

“If you have ever questioned some of the things spoken by leaders and teachers from the Bible that didn't seem to make sense, then this book may help you in your struggle to see what God has spoken to His church.”

Terrance Hill

Author of *THE BODY AS ONE*

Levitical

Lies &

Liturggy

Just God's Word Publishers

Stanley J. Dorsy

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To God,

who challenged me as no one ever has to search for Truth

for His never ending Love and patience

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Foreword

Those who have helped to influence the writing of this book are truly spiritual revolutionaries of change in the study of scripture. They have proven beyond a doubt that they are the type of people that will not let go of God's Word until they have exhausted every angle of approach and turned over every stone searching for the answers to the many questions that have been left unanswered for so long.

This book, is to say the least not for the casual reader or for the faint of heart; but will bring each person who is willing to read it to a whole new relationship with God. It may anger you at times and at other moments cause you to leap right out of your skin and announce 'that's it, I knew the answer had to be there somewhere.' Whatever your reaction is there is one thing for certain, you will never be the same after taking this Spiritual Journey in God's Word.

This journey is unlike any that you will ever take. It goes to the very throne of God and unveils what has been hidden from those who have become part of a modern system of worship that promotes strange ideas of who our Savior is and what He has done and is doing for mankind.

That's why this book has been written. Those who have been a part of putting this together want to lay out God's Word and to challenge the reader to peer through the gates of heaven with an open mind. This is a high hurdle to get over no doubt but will be worth the effort. There are a lot of treasures to unearth, but don't be surprised if you do not find them all or like what you see at first. You may find that you will return to those treasures that you thought were not worth the effort and will see their true value.

Whatever you do, do not just accept what has been written because it sounds good, but test God's Word yourself and read what He says about each and every issue presented here and challenge your mind to go places that no man has gone before (star trek theme playing in the background.)

We hope you are blessed as you read *Levitical Lies & Liturgy* It will change your life and the way you think about the God's plan for your salvation. Read this at your own risk of losing your mind but gaining God's. May you be forever blessed as God is introduced to you for possibly the first time in your life.

—Just God's Word

Publishers of *The Spiritual Journey into Eternity, The Body as One, Pulling Back the Veil, A Road Less Traveled: The writings of Paul and The Final Revelation*

Looking in the Right Place

Many authors have proposed some shocking things about God's Word, but God's Word has the ability to be shocking enough without anyone's help.

As a faithful church attendant I believed that I pretty much had a good understanding of what God said and what it took to be saved like most who attend church believe they are. I did not realize that my religion and its foundation was just about to be challenged to its very core.

In the year of 1984 I was presented with a thought right in the middle of church service that took my normal every-day life into a whole new direction of looking in the right place for the answer. I was sitting there minding my own business when someone said to me, 'why do you believe what you believe.' At first glance it does not appear to be much of a question, but as time progressed on for me the question became more intense until it drove me to look seriously at just why I held to the doctrines I called my belief system.

As I began to look for the answer to the question I realized I was being challenged to prove that what I held to as **truth** was really the truth. But the more I looked at the book the harder it became to prove the foundation that I thought I stood on.

(Kinda like believing in Santa Clause for too long and waking up one day to the sudden reality that what you believed in was not true.)

If you are able to read this book with a fresh mind like a child beginning their school life experience then I can promise that you will be driven to God's Word (if for no other reason than to prove me wrong.) But don't be surprised that as you do this you may find yourself seeing more than you bargained for and then wanting to share your new insights with others. Perhaps it will not be any more clear to you then mud at first but I know that with persistence you will see the answers just as I did. But do not just take my words as truth, look it up for yourself and read the whole story, not just bits and pieces.

Why read the whole thing? Well, the parts that matter are often the parts we don't read, that stuff in-between the parts that we are often directed to read in church and then are interpreted for us so we don't have to read the 'other stuff;' but as I found out, those parts that are left out are just as important as the rest of the story. Just like when we read other books (other than the Bible) and learn from them because we read the whole thing.

