1:27; 2:15-16; 1John 3:17.

TO MEMORIZE: Passages proving:

a. That Christ is the Head of the Church:

Eph. 1:22b-23. “And He... gave him to be head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fulness of the One who fills all in all.”

Col. 1:18. “And He is the head of the body, the Church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things He might have the preeminence.”

b. The special marks of an apostle:

1 Cor. 9:1-2. “Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are not you my work in the Lord? If to others I am not an apostle, yet at least I am to you; for the seal of my apostleship are you in the Lord.”

2Cor 12:12. “Truly the signs of an apostle were worked among you in all patience, by signs and wonders and mighty works.”

c. The office of elder or bishop:

Acts 14:23. “And when they had appointed for them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they had believed.”

1Tim 3:1. “Faithful is the saying, If a man seeks the office of a bishop, he desires a good work.”

Tit. 1:5. "For this cause left I you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that were wanting, and appoint elders in every city, as I gave you charge."

d. The teaching function of some elders:

1 Tim 5:17. "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and in teaching."

2 Tim 2:2. "And the things which you have heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit you to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also."

e. The office of deacon:

1 Tim 3:10. "And let these also first be proved; then let them serve as deacons, if they be blameless."

f. The spiritual nature of the elders' work:

Acts 20:28. "Take heed to yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you bishops, to feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood."

1 Pet. 5:2-3. "Tend the flock of God which is among you, exercising the oversight, not of constraint, but willingly, according to [the will of] God; nor yet for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; nor as lording it over the charge allotted to you, but making yourselves ensamples to the flock."

g. The power of discipline:

Matt. 18:18. "Truly I say to you, whatever things you will bind on earth will be bound in heaven; and whatever things you will loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

John 20:23. "Whoever's sins you forgive, they are forgiven to them; whoever's [sins] you retain, they are retained."

For Further Study:

a. What men besides the Twelve and Paul are called apostles? Acts 14:4, 14; 1Cor 9:5-6; 2Cor 8:23; Gal. 1:19. "see also: Heb 3:1, Acts 1:21 & 2:14, Rom. 16:17, Jude 1, 2Cor 5:16, Phil 2:25 Gk., 1Thess 1:1 & 2:6."

b. Who are called evangelists in the Bible? Acts 21:8; 2Tim. 4:5.

c. What is the course of discipline in connection with private sins indicated in Matt. 18:15-17?

Questions for Review

1. Who is the Head of the Church and by what standard does He rule?

2. What extraordinary officers were there in the Church?

3. What were the characteristics of the apostles?

4. What did the prophets and the evangelists do?

5. Which were the ordinary officers?

6. What other name was used for elders?

7. When was the office of deacon instituted?
8. What ecclesiastical assemblies do we distinguish?
9. In how far is the local church independent?
10. Is there any Scripture warrant for major assemblies? Where?
11. How are they constituted, and with what matters can they deal?
12. Are their decisions merely advisory?
13. What different kinds of power has the Church? What does each include?
14. What is the purpose of Church discipline?
15. What do we understand by the ministry of mercy in the Church?

THE MEANS OF GRACE

CHAPTER 25: THE WORD OF GOD AND THE SACRAMENTS IN GENERAL

1. THE WORD OF GOD. The Word of God is the most important means of grace, though Catholics ascribe this honor to the sacraments.

a. THE WORD AND THE SPIRIT. While the term ‘means of grace’ can be used in a broader sense, it is here used as a designation of the means which the Church is directed to employ. When we speak of the ‘Word’ here, we do not refer to the personal Word (second person in the Trinity, John 1:1 ff.), nor to the creative word of power, Ps. 33:6; but very specially to the Word of God as it is contained in Scripture and is preached to the Church. 1Pet. 1:25. It is the word of God’s grace, and therefore the most important means of grace. While the emphasis falls on the Word as it is PREACHED, it may also be brought to men in other ways: in the home and in the school, by means of conversation and religious literature. The Word is made effective as a means of grace only through the operation of the Holy Spirit. The Word alone is not sufficient to work faith and conversion, but is yet the necessary instrument. While the Holy Spirit can, He does not ordinarily work without the Word. The preaching of the Word is made fruitful by the operation of the Spirit.

b. TWO PARTS OF THE WORD AS A MEANS OF GRACE. The Word as a means of grace consists of two parts, namely, the law and the gospel. The law as a means of grace first of all serves the purpose of bringing men under conviction of sin, Rom. 3:20, making him conscious of his inability to meet the demands of the law, and becoming his tutor to lead him to Christ, Gal. 3:24. In the second place it is also the rule of life for believers, reminding them of their duties and leading them in the way of life and salvation. The gospel is a clear representation of the way of salvation revealed in Jesus Christ. It exhorts the sinner to come to Christ in faith and repentance, and promises those who truly repent and believe all the blessings of salvation in the present and in the future. It is the power of God unto salvation for every one who believes.

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

1Cor. 1:18. “For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who perish; but to us who are saved it is the power of God. (1Co. 1:18)”

2. THE SACRAMENTS IN GENERAL. The Word of God is complete as a means of grace, but the sacraments are not complete without the Word. This must be maintained over against the Roman Catholics, who teach that the sacraments contain all that is necessary unto salvation. The Word and the sacraments differ in the following particulars: (a) the Word is absolutely necessary, while the sacraments are not; (b) the Word serves to beget and to strengthen faith, while the sacraments can only strengthen it; and (c) the Word is for all the world, but the sacraments only for believers and their seed. The following points deserve attention:

a. THE PARTS OF THE SACRAMENTS. Three parts must be distinguished in the sacraments, namely, (1) THE OUTWARD AND VISIBLE SIGN. Each one of the sacraments contains an external element. This consists of water in baptism, and of bread and wine in the Lord’s Supper. One who receives merely this may be said to receive the sacrament, but does not receive the whole, nor the most important part of it. (2) THE INWARD SPIRITUAL GRACE SIGNIFIED.

A sign points to something that is signified, and this is the internal matter of the sacrament. It may be called righteousness of faith,

Rom. 4:11, “and he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while he was in uncircumcision; that he might be the father of all those who believe, though they be in uncircumcision, that righteousness might be reckoned to them; (Rom. 4:11)”

the forgiveness of sins, Mark 1:4; faith and repentance,

Mark 1:4; “John came, who baptized in the wilderness and preached the baptism of repentance to remission of sins. (Mark 1:4)”

16:16, “One who believes and is baptized will be saved; but one who disbelieves will be condemned. (Mark 16:16)”

or communion with Christ in His death and resurrection,

Rom. 6:3-4; “3 Or are you ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4 We were buried therefore with him through baptism to death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life. (Rom. 6:3-4)”

Col. 2:11-12. “11 in whom you were also circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands, in the putting off of the body of the flesh, in the circumcision of Christ; 12 having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead. (Col. 2:11-12)”

(3) The union between the sign and the thing signified. This really constitutes the essence of the sacrament. Where the sacrament is received in faith, the grace of God accompanies it.