As you read you will quickly notice that God has things to say that will bring you to your knees and then make you leap for joy as His knowledge begins to fill the voids and answer the questions that so many of have wanted to ask but may not have known how to ask or have not been allowed to ask. Whatever the case may be this book is bound to leave a lasting impression in the way you look at what is in God's Word.

So rather than try to teach an old dog new tricks or re-hash old doctrines or someone else's ideas, this book will take a new and fresh look at what God has said. Even though it is easier to teach people that have not had any indoctrination and are already biased or opinionated (as so many speakers have found it an issue when they try to present a new idea in the face of an already excepted concept of the way to do things) it still can be accomplished; and God is ever knocking on the heart door to bring into each mind a deeper relationship of peace and knowledge. If He is allowed in and His knowledge is not resisted then a journey will ensue that takes each reader to a whole new level of empowerment against anything that would try to come against the kingdom of God. This has been my experience in walking in His Word.



To help set the stage, I want to mention a couple of points up front. First, a word here and there can totally change the meaning of things. For instance, I'm almost sure you have already skimmed over the book, its chapter titles and maybe the preface, and there are little words that have stood out like *law* and *change*. You may not agree with the little you have read but I have gotten your attention. In other words, a otherwise seemingly insignificant word makes a great difference.

Some of what you will read will be very shocking or different from what you have been told or felt you understood; while other things you may argue you have already heard in church. But I would urge you to read this with a open heart. If you will look at what is written here and then read the entire story in God's Word you will see what is the truth and what is not. Of course I promise you that I will only present that which can be seen in scripture, so I have quoted and listed scripture throughout, because God's Word is, was, and always will be the only source for Truth.

The second point I wish to mention is that the things written here may take some time to digest. It took some time for me to come to this understanding. In fact if anyone is able to use simple mathematics they can add up the time from 1984 to this date; and my learning in God is still continuing; and though some things may be high hurdles to get over, they can be achieved with practice. Think of it like any well cultivated habit, if it is practiced over and over again it will soon become just like breathing. I pray that reading God's Word becomes the most well

cultivated habit you will ever have.

Finally, remember that something led you to pick up this book. Something peeked your curiosity and is working in your mind even as you read these words. The sparks of Truth are being fanned into flames and the fire will be kindled if Truth is allowed to be seen in its entirety.



Many Ways to The Truth

I began to hear this phrase more and more among those who said they believed in only One Way to the Truth. And yet as time progressed on I began to hear a message promoted from pulpits the world over of a multitude of ways to God (and a myriad of programs and new theories erupted that seemed to make it clear that there were things that had been overlooked in the field of evangelism and church outreach that were now being brought to the surface in the new age of openness and celebration or evangelicalism.) And today many of the things that were called sinful and even heretical were now being accepted with open arms. The idea of many ways to the truth had begun to be *the way* and the ideas of the past or what was once called truth was now seen as out of place and being a part of the old cold formalism of yesterdays church. In other words, the past was now wrong/sinful and the new way is the correct way.

But is Truth to be weighed out on the platform of what the majority say is right? Are there really many ways to the Truth and all we need is more thinking minds to come up with more programs and financial insights to spread the Truth to those who do not have it? Is the Word of God full of theories that are just waiting to be seen as to how they are to fit today's traditions, customs, culture and ever widening base of peoples and mindsets? Is truth to be seen in one part of the world as having one meaning while having an opposing meaning somewhere else?

I agreed with this myself as I grew up in church and saw the old ways as being out of date and cold. But yet I grew up hearing that there is only one way to God (and depending on what denomination I belonged to, that was the way to God.) So, needless to say I was a little confused when I began to study for myself to see what God says about how each of us comes to Him and by what door we must pass through on our journey. Between what I was reading in scripture and what was being spoken in church and its many forums, the two ideas (old and cold formalism and the new age of celebration) became more and more opposed as each day passed. But through it all God implanted in me a desire to know the Truth and to be set free

from those many ways and instead to follow Him on the narrow road that very few find. I soon realized though that it took far more than just simple reading to receive the Truth, but in fact was the same reality that Paul spoke of when he came face to face with God. He had to be knocked off his *high horse* (knocked off of the foundation he had learned to call home) and now was to be driven by faith that was built upon knowledge, and revelation built upon The Truth.

God reveals His Word and gives to hearts that desire to know the Truth. Just like Paul, if the heart is desirous to do God's will, then when faced with the Truth they can do nothing but give into it. And just like Paul, knowledge alone does not assure anyone of knowing the Truth. In fact, there are far too many knowledgeable persons who instead of upholding the power of God over evil, will uphold Satan's power over the power of God to set the captive free, and will uphold church doctrine over what God has said in His Word. Therefore it becomes evidently clear that even if you can recite the entire Bible by heart and speak wonderful words of inspiration to thousands of people, it does not mean you have or are speaking the Truth. In other words, it is not just being *wise* in the ability to know things, but it is the ability to have a personal relationship with God and live in Him and He in you.

*Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing. **1 Cor 13:1-3***

This is a hard saying and almost makes us want to say *Then who can be saved?*

Only those who are filled with Love can achieve this. Love is the reason that any of the *gifts* of God are viable. And of course we must realize just what Love is. *God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.* **1 John 4:16**

A Encounter of the Studying Kind

As an example of this, in the summer of 1984 I began to study with a small group of about 8 people led out by a retired minister who was a friend of my parents. He began to present an

idea of living a *righteous* life built upon faith. Now I thought that I had a fairly good grasp on the idea of righteousness and how a Christian is suppose to live in this world. But the more I began to look at the information being presented, I began to have a crisis of faith.

I was young and just married, looking for the answer to my life and just how I fit into the whole process. At this time the pastor began to have us read parts of scripture that most of us had never even imagined were in the Bible. We read things like; *He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. 1 John 3:8* and *Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God. Rom 8:8* These texts as well as so many others began to fly in the face of tradition that taught us that we are just human and cannot help but live by the sinful human nature.

Days turned into weeks and weeks turned into months as we all studied together and I began to set out to prove the human nature theory. I had grown up with this understanding and my parents had told me the story of mans redemption in the life, death and resurrection of the Messiah and how He had come to pay for our sins. But the more I sought to defend my religious beliefs the more I found what I wasn't looking for.

Our conversations at the studies held once a week at the pastors house took on a life of their own as many of us tried to defend our positions in church doctrine. But the more we stood our ground the less foundation we had to stand on. And as faithful tithe paying, baptized members of the church we could not imagine being in a position of disagreeing with what we had learned to place our faith in, *church*. And needless to say, rocking the boat was not what any of us had in mind to do, especially in the face of hierarchical authority and church doctrine and decree. But no matter what decision each person made when faced with having to make up their minds as to whether or not to continue down the road of studying more of what God had to say, I decided to stay with it. The veil was beginning to lift from my life and I would not have this new found freedom I was experiencing taken away from me. I wanted to know more.

A Spiritual Journey Begins

This was the beginning of what would turn out to be a eight year run of sleepless nights and days full of work and study (studying and working at the same time. Boy was I happy for the new technology of walkman cassette tape players.) It seemed that just like the peeling of an onion, that every moment another layer was being removed revealing new truths. Yet I so often felt as though every step I was taking forward that I found myself going back and starting all over again reading and looking deeper each time I went over the subject we were studying.

And though that was a hard lump to swallow I soon got use to that feeling, because I began to realize that every time I went over a point that it became more solidly implanted in my mind. And that worked out for me as I was a perfectionist and wanted everything in order so that I would never again be found holding the bag as I was at the beginning of my journey.

I soon came to the understanding why Christ said; *I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? John 3:12-13* I felt as though I had been told heavenly things in church and that I was somehow refusing to listen. Yet the more I read the more I saw a totally different picture; that it was not me that did not understand but that those who were teaching and preaching that did not understand, and then made me feel guilty if I could not tell others what had been told to me.