The following definition may be given of a sacrament. ~A sacrament is a holy ordinance instituted by Christ, in which by sensible signs the grace of God in Christ is represented, sealed, and applied to believers, and they, in turn, express their faith and obedience to God.

b. **THE NUMBER OF THE SACRAMENTS.** During the Old Testament there were just two sacraments, namely, circumcision and Passover. The former was instituted in the days of Abraham, and the latter in the time of Moses. Both were bloody sacraments in harmony with the Old Testament dispensation. The Church of the New Testament also has two sacraments, namely, baptism and the Lord’s Supper, both of which are unbloody. After Christ has brought His perfect sacrifice, no more shedding of blood is needed. The Church of Rome enlarged the number of sacraments in an unwarranted manner by adding confirmation, penance, orders, matrimony, and extreme unction.

c. **OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT SACRAMENTS COMPARED.** The Church of Rome holds that there is an essential difference between the two: the former being merely typical, affecting only the legal standing of the recipient and not his spiritual condition, and depending for their effectiveness on the faith of those who received them; and the latter working spiritual grace in the hearts of the recipients irrespective of their spiritual condition, merely in virtue of the sacramental action. As a matter of fact, however, there is no ESSENTIAL difference, Rom. 4:11; 1Cor. 5:7; 10:1-4; Col. 2:11. There are some dispensational differences, however: (1) The Old Testament sacraments had a national aspect in addition to their spiritual significance. (2) They pointed forward to the coming sacrifice of Christ, while those of the New Testament point back

to the completed sacrifice. (3) They did not convey to the recipient as rich a measure of spiritual grace as do the sacraments of the New Testament.

TO MEMORIZE. Passages pointing to:

a. The Word as a means of grace:

Rom. 10:17. "So belief comes of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ."

1Cor. 1:18. "For the word of the cross is to those who perish foolishness; but to us who are saved it is the power of God."

b. The twofold function of the law:

Rom. 3:20. "Because by the works of the law will no flesh be justified in his sight; for through the law comes the knowledge of sin."

Rom 7:7. "What will we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Moreover, I would not have known sin, except through the law: for I would not have known coveting, except the law had said, you will not covet."

1John 5:3. "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous."

c. The function of the gospel:

Rom. 1:16. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one who believes; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."

1Cor 1:18. Compare above under a.

d. The spiritual significance of the sacraments:

Rom. 4:11. "And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while he was in uncircumcision..."

1Cor. 5:7. "For our Passover also has been sacrificed, even Christ."

Col. 2:12. "Having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead."

John 6:51. "I am the living bread which came down out of heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he will live for ever: yes and the bread which I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world."

For Further Study:

a. Is the law also a rule of life for New Testament believers?

Matt. 5:17-19; "17 Do not think that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I did not come to destroy, but to fulfill. 18 For truly I say to you, Till heaven and earth pass away, not one jot or tittle will in the least pass away from the law, till all things are accomplished. 19 Whoever therefore would break one of these least commandments, and would teach men so, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven: but whoever will do and teach them, he will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. (Mat. 5:17-19)"

Rom. 13:10; "Love works no ill to his neighbor: love therefore is the fulfilment of the law. (Rom. 13:10)"

Eph. 6:2; "Honor your father and mother (which is the first commandment with promise), (Eph. 6:2)"

Jas 2:8-11; “8 Nonetheless if you fulfill the royal law, according to the scripture, you will love your neighbor as yourself, you do well: 9 but if you are biased toward someone, you commit sin, being convicted by the law as transgressors. 10 For whoever would keep the whole law, and yet stumbles in one [point], has become guilty of all. 11 For the one who said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if you do not commit adultery, but kills, you are become a transgressor of the law. (James 2:8-11)”

1John 3:4; “Every one who sins also commits lawlessness; indeed sin is lawlessness. (1 John 3:4)”

5:3. “For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. (1 John 5:3)”

b. Can you prove that the sacraments are only for believers and their seed?

Gen. 17:10; “This is my covenant, which you will keep, between me and you and your seed after you: every male among you will be circumcised. (Gen. 17:10)”

Ex. 12:43-45; “43 And Jehovah said to Moses and Aaron, This is the ordinance of the Passover: there will no foreigner eating of it; 44 but every man’s servant that is bought for money, when you have circumcised him, then he will eat of it. 45 A sojourner and a hired servant will not eat of it. (Exodus 12:43-45)”

Mark 16:16; Acts 2:39; “For to you is the promise, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, [even] as many as the Lord our God will call to him. (Acts 2:39)”

1Cor. 11:28-29. “28 But let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of the bread, and drink of the cup. 29 For one who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself, if he discern not the body. (1Co. 11)”

c. What dispute arose in the early Church about circumcision? Acts 15; Gal. 2:3-9.

Questions for Review

1. What do we mean by the term ‘means of grace’?
2. What do we mean by ‘the Word of God’ as a means of grace?
3. Why is the Word the most important means of grace?
4. What is the relation between the Word and the Spirit?
5. What is the function of the law as a means of grace?
6. What is the function of the gospel?
7. How are the sacraments related to the Word?
8. How do Word and sacraments differ as means of grace?
9. What is a sacrament?
10. What are the component parts of a sacrament?
11. What is the sign in each one of the sacraments?
12. What is the thing signified in each?
13. How are the sign and the things signified related?

14. How did the Old Testament sacraments differ from those of the New?

CHAPTER 26: CHRISTIAN BAPTISM

Christ instituted baptism after the resurrection, Matt. 28:19, Mark 16:16. He charged His disciples to baptize those who were made disciples “into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,” that is, into special relationship with the triune God. While He did not intend to prescribe a formula, the Church chose the words of the institution, when it felt the need of one. The present formula was in use before the beginning of the second century. Protestants regard a baptism legitimate, which is administered by a duly accredited minister and in the name of the triune God, while Roman Catholics, who regard baptism as absolutely necessary unto salvation, permit its administration, in case the life of a child is in danger, also to others than priests, particularly to midwives.