But before someone gets the idea that I must know everything and that everyone should just believe because I say so, let me say this: My journey is still in progress, but I have learned many things as a good student should and will learn if they study. I do hope that in your journey through this book that you too will begin to start your Spiritual Journey in God's Word and see the deeper relevant meaning of Salvation and God's Love for His creation; but even if you do not believe what is said in these pages I pray that at least a crack in the door to God's throne appears in your life and that you will become like the Bereans "*who searched the Scriptures daily*" to see if what Paul was saying was true. *Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true. Acts 17:10-11*

To Find the Truth is a Real Challenge

With a plethora of religions and religious bodies to choose from like some kind of religious buffet where you can pick or choose everything from soup to nuts (no pun intended) choosing a body of believers to belong to has become a overwhelming task to say the least. From conservative to liberal, from Bible pounding to self-help, whatever you're looking for, you may find.

Now this is not said to make it seem that there is no one left on planet earth that is honest in their endeavors to live-up to what they understand as truth, but I can speak of what all of us know as we step out our own front doors. Therefore to know the Truth and to find it presents a real challenge, but the Truth is there. It can be found on tables, nightstands, bookshelves and stores across the world; it's called the Bible; yet it is so often disregarded by so many who claim to believe in It.

One of the ways this shows up in a overwhelming manner is to attend a church where the preaching is equal to a counseling session with only a few mentions of God at most. It is also evidently clear to see that what many times is presented by the speaker is not what the speaker themselves even came up with; because all they had to do is use the internet that allows anyone to quickly print off a pre-written sermon. Religion has become easy and painless to all those involved. But this is an age old problem, it did not just arrive here yesterday. In fact, Timothy spoke of it in his day: *For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.* **2 Tim 4:3-4**

The reason for this book (and what I hope you will see) is that God's Word is too precious to just use up time in doing what makes us feel good or to see it as something that allows us to not have to spend much energy in being fed by it. It is Life and gives Life to those who are willing to give of their time and talent to dig deeper and experience God in their life.

There is a reason why many do not find the road that leads to God's throne, and it is this: *For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.* **Heb 4:12-13** Most do not want this in their life, for it means cutting away those things that have kept them bound to feelings and emotions that they have learned to live with. But to the true seeker this is a good thing to go through. Yet for many this is too much to ask of them because it puts them in a most uncomfortable position, of leaving behind what seems to them to be some very precious cargo, even to the point of possibly leaving loved one's behind in the process.

"Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to turn "a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law, a man's enemies will be the members of his own household.'" Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. **Matt 10:34-39**

Truth is a blessed thing, but not for those who do not want what has been hidden in their

heart to be revealed or to have to put away earthly things that have come in-between themselves and God.

God's Perspective on Truth

There is a common misconception that many hold about Truth and just how they view Scripture. The view for many is, that the Bible contradicts itself in many different chapters and verses throughout the book. Even among those who claim to believe in the book are groups of individuals who are having less and less faith that God's Word provides the absolute Truth on any given subject. Some have even declared boldly that they believe that Satan may have influenced certain portions of it through the men who penned the words.

But the book itself is no different than any other book written in any of the languages in this world. (But before anyone has a heart-attack who believes otherwise, let me explain myself.) Just as with any other book, you cannot get the WHOLE picture of what is being said unless you are willing to treat it with at least the same respect that you would treat any other book and read it in its entirety from beginning to end; and if you are going to try to see into its deeper meaning, then at least be willing to study it just as intensely, with just as much desire to know the Truth as you would any other book. In other words, be honest and true to yourself and those around you that when you say you understand what is written in its pages that you did not just pick up the book and read certain pieces of it and then try to make it appear as though you are now a knowledgeable student of the book and can point out truths or lies because of your wisdom of what lies within its pages.

Far too long people have done this very thing and then call their efforts in uncovering what then appears to be some kind of ignorant plot, fair and just. Do not misunderstand me, people can do whatever they want, whether it is right or wrong; but I am also a thinking person of sound mind who has the ability to add up 2+2 and know that it equals 4. I know that if I am going to speak on a subject that I had better be willing to know of what I speak before I open my mouth, because someone who has more wisdom or knowledge than I may be and most likely is very willing to point out my lack of knowledge and I will be found in a very uncomfortable position.

Yet as much as the Bible is like other books in some respect it is just as (if not more) different. It is different because it is written within the context of a Spiritual understanding. God is declared to be Spirit and those who wish to know His wisdom must then see through that Spirit to have a complete understanding of what He has spoken to those who wish to know

His Way and to read and understand. *But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."* **John 4:23-24** And Paul writes: *For we do not write you anything you cannot read or understand. And I hope that, as you have understood us in part, you will come to understand fully that you can boast of us just as we will boast of you in the day of the Lord Jesus.* **2 Cor 1:13-14** And the Messiah says: *But the one who received the seed that fell on good soil is the man who hears the word and understands it. He produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown."* **Matt 13:23** Those who are of *His seed* are those who not only hear but understand His Word. Then and only then can fruit be born. In other words, you cannot give what you do not have. So the true student of scripture knows that there is more to the study of God's Word than just simply reading it.

God Helps Those Who Help Themselves

'We must do our part and then God does His,' 'If you would just exert a little will power of your own...' This kind of talk cannot be found anywhere in scripture, yet out of the mouths of Christians, people hear this kind of theology.

One of the most prominent ideas that Christ presented in Scripture was that of His own position on this issue, that of His own strength He could do nothing. Here was God in the flesh admitting that He could do nothing unless the Father did it through Him. *I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.* **John 5:30** This reminds me of an old adage; *"Any kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and a house divided against itself will fall.* **Luke 11:17** But many have accepted the alternate form of living that demands that human will power to be exerted when the time arises. And sadly people have become indoctrinated by it as they have listened to leaders who are suppose to know the Truth who instead preach self-help sermons. So the theory of **letting go and letting God** becomes just some nice words on a plaque that you can purchase at the local Bible and book store.

The idea of a kingdom divided against itself becomes lost against such a background as this. And the audience who comes to church to hear the truth has a hard time making sense of what is being said. But who is going to question or is allowed to question the church leader? So a doctrine emerges that fills the gap left wide open by a divided teaching of God's character and the Kingdom He rules over that points out the seemingly ultimate love of God in the continual forgiveness for the faults and outright sins that emerge from a life of struggling to do good

(where human power continues to show its weakness in not being strong enough to win against the power of temptation.) This doctrine is called *grace*; and it is made to appear that God covers the sins and mistakes of His erring human children with His blood that was shed on Calvary. Yet it cannot be left unnoticed that the sinner is to *try hard* not to sin. But if God covers the sin anyway then what is the *trying* for? Paul speaks of this dilemma and makes it very clear that judgment is upon those who teach this kind of doctrine.

But if our unrighteousness brings out God's righteousness more clearly, what shall we say? That God is unjust in bringing his wrath on us? (I am using a human argument.) Certainly not! If that were so, how could God judge the world?

Someone might argue, "If my falsehood enhances God's truthfulness and so increases his glory, why am I still condemned as a sinner?" (a very good question)

Why not say-as we are being slanderously reported as saying and as some claim that we say-"Let us do evil that good may result"? THEIR CONDEMNATION IS DESERVED.

Rom 3:5-8

I have been told by church leaders (more times than I care to know) just what kind of people are to be found in the average church audience; they call them little lambs. And the idea is presented that these little lambs are not mature enough to be able to handle such deep issues as the Truth. So the idea is conceived that these little lambs need to be handled ever so gently as to not hurt their frail or child-like minds. But a problem arises at that point; when I revisit that same church 10 years later, the same milk that was being fed to them is still being fed to the same little lambs! The idea would have to be then, that little lambs NEVER grow up into mature sheep!

Paul had a struggle just like this and spoke of a need for maturity in God's Word, he even said that unless those who say they are God's children grow up that they then show that they are not *acquainted with the teaching about righteousness*; which would leave the teachers of these people in a very bad light of supposedly being teachers of the Truth who are suppose to be talking with mature sheep.