1. THE PROPER MODE OF BAPTISM. Baptists not only maintain that the proper mode of baptism is by immersion, but even assert that immersion belongs to the very essence of baptism. Baptism applied in any other way is not baptism at all. They hold that the fundamental idea of baptism is that of being buried and rising again with Christ, Rom. 6:3-6; Col. 2:12, and that this is symbolically indicated only by immersion. But Scripture clearly represents purification as the essential thing in the symbolism of baptism, Ezek. 36:25; John 3:25-26; Acts 22:16; Tit. 3:5; Heb. 10:22; 1 Pet. 3:21. And this can be symbolized by sprinkling or pouring as well as by immersion,

Lev. 14:7; “And he will sprinkle on the one who is to be cleansed from the leprosy seven times, and will pronounce him clean, and will let go the living bird into the open field. (Leviticus 14:7)”

Num. 8:7; “And thus will you do to them, to cleanse them: sprinkle the water of expiation on them, and let them cause a razor to pass over all their flesh, and let them wash their clothes, and cleanse themselves. (Numbers 8:7)”

Ezek. 36:25; “And I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. (Ezekiel 36:25)”

Heb. 9:19-22; “19 For when every commandment had been spoken by Moses to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of the calves and the goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, 20 saying, This is the blood of the covenant which God commanded toward you. 21 Moreover the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry he sprinkled in the same way with the blood. 22 And according to the law, I may almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and apart from shedding of blood there is no remission. (Heb. 9:19-22)”

10:22. “let us draw near with a true heart in fulness of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience: and having our body washed with pure water, (Heb. 10:22)”

Consequently the mode of baptism is quite immaterial: it may be administered by immersion, but also by pouring or sprinkling. But the Baptists have another argument, namely, that the New Testament warrants only baptism by immersion. However, they fail to prove their point. Jesus did not prescribe a certain mode of baptism, and the Bible never stresses any particular mode. The word (BAPTIZO) employed by Jesus does not necessarily mean ‘to immerse,’ but may also mean ‘to purify by washing.’ There is not a single case of baptism mentioned in the New Testament of which we are sure that it was baptism by immersion. It is very unlikely that the multitudes who flocked to John the Baptist and the three thousand who believed on the day of Pentecost were baptized in that way. Nor is it likely that this mode was applied in the cases mentioned in

Acts 9:18; “And straightway there fell from his eyes as it were scales, and he received his sight; and he arose and was baptized; (Acts 9:18)”

10:47; “Can any man forbid the water, that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Spirit as well as we? (Acts 10:47)”

16:33-34. “33 And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, immediately. 34 And he brought them up into his house, and set food before them, and rejoiced greatly, with all his house, having believed in God. (Acts 16:33-34)”

2. THE PROPER SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM. There are two classes to whom baptism is applied, namely, adults and infants.

a. **ADULT BAPTISM.** Baptism is intended for believers and their seed. In the words of the institution Jesus undoubtedly had in mind primarily the baptism of adults, for it was only with these that the disciples could begin in their missionary labors. His instruction implies that baptism had to be preceded by a profession of faith, Mark 16:16. On the day of Pentecost those that received the word of Peter were baptized, Acts 2:41; compare also Acts 8:37 (Auth.Ver.); 16:31-34. The Church should require a profession of faith of all adults seeking baptism. When such a profession is made, this is accepted by the Church at its face value, unless there are good reasons to doubt its sincerity.

b. **INFANT BAPTISM.** Baptists deny the right of infant baptism, since children cannot exercise faith, and since the New Testament contains no command to baptize children and does not record a single instance of such baptism. Yet this does not prove it unbiblical. (1) **THE SCRIPTURAL BASIS FOR INFANT BAPTISM.** Infant baptism is not based on a single passage of Scripture, but on a series of considerations. The covenant made with Abraham was primarily a spiritual covenant, though it also had a national aspect, Rom. 4:16-18; Gal. 3:8-9, 14. This covenant is still in force and is essentially the same as the “new covenant” of the present dispensation, Rom. 4:13-18; Gal. 3:15-18; Heb. 6:13-18. Children shared in the blessings of the covenant, received the sign of circumcision, and were reckoned as part of the congregation if Israel, 2 Chron. 20:13; Joel 2:16. In the New Testament baptism is substituted for circumcision as the sign and seal of entrance into the covenant, Acts 2:39; Col. 2:11-12. The “new covenant” is represented in Scripture as more gracious than the old, Isa. 54:13; Jer. 31:34; Heb. 8:11, and therefore could hardly exclude children. This is also unlikely in view of such passages as Matt. 19:14; Acts 2:39; 1Cor. 7:14. Moreover, whole households were baptized and it is unlikely that these contained no children, Acts 16:15; 16:33; 1Cor. 1:16. (2) **THE GROUND AND OPERATION OF INFANT BAPTISM.** In Reformed circles some hold that children are baptized on the ground of a presumptive regeneration, that is, on the assumption (not the assurance), that they are regenerated. Others take the position that they are baptized on the ground of the all-comprehensive covenant promise of God, which also includes the promise of regeneration. This view deserves preference. The covenant promise affords the only certain and objective ground for the baptism of infants. But if the question is raised, how infant baptism can function as a means of grace to strengthen spiritual life, the answer is that it can at the very moment of its administration strengthen the regenerate life, if already present in the child, and can strengthen faith later on when the significance of baptism is more clearly understood. Its operation is not necessarily limited to the very moment of its administration.

TO MEMORIZE. Passages bearing on:

a. THE INSTITUTION OF BAPTISM:

Matt. 28:19. “Go therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”

Mark 16:15-16. “Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. One who believes and is baptized will be saved; but one who disbelieves will be condemned.”

b. BAPTISM AS A SYMBOL OF PURIFICATION:

Acts 22:16. “And now why do you tarry? arise, and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on his name.”

1 Pet. 3:21. “Which also after a true likeness does now save you, even baptism, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the interrogation of a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.”

c. The substitution of baptism for circumcision:

Col. 2:11-12. “In whom you were also circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands, in the putting off of the body of the flesh, in the circumcision of Christ; having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead.”

d. The permanent application of the covenant of Abraham:

Rom. 4:16. “For this cause [it is] of faith, that it may be according to grace; to the end that the promise may be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all.”

Gal. 3:29. “And if you are Christ’s, then are you Abraham’s seed, heirs according to promise.”

e. The inclusion of children in the New Testament church:

Matt. 19:14. “But Jesus said, Suffer the little children, and forbid them not, to come to me: for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven.”

Acts 2:39. “For to you is the promise, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God will call to him.”

1Cor. 7:14. “For the unbelieving husband is sanctified in the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified in the brother: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.”

For Further Study:

- a. Do the following passages prove that the disciples did not use the trinitarian formula in baptism? Acts 2:38; 8:16; 10:48; 19:5.
- b. How does the spiritual meaning of baptism compare with that of circumcision? Compare Deut. 30:6; Jer. 4:4 with Acts 2:38; 22:16.
- c. Can you prove that circumcision was abolished in the New Testament? Acts 15; Gal. 2:3; 5:2-3; 6:12-13.