We have much to say about this, but it is hard to explain because you are slow to learn. In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching

about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil. Heb 5:11-14

Therefore ANY controversy or ANYTHING construed as negative is seen as out of place in such religious circles, yet even in the world where high-minded ideas that are presented in large corporations in front of large groups of corporate leaders with their theories and deep thinking can be and are presented in churches all over the world to those same little lambs (that takes both strategic and analytic thinking) that is presented as a better way to run today's mega churches while God's Word is seen as being a difficult if not totally a mysterious thing to comprehend. The church of today has used every kind of self-help theory and corporate techniques as well as fiscal-dynamic ideas that are grounded in controversy and argument, but never is Biblical controversy allowed to show its face. The idea appears to be that never is anyone to imagine that laity have a mind to think deeply about God, but yet can take on corporate issues and be CEO's, entrepreneurs and the like who must use thinking skills that cause many to look at them as having great wisdom and knowledge, but never are those same people to be seen as having the ability to use their same minds to look deep into the mind of God.

That kind of action shows the wild inconsistency among those who say one thing from a position of church authority while acting out something totally different in church. Christ and those like Him called this kind of action hypocrisy.

"Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of dead men's bones and everything unclean. In the same way, on the outside you appear to people as righteous but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness. Matt 23:27-28

Throughout time this kind of thinking of thinking as shown itself over and over again, and over and over again the people are found to become dependent on others to lead them. And sadly there is a unbalanced preoccupation with *guarding* the little lambs and treating them as though they do not have a brain cell in their heads that can take deep thought or controversy on any level, while at the same time handling complicated issues and controversy at home, school, work (and on a myriad of different levels) in their own personal or professional life.

Now, my goal here is to not convict you that what I have said is right (of course we all live this very thing every day of our lives) or that I have all the Truth (for that only comes by God working in each person's life) but I do hope to cause a desire within you to go to God and see in His Word what He has said and to see if it meets up to what you believe as truth in your life just as I was asked the question 'Why do you believe what you believe?' The Truth is freeing and it will set you free if just given the chance. Will you take that chance?



The Journey

Begins





The Scales of Justice

'It never hurts to shake in your boots a little bit when you think of God.' I couldn't believe what I was hearing as I sat listening to a church leader giving that mornings lesson study. He was inferring that God wants us to be afraid of Him when we look into His loving face (or at least as the song infers that people sing in church called *Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus*.) From hellfire and brimstone preaching to God's awesome throne-room judgment scene that has been implanted in people's minds, this is how many see God and that place called heaven where they say there is ultimate peace and where every tear is said to be cleared from the eye.

The message is all too clear as to how religion views the character of God through their doctrines of judgment and forgiveness. For some, this view of God's character is seen through His use of saints and even the virgin Mary as role players in the fate, protection and judgment of mankind. And with this view, a form of repentance and confession is taught so that the people offer up to God their prayers that keeps them attempting to turn God's anger away from the fact that they have sinned and are probably worthy of hell because of it. So their prayers are offered up on a continual basis (and for some) at specific times of the day as well as in certain bodily positions and pointed in a particular direction to turn the face of God to them in love instead of anger or judgment (usually they both mean the same thing.) But fortunately for those who hold to that belief system, they understand that God has a sliding grade scale as to which sins are really bad, which sins are bad, which sins are kinda bad, which sins are kinda not good, which sins are so-so and which sins God does not really even notice at all. Yet, still they wonder or fear of what position they will find themselves in at the great day of God's anger. So the prayers are offered up as an appeasement to God in hopeful expectation of being accepted into paradise at the judgment.

Has the Jury Reached their Verdict?

Karma, fate, and luck have made their way into the conversation of those who talk about God and supposedly believe that He is a all powerful being who loves them and wants them to be with Him in a place called paradise. But their version of God has taken on a mythological

view where He looks down from a high throne and may or may not become involved with the lives of mankind. They then throw into this mix that God did not create His children (Adam and Eve) with a completed brain full of what it would need to survive in this bold new world. Yet it is taught that God's creation were suppose to use their brains to survive and grow in this new world. In all of this God sits on His throne (as it is believed) and will judge them as He created them or maybe He will judge them by all the evil things they have done and make them pay for it.