Questions for Review

1. When did Christ institute baptism?
2. What is the meaning of baptism into the name of someone?
3. Were the words of Christ intended as a formula?
4. What do Baptists regard as the essential thing in the symbolism of baptism?
5. What is the essential thing in it?
6. Did Christ prescribe a certain mode of baptism?
7. Can the necessity of immersion be proved from Scripture?
8. Who are the proper administrators of baptism? What is Rome's view?
9. What is the condition of adult baptism?
10. How can infant baptism be proved from Scripture?
11. What views are there as to the ground of infant baptism?
12. Which should be preferred, and why?
13. How can infant baptism be a means of grace?

CHAPTER 27: THE LORD'S SUPPER

The Lord's Supper was instituted at the time of the Passover shortly before the death of Jesus, Matt. 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:19-20; 1Cor. 11:23-25. The new sacrament was linked up with the central element in the paschal meal. The bread that was eaten with the lamb was consecrated to a new use, and so was the wine of the third cup, "the cup of blessing." The broken bread and the wine symbolize the Lord's broken body and shed blood; the physical eating and drinking of these point to a spiritual appropriation of the fruits of the sacrifice of Christ; and the whole sacrament is a constant reminder of His redemptive death.

1. **THE LORD'S SUPPER AS A SIGN AND SEAL.** Like every other sacrament, the Lord's Supper is first of all a sign. The sign includes not only the visible elements of bread and wine, but also their eating and drinking. It is a symbolical representation of the Lord's death, 1Cor. 11:26, and symbolizes the believer's participation in the crucified Christ and in the life and strength of the risen Lord. In addition to this it is also an act of profession on the part of those who partake of it. They profess faith in Christ as their Savior, and allegiance to Him as their King. But the Lord's Supper is more than a sign; it is also a seal, which is attached to the thing signified and is a pledge of its realization. It gives believing partakers the assurance that they are the objects of the great love of Christ revealed in His self-surrender to a bitter and shameful death; that all the promises of the covenant and all the riches of the gospel are theirs; and even that the blessings of salvation are theirs in actual possession.
2. **THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST IN THE LORD'S SUPPER.** The question as to the nature of the presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper is one that has long been debated, and one on which there is still considerable difference of opinion. Four views come into consideration here.
 - a. **THE VIEW OF ROME.** The Church of Rome conceives of the presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper in a **PHYSICAL SENSE**. On the ground of Jesus' statement, "this is my body," it holds that bread and wine change into the body and blood of Christ, though they continue to look and taste like bread and wine. This view is open to several objections: (1) Jesus, standing before the disciples in the flesh, could not very well say that He had His body in His hand; (2) Scripture speaks of the bread as bread even after the supposed change has taken place, 1Cor. 10:17; 11:26-28; and (3) It is contrary to common sense to believe that what looks and smells and tastes like bread and wine is indeed flesh and blood.
 - b. **THE LUTHERAN VIEW.** Lutherans maintain that, while bread and wine remain what they are, the whole person of Christ, body and blood, is present **IN, UNDER, AND ALONG WITH**, the elements. When Christ had the bread in His hand, He held His body along with it, and therefore could say, "this is my body." Every one who receives the bread also receives the body, whether he be a believer or not. This is no great improvement on the Roman Catholic doctrine. It ascribes to Jesus' words the unnatural meaning "this accompanies my body." Moreover, it is burdened with the impossible notion that the body of Christ is omnipresent.
 - c. **THE ZWINGLIAN VIEW.** Zwingli denied the bodily presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper, while admitting that He is spiritually present in the faith of believers. For him the Lord's Supper was mainly a mere sign or symbol, a memorial of the death of Christ, and an act of profession on

the part of believers. Some of his statements, however, seem to indicate that he also regarded it as a seal or pledge of what God does for the believer in Christ.

d. CALVIN'S VIEW. Calvin took an intermediate position. Instead of the physical and local, he taught the spiritual presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper. In distinction from Zwingli he stressed the deeper significance of the sacrament. He saw in it a seal and pledge of what God does for believers rather than a pledge of their consecration to God. The virtues and effects of the sacrifice of Christ on the cross are present and actually conveyed to believers by the power of the Holy Spirit.

3. THE PERSONS FOR WHOM THE LORD'S SUPPER IS INSTITUTED. The Lord's Supper was not instituted for all indiscriminately, but only for believers, who understand its spiritual significance. Children, who have not yet come to years of discretion, are not fit to partake of it. Even true believers may be in such a spiritual condition that they cannot worthily take their place at the table of the Lord, and should therefore examine themselves carefully, 1Cor 11:28-32. Unbelievers are naturally excluded from the Lord's Supper. The grace that is received in the sacrament does not differ in kind from what is received through the instrumentality of the Word. The sacrament merely adds to the effectiveness of the Word and to the measure of the grace received. The enjoyment of its spiritual benefits depends on the faith of the participant.

TO MEMORIZE. Passages bearing on:

a. THE INSTITUTION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER:

1 Cor. 11:23-27. "For I received of the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it, and said, This is my body, which is for you: do this in remembrance of me. In the same way he also took the cup, after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood: do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me. 26 For as often as you eat this bread, and drink this cup, you are proclaiming the Lord's death till he comes. Therefore whoever might eat this bread or drink this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, will be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord."

b. THE LORD'S SUPPER AS A SIGN AND SEAL:

Matt. 26:26-27. "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke it; and He gave to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And He took a cup, and gave thanks, and gave to them, saying, Drink you all of it; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many to remission of sins."

1 Cor. 10:16. "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a communion of the body of Christ?"

c. THE LORD'S SUPPER AS AN ACT OF PROFESSION:

1 Cor 11:26. "For as often as you eat this bread, and drink this cup, you are proclaiming the Lord's death till he comes."

d. WORTHY PARTICIPATION AND SELF-EXAMINATION:

1 Cor. 11:27-29. "Therefore whoever might eat this bread or drink this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, will be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. But let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of the bread, and drink of the cup. For one who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself, if he does not discern the body."

For Further Study:

- a. Do the words of Jesus in John 6:48-58 have reference to the Lord's Supper?
- b. Does the expression 'breaking bread' necessarily refer to the Lord's Supper? Compare Acts 2:42; 20:7, 11; 27:35; 1Cor 10:16.
- c. Can you mention other cases in which the verb 'to be' cannot be taken literally? John 10:7; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1.

Questions for Review

1. What belongs to the sign in the Lord's Supper?
2. What does the sacrament signify and what does it seal?
3. What is the Roman Catholic view of the presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper?
4. How do the Lutherans conceive of it?
5. What objections are there to these views?
6. What is the Zwinglian conception of the Lord's Supper?
7. How does Calvin's conception differ from it?
8. How does Calvin conceive of the Lord's presence in it?
9. How does the grace received in the sacrament differ from that received through the Word?
10. For whom was the Lord's Supper instituted?
11. Who should be excluded from the table of the Lord?

PART VII - THE DOCTRINE OF THE LAST THINGS

CHAPTER 28: PHYSICAL DEATH AND THE INTERMEDIATE STATE

1. PHYSICAL DEATH. Physical death is variously represented in Scripture. It is spoken of as the death of the body, as distinguished from that of the soul, Matt. 10:28; Luke 12:4, as the termination or loss of animal life, Luke 6:9; John 12:25, and as a separation of body and soul, Eccl. 12:7; Jas. 2:26. It is never an annihilation, but may be described as A TERMINATION OF PHYSICAL LIFE BY THE SEPARATION OF BODY AND SOUL. Pelagians and Socinians teach that man was created so that he had to die, but this is not in harmony with Scripture. It teaches us that death resulted from sin and is a punishment for sin, Gen. 2:17; 3:19; Rom. 5:12, 17; 6:23. Instead of being something natural, it is an expression of divine anger, Ps. 90:7, 11, a judgment, Rom. 1:32, a condemnation, Rom. 5:16, and a curse, Gal. 3:13, filling the hearts of men with dread and fear. But since death is a punishment for sin, and believers are redeemed from the guilt of sin, the question naturally arises, Why must they still die? It is clear that it cannot be a punishment for them, but must be regarded as an important element in the process of sanctification. It is the consummation of their dying to sin.

2. THE INTERMEDIATE STATE. Opinions differ very much as to the condition of man between death and the general resurrection. The most important theories call for a brief discussion.

a. THE MODERN IDEA OF SHEOL-HADES. The idea is very prevalent at present that at death both the pious and the wicked descend into an intermediate place, which the Old Testament calls SHEOL, and the New Testament, HADES. It is not a place of reward or punishment, but a place where all share the same fate, a dreary abode where life is but a weakened reflection of life on earth, a place of weakened consciousness, of slumbrous inactivity, where life has lost its interests and the joys of living are turned into sadness. But this is hardly a scriptural representation. If the terms SHEOL and HADES always denote a place to which both the pious and the wicked descend, how can the descent into it be held up as a warning to the wicked, Ps. 9:17; Prov. 5:5; 7:27; 9:18; 15:24; 23:14? And how can Scripture speak of God's anger as burning there, Deut. 32:22? It was in HADES that the rich man lifted up his eyes, Luke 16:23, and he calls it a "place of torment," vs. 28. It is better to assume that the words SHEOL and HADES are not always used in the same sense, but sometimes denote the grave, Gen. 42:38; Ps. 16:10, sometimes the state or condition of death, represented as a place, 1 Sam 2:6; Ps. 89:48, and sometimes the place of eternal punishment, Deut. 32:22; Ps 9:17; Prov. 9:18.

b. PURGATORY, LIMBUS PATRUM, AND LIMBUS INFANTUM. According to the Church of Rome the souls of those who are perfect at death are at once admitted to heaven, Matt. 25:46; Phil. 1:23, but those who are not perfectly cleansed at death -- and this is the condition of most believers -- enter a place of purification called purgatory. The length of their stay there varies according to the need of individual cases, and can be shortened by the prayers, good works, and masses of pious friends or relatives. This doctrine finds no support in Scripture. -- The Limbus Patrum is the place where, according to Rome, the Old Testament saints were detained until Christ set them free between His death and resurrection. -- And the Limbus Infantum is the supposed abode of all unbaptized children. They remain there without any hope of deliverance,

suffering no positive punishment indeed, but excluded from the blessings of heaven. Neither of these views find any support in Scripture.

c. THE SLEEP OF THE SOUL. The notion that at death the soul enters into a state of unconscious repose or sleep, was advocated by several sects in the past, and is now also a favorite doctrine of the Irvingites in England and of the Russellites in America. It has a peculiar fascination for those who find it hard to believe in a continuance of consciousness apart from the brain. They find support for it in Scripture passages which speak of death as a sleep, Matt. 9:24; Acts 7:60; 1Thess. 4:13, or seem to say that the dead are unconscious, Ps. 6:5; 30:9; 115:17; 146:4. But the former simply speak of death as a sleep because of the similarity between a dead body and a body asleep, and the latter simply stress the fact that the dead can no more take notice of nor share in the activities of the present world. Believers are represented as enjoying a conscious life immediately after death, Luke 16:19-31; 23:43; 2Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23; Rev. 6:9.

d. ANNIHILATIONISM AND CONDITIONAL IMMORTALITY. According to these doctrines there is no conscious existence, if any existence at all, of the wicked after death. Annihilationism teaches that man was created immortal, but that they who continue in sin are by a positive act of God deprived of immortality and finally destroyed or bereft forever of consciousness. According to the doctrine of conditional immortality, however, man was created mortal, and only believers receive the gift of immortality in Christ. The wicked ultimately perish completely or lose all consciousness. The result is the same in both cases. These doctrines are supposed to find support in the fact that the Bible represents eternal life as a gift of God in Christ, John 10:27-28; Rom. 2:7; 6:23, and threatens sinners with death and destruction, Ps. 73:27; Mal. 4:1; 2Pet. 2:12. But the Bible clearly teaches that sinners will continue to exist, Matt. 25:46; Rev. 14:11; 20:10, and that there will be degrees of punishment of the wicked, Luke 12:47-48; Rom. 2:12. e. SECOND PROBATION. Some scholars hold that they who die in their sins will have another opportunity after death to accept Christ. No man will perish without having been offered a favorable opportunity to know and accept Jesus. They appeal to such passages as Eph. 4:8-9; 1Cor. 15:24-28; Phil. 2:9-11; Col. 1:19,20; 1Pet. 3:19; 4:6. But these do not prove the point. Moreover, Scripture represents the state of unbelievers after death as a fixed state, which cannot be altered, Eccl. 11:3; Luke 16:19-31; John 8:21, 24; 2Pet 2:4,9; Jude 7, 13. Their judgment depends on what they have done in the flesh, Matt. 7:22-23; 10:32-33; 25:34-46; 2Cor 5:9-10; 2Thess. 1:8.

TO MEMORIZE. Passages proving:

a. THAT DEATH IS A PUNISHMENT FOR SIN:

Rom. 5:12. "Therefore, as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; even so death passed to all men, upon which all sinned."

Rom. 6:23. "For the wages of sin is death; but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

b. THAT BELIEVERS ARE VICTORIOUS OVER DEATH:

1 Cor. 15:55-57. "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting? The sting of death is sin; and the power of sin is the law: but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

c. THAT SHEOL-HADES IS IN SOME CASES A PLACE OF PUNISHMENT:

Ps. 9:17. "The wicked will be turned back to SHEOL, Even all the nations that forget God."

Prov. 15:24. "To the wise the way of life goes upward, That he may depart from SHEOL beneath."

Luke 16:23. "And in HADES he lifted up his eyes, being in torments."

d. THAT BELIEVERS ARE WITH CHRIST IMMEDIATELY AFTER DEATH:

2 Cor. 5:8. "We are of good courage, I say, and are willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be at home with the Lord."

Phil. 1:23. "But I am in a strait between the two, having the desire to depart and be with Christ; for it is very far better."

e. THAT UNBELIEVERS CONTINUE TO EXIST AFTER DEATH:

Matt. 25:46. "And these will go away into eternal punishment: but the righteous into eternal life."

Luke 12:47-48. "And that servant, who knew his lord's will, and made not ready, nor did according to his will, will be beaten with many stripes; but one who did not know, and did things worthy of stripes, will be beaten with few stripes."

Rev. 14:11. "And the smoke of their torment goes up for ever and ever; and they have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name."

f. THAT THERE IS NO ESCAPE AFTER DEATH:

Luke 16:26. "And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, that those who would pass from hence to you may not be able, and that none may cross over from there to us."

2 Pet. 2:9. "The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment to the day of judgment."

For Further Study:

a. What do the following passages teach respecting death? 1 Cor. 15:55-57; 2 Tim. 1:10; Heb. 2:14; Rev. 1:18; 20:14.

b. Do you think the following passages support the doctrine of purgatory? Isa. 4:4; Mic. 7:8; Zech. 9:11; Mal. 3:2; Matt. 12:32; 1 Cor. 3:13-15.

c. Does the word of Jesus to the dying thief on the cross fit in with the doctrine of the sleep of the soul? Luke 23:43.

Questions for Review

1. How is physical death represented in Scripture?
2. How can you prove that death is not something natural?
3. What is the connection between sin and death?
4. Is death a punishment for believers? What purpose does it serve?

5. What is the modern idea of sheol-hades?
6. What objections are there to this theory?
7. What do these terms denote in Scripture?
8. How do the doctrines of annihilation and conditional immortality differ?
9. What is the supposed Scripture basis for these?
10. How can you disprove them?
11. What is the Roman Catholic doctrine of Purgatory, Limbus Patrum, and Limbus Infantum?
12. What is the doctrine of the sleep of the soul?
13. What is its supposed Scripture basis? How would you refute it?
14. What is the doctrine of second probation?
15. Does Scripture support or contradict this doctrine?

CHAPTER 29: THE SECOND COMING OF Christ

The New Testament clearly teaches us that the first coming of Christ will be followed by a second. Jesus referred to His return more than once, Matt. 24:30, 25:19; 26:64; John 14:3; angels called attention to it at the ascension, Acts 1:11; and the Epistles speak of it repeatedly, Phil. 3:20; 1Thess. 4:15-16; 2Thess. 1:7, 10; Tit. 2:13; Heb. 9:28.

1. GREAT EVENTS PRECEDING THE SECOND COMING. According to Scripture several important events must precede the return of Christ.

a. THE CALLING OF THE GENTILES. The gospel of the kingdom must be preached to all nations before the coming of Christ, Matt. 24:14; Mark 13:10; Rom. 11:25. This means that the nations as a whole must be so thoroughly evangelized that the gospel becomes a power in the life of the people, a sign that calls for decision.

b. THE CONVERSION OF THE FULL NUMBER OF ISRAEL. 2Cor. 3:15 and Rom. 11:25-29 refer to a conversion of Israel, and the passage in Rom. seems to connect this with the end of time. Some take these passages to teach that Israel as a whole, Israel as a nation, will finally turn to the Lord. It is more likely, however, that the expression “all Israel” in Rom. 11:26 simply refers to the full number of the elect out of the ancient covenant people. The whole passage does seem to imply that in the end large numbers of Israel will turn to the Lord.

c. THE GREAT APOSTASY AND THE GREAT TRIBULATION. The Bible teaches repeatedly that toward the end of time there will be a great falling away. Iniquity will increase, and the love of many will wax cold, Matt. 24:12; 2Thess. 2:3; 2Tim. 3:1-7; 4:3-4. Wickedness crying to high heaven will result in a terrible tribulation “such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, nor ever will be.” Matt. 24:21. If those days were not shortened no flesh would be saved; but they will be shortened for the sake of the elect.

d. THE COMING OF ANTICHRIST. The spirit of Antichrist was already in evidence in the apostolic age, 1John 4:3, and many antichrists had made their appearance, 1John 2:18. But the Bible leads us to expect that at the end of the age a single individual will stand out as the incarnation of all wickedness, “the man of sin,” “the son of perdition, the one who opposes and exalts himself against all that is called God or that is worshipped; so that he sits in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God.” 2Thess. 2:3-4.

e. SIGNS AND WONDERS. The Bible also refers to striking signs as marking the beginning of the end. There will be wars, famines, and earthquakes in diverse places, which are called the beginning of travail, to be followed by the rebirth of the universe; and also fearful portents in heaven, when the powers of the heavens will be shaken, Matt. 24:29-30; Mark 13:24-25; Luke 21:25-26.

2. THE SECOND COMING ITSELF. After these signs the Son of Man will be seen coming on the clouds of heaven.

a. THE TIME OF HIS COMING. Some believe that the coming of Christ is imminent, that is, may now occur at any time. But the Bible teaches us that the events and signs mentioned in the foregoing must precede the return. From God’s point of view the coming is always near, Heb.

10:25; Jas. 5:9; 1Pet. 4:5; but no one can determine the exact time, not even the angels nor the Son of Man, Matt. 24:36.

b. THE MANNER OF HIS COMING. The person of Christ will return. He has already come in the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, but He will return in the body, so that He can be seen, Matt. 24:30; 26:64; Acts 1:11; Tit. 2:13; Rev. 1:7. Though several signs will precede His coming, yet it will be unexpected and take people by surprise, Matt. 24:37-44; 25:1-12; 1Thess. 5:2-3; Rev. 3:3. Moreover, it will be a glorious and triumphant coming. The clouds of heaven will be His chariot, Matt. 24:30, the angels His bodyguard, 2Thess. 1:7, the archangels His heralds, 1Thess. 4:16, and the saints of God His glorious retinue, 1Thess. 3:13; 2Thess. 1:10.

c. THE PURPOSE OF HIS COMING. Christ will return to introduce the future age, the eternal state of things, and will do this by two mighty events, the resurrection and the final judgment, John 5:25-29; Acts 17:31; Rom. 2:3-16; 2Cor. 5:10; Phil. 3:20-21; 1Thess. 4:13-17; 2Pet. 3:10-13; Rev. 20:11-15; 22:12

3. THE QUESTION OF THE MILLENNIUM. Some believe that the second coming of Christ will either be preceded or followed by a millennium.

a. POST-MILLENNIALISM. Post-millennialism teaches that the second coming of Christ will follow the millennium. The millennium is expected during the gospel dispensation, in which we are now living, and at the end of which Christ will appear. The expectation is that the gospel will in the end become much more effective than it is at present and will usher in a period of righteousness and peace and of rich spiritual blessings. In our days some even expect that this will be the grand result of a purely natural process of evolution. This whole idea, however, does not seem to fit in with what the Bible tells us respecting the great apostasy toward the end of time.

b. PRE-MILLENNIALISM. According to Pre-millennialism Christ at His return will re-establish the kingdom of David on earth, and will reign at Jerusalem for a thousand years. This theory is based on a literalistic interpretation of the prophets and of Rev. 20:1-6. It makes the kingdom of God an earthly and national kingdom, while the New Testament represents it as spiritual and universal, a kingdom that is even now in existence, Matt. 11:12; 12:28; Luke 17:21; John 18:36-37; Col. 1:13. The New Testament knows nothing of such an earthly and temporal kingdom of Christ, but does speak of His heavenly (2Tim. 4:18) and eternal (2Pet. 1:11) kingdom. Moreover, this theory seeks its main support in a passage (Rev. 20:1-6), which represents a scene in heaven, and makes no mention of the Jews, of an earthly and national kingdom, nor of the land of Palestine, as the place where Jesus will rule.

TO MEMORIZE. Passages pertaining to:

a. THE CALLING OF THE GENTILE:

Matt. 24:14. "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world for a testimony to all the nations; and then will the end come."

Rom. 11:25-26a. "For I would not, brethren, have you ignorant of this mystery, lest you be wise in your own conceits, that a hardening in part has befallen Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in; and so all Israel will be saved."

b. THE CONVERSION OF ISRAEL:

Rom. 11:26. Compare above under a.

2 Cor. 3:15-16. “But to this day, whenever Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart. But whenever it will turn to the Lord, the veil is taken away.”

c. THE GREAT APOSTASY AND THE GREAT TRIBULATION:

Matt. 24:9-13. “Then will they deliver you up to tribulation, and will kill you: and you will be hated of all the nations for my name’s sake. And then will many stumble, and will deliver up one another, and will hate one another. And many false prophets will arise, and will lead many astray. And because iniquity will be multiplied, the love of the many will wax cold. But the one who endures to the end, the same will be saved.”

Matt. 24:21-22. “For then will be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, nor ever will be. And except those days had been shortened, no flesh would have been saved: but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened.”

d. THE REVELATION OF ANTICHRIST:

2 Thess. 2:8-9. “And then will be revealed the lawless one, whom the Lord Jesus will slay with the breath of his mouth, and bring to nothing by the manifestation of his coming; even he, whose coming is according to the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders.”

1 John 2:18a, 22. “Little children, it is the last hour: and as you heard that antichrist comes, even now have there arisen many antichrists... Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, [even] the one who denies the Father and the Son.”

e. THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST:

Matt. 24:44. “Therefore be also ready; for in an hour that you do not suppose the Son of Man comes.”

Phil. 3:20. “For our citizenship is in heaven; from where also we wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Tit. 2:13. “Looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ.”

For Further Study:

a. How would you explain the passages that speak of the coming of Christ as near? Matt. 16:28; 24:34; Heb. 10:25; Jas. 5:9; 1 Pet. 4:5; 1 John 2:18.

b. Who are the “false Christs” or “antichrists,” of which the Bible speaks, Matt. 24:24; 1 John 2:18?

C. What would you say in reply to the idea that the second coming of Christ belongs to the past, since He returned in the Spirit, John 14:18, 28.

Questions for Review

1. What great events will precede the second coming of Christ?
2. In what sense must the nations be evangelized?

3. How must we understand the predicted conversion of Israel?
4. What is the great apostasy and the great tribulation?
5. What does the Bible mean when it speaks of the Antichrist?
6. In what sense are there antichrists even now?
7. What signs will precede the second coming?
8. In what sense can it be regarded as near?
9. Can we regard the second coming as a past event? If not, why not?
10. Can you prove that it will be physical and visible?
11. How can it be sudden, when it will be preceded by signs?
12. What will be the purpose of Christ's return?
13. What is the difference between post- and pre-millennialism?
14. What objections are there to these theories?

CHAPTER 30: THE RESURRECTION, THE LAST JUDGMENT AND THE FINAL STATE

1. THE RESURRECTION. Scripture teaches us that at the return of Christ the dead will be raised up. The Old Testament clearly speaks of it in Isa. 26:19, Dan. 12:2. The New Testament contains more abundant proof of it, John 5:25-29; 6:39-40, 44; 11:24-25; 1Cor 15; 1Thess. 4:13-17; Rev. 20:13.

a. **THE CHARACTER OF THE RESURRECTION.** Scripture teaches us to look forward to a BODILY resurrection, similar to the resurrection of Christ. The redemption in Christ will include the body, Rom. 8:23; 1Cor. 6:13-20. Such a resurrection is clearly taught in 1Cor. 15, and in Rom. 8:11. It will include both the righteous and the wicked, but will be an act of deliverance and glorification only for the former. For the latter the re-union of body and soul will issue in the extreme penalty of eternal death.

b. **THE TIME OF THE RESURRECTION.** According to Scripture the general resurrection will coincide with the return of Christ and the end of the world, and will immediately precede the final judgment, John 5:27-29; 6:39-40, 44, 54; 11:24; 1Cor. 15:23; Phil. 3:20-21; Rev. 20:11-15. Pre-millennarians teach a double resurrection: one of the just at the return of Christ, and another of the unjust a thousand years later, at the end of the world. But the Bible speaks of the resurrection of both in a single breath. Dan. 12:2; John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15. It connects the judgment of the wicked with the coming of Christ, 2Thess. 1:7-10, and places the resurrection of the just at the last day, John 6:39-40, 44, 54; 11:24.

2. THE LAST JUDGMENT. The doctrine of the resurrection leads right on to that of the last judgment. The Bible speaks of the coming of a final judgment in no uncertain terms, Ps. 96:13; 98:9; Eccl. 3:17; 12:14; Matt. 25:31-46; Rom. 2:5-10; 2Cor. 5:10. 2Tim. 4:1; 1Pet. 4:5; Rev. 20:11-14.

a. **THE JUDGE AND HIS ASSISTANTS.** Christ as the Mediator will be the Judge, Matt. 25:31-32; John 5:27; Acts 10:42; 17:31; Phil. 2:10; 1Tim. 4:1. This honor was conferred on Christ as the reward for His atoning work. The angels will assist Him, Matt. 13:41-42; 24:31; 25:31, and the saints will also have some share in His judicial work, 1Cor. 6:2-3; Rev. 20:4.

b. **THE PARTIES THAT WILL BE JUDGED.** It is perfectly evident from Scripture that every individual of the human race will have to appear before the judgment seat, Eccl. 12:14; Matt. 12:36-37; 25:32; Rom. 14:10; 2Cor. 5:10; Rev. 20:12. Some think that the righteous will be excepted, but this is contrary to Matt. 13:30, 40-43, 49; 25:31-36; 2Cor. 5:10. Clearly the demons will also be judged, Matt. 8:29; 1Cor. 6:3; 2Pet 2:4; Jude 6.

c. **THE TIME OF THE JUDGMENT.** The final judgment will naturally be at the end of the world, and will follow immediately after the resurrection of the dead, John 5:28-29; Rev. 20:12-13. The duration of the judgment cannot be determined. The Bible speaks of “the day of judgment”, but this does not necessarily mean that it will be a day of twenty-four hours. Nor is there any ground to assert with the Pre-millennarians that it will be a day of a thousand years.

d. **THE STANDARD OF JUDGMENT.** The standard by which saints and sinners will be judged will evidently be the revealed will of God. Gentiles will be judged by the law of nature; Jews by

the Old Testament revelation, and those acquainted with the fuller revelation of the gospel will be judged by it, Rom. 2:12. God will give every man his due.

3. THE FINAL STATE. The final judgment serves the purpose of setting forth clearly what the final state of each person will be.

a. THE FINAL STATE OF THE WICKED. The wicked are consigned to the place of punishment called “hell”. Some deny that hell is a place and regard it merely as a condition, but the Bible uses local terms right along. It speaks, for instance, of a “furnace of fire”, Matt. 13:42, a “lake of fire”, Rev. 20:14-15, and of a “prison”, 1Pet. 3:19, all of which are local terms. In this place they will be totally deprived of the divine favor, will experience an endless disturbance of life, will suffer positive pains in body and soul, and will be subject to pangs of conscience, anguish, and despair, Matt. 8:12-13; Mark 9:47-48; Luke 16:23, 28; Rev. 14:10; 21:8. There will be degrees in their punishment, Matt. 11:22, 24; Luke 12:47-48; 20:47. It is evident that their punishment will be eternal. Some deny this, because the words ‘eternal’ and ‘everlasting’ may simply denote a long period of time. Yet this is not the usual meaning of the words, and there is no reason to think that they have that meaning when applied to the future punishment of the wicked. Moreover, other terms are used, which point to endless punishment, Mark 9:43, 48; Luke 16:26.

b. THE FINAL STATE OF THE RIGHTEOUS. The final state of believers will be preceded by the passing of the present world and the establishment of a new creation. This will not be an entirely new creation, but rather a renewal of the present creation. Ps. 102:26-27; Heb. 12:26-28. Heaven will be the eternal abode of believers. Some think of heaven merely as a condition, but the Bible clearly represents it as a place, John 14:2; Matt. 22:12-13; 25:10-12. The righteous will not only inherit heaven, but the entire new creation, Matt. 55:; Rev. 21:1-3. The reward of the righteous is described as eternal life, that is, not merely endless life, but life in all its fulness, without any of the imperfections and disturbances of the present. This fulness of life is enjoyed in communion with God, which is really the essence of eternal life, Rev. 21:3. While all will enjoy perfect bliss, there will be degrees also in the enjoyments of heaven, Dan. 12:3; 2Cor. 9:6.

TO MEMORIZE. Passages proving:

a. A GENERAL RESURRECTION:

Dan. 12:2. “And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.”

John 5:28-29. “Do not marvel at this: for the hour comes, in which all that are in the tombs will hear his voice, and will come forth; those who have done good, to the resurrection of life; and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment.”

Acts 24:15. “Having hope toward God, which these also themselves look for, that there will be a resurrection both of the just and unjust.”

b. A RESURRECTION OF THE BODY:

Rom. 8:11. “But if the Spirit of the One who raised up Jesus from the dead dwells in you, the One who raised up Christ Jesus from the dead will give life also to your mortal bodies through His Spirit that dwells in you.”

1 Cor. 15:35. “But some one will say, How are the dead raised? and with what manner of body do they come?” Also verse 44. “It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body.”

c. A RESURRECTION AT THE LAST DAY OR AT THE COMING OF CHRIST:

1 Cor. 15:22-23. “For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ will all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; then those who are Christ’s, at his coming.”

1 Thess. 4:16. “For the Lord himself will descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ will rise first.”

John 6:40. “For this is the will of my Father, that every one who beholds the Son, and believes on Him, should have eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.”

d. A FINAL JUDGMENT WITH CHRIST AS JUDGE:

2 Cor. 5:10. “For we must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things [done] in the body, according to what he has done, whether [it be] good or bad.”

2 Tim 4:1. “I charge you in the sight of God, and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead...”

Rev. 20:12. “And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne; and books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works.”

e. ETERNAL AWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS:

Matt. 25:46. “And these will go away into eternal punishment: but the righteous into eternal life.”

Rom. 2:6-8. “Who will render to every man according to his works: to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and incorruption, eternal life: but to those who are factious, and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, will be wrath and indignation.”

2 Thess. 1:9. “Who will suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might.”

f. DEGREES IN AWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS:

Dan. 12:3. “And those who are wise will shine as the brightness of the firmament; and those who turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.”

Luke 12:47-48. “And that servant, who knew his lord’s will, and made not ready, nor did according to his will, will be beaten with many stripes; but the one who did not know, and did things worthy of stripes, will be beaten with few stripes. And to whomever much is given, of him will much be required: and to whom they commit much, of him will they ask the more.”

2 Cor. 9:6. “But this I say, the one who sows sparingly will reap also sparingly; and the one who sows bountifully will reap also bountifully.”

For Further Study:

a. How does Jesus argue the resurrection in Matt. 22:23-33?

b. Does Paul in 2 Thess. 1:7-10 place the judgment of the wicked a thousand years after the coming of Christ?

c. Does 1 Cor. 6:3 prove that the good angels will also be judged?

Questions for Review

1. How can you prove the resurrection of the body from the New Testament?
2. What Bible proof is there for the resurrection of the wicked?
3. How does their resurrection differ from that of the righteous?
4. What does the Bible teach respecting the time of the resurrection?
5. How would you disprove the doctrine of a double resurrection?
6. What Scripture proof is there for a last judgment?
7. Who will be the Judge, and who will assist Him?
8. What parties will be judged?
9. When will the last judgment be, and how long will it last?
10. By what standard will men be judged?
11. In what will the punishment of the wicked consist?
12. How can you prove that it will be unending?
13. Will the new creation be an entirely new creation?
14. What will be the reward of the righteous?

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KJV and ASV verses were updated to Modern English, and corrections were made
by William H. Gross, Colorado Springs CO 2004