And then another persona is added to this mix in the creation of Lucifer who would be called the devil.

Now mankind in their infant state of mind would become subject to temptation that they could never hope to overcome while still learning how to survive and use the brains (with their limited capacity) that God gave them. And at the same time free-will appears to be handed out on a limited basis so that all of what happens is as God wants it, thus mankind must just learn to roll-with-punch and make eternal decisions with their limited capacity to understand what a decision even is. Thus a conclusion is reached by the majority of a belief in God that all of life is pretty much beyond their understanding and they are just holding on for the ride of their life. So they claim that God is too big to understand with the use of their finite minds and only God Himself can comprehend it all. Thus it becomes a rational move to believe that even though God gives man laws to live by and then shows them how to live those laws out in their daily life's, that only a God could ever hope to do it; and so He offers forgiveness knowing that they cannot completely obey Him as He has asked. But then a real problem occurs.

In the Old Testament, God is seen as punishing those who disobey Him, even to the point of taking their lives. But why would God do that when He knows that they are just simple creations with only so much brain capacity and with an inherent disposition to sin due to their *human nature*? Did God forget what He had done by making man this way? So to find a calm in the midst of the storm a doctrine has been created that comes to the rescue, called *dispensation*. Now God is seen as having a changing character that acts one way and then at another time does a 180 degree turn and only requires man to be sorry for what he has done while the blood of Christ makes up for what they cannot do. And this is all said while believing that the character of God cannot be understood. But surely it appears as though they have it figure out, and if they have then what is the explanation given for hell when no one is going there? If God's verdict is FORGIVEN and He forgave His creation through His death, then no one is going to hell and the devil has a very lonely job watching the fires of hell and no one is ever going to show up.

Nothing Left Out

In my life I have worn many hats and one of them was when I worked as a anesthesia assistant. (I also served as a nurse's aide and trained for EMT.) In this capacity it became very evident to me that God created quite the human machine when He made man. And Just like a machine that needs to run at full proficiency, everything is where it needs to be and nothing is missing or left out that is needed to live, breath and think. This does not leave out the reality of what sin has done to God's creation but is a view into what God has done and with what care He did it.

One of the realities of the human machine is what happens when a piece of the puzzle comes up missing and how it effects that machine as a whole. This is no different in the animal kingdom. It can be very quickly seen that without the chicken to hatch the egg, there are no chickens. God did not miss that part nor billions of other parts that are needed to make the whole thing called creation work. In other words, nothing was left to some evolutionary process that may or may-not happen as it should. And isn't that something, that for evolution to work as it has been proposed that it does, it would have to have a foundation of information to cause things to happen so that not one thing would be missing in order for the machine to work correctly. And the same with God. In order for evolution or God to be the answer to this life, then a knowledge would have to exist that made sure that not ONE THING was left out or not put in its right place.

God is not an idiot nor forgetful, nor is He a person who leaves anything to chance, yet those who say they believe in Him hold to some or all of these opinions of Him. So science becomes (to those who see God as a person who changes His mind or leaves things to chance) an answer to the many holes left unfilled by Him. So man comes up with theories as the answers to this life as they perceive it, and they see God as being a far away personality until He is virtually invisible in the meaning of life. Thus Salvation and atonement and the many aspects of God get left to those who must go to school to get degrees and honors for being wise and learned in the ways of God through a system that licenses and gives accreditation and does not believe in God. Yet after all the learning that is done, men make remarks like *God's ways are not our ways* and *some things we will never understand in this life* that causes the simple hearers to believe that God is really one of those types of character we have mentioned and the best that any of them can ever hope for is to die peacefully in their sleep. But at the same time people are told to trust in that kind of a god. BUT WHAT ARE THEY TO TRUST IN if all or any of this is true?

Ends To a Means

What is so often missed in what many propose about God is the end of the story and what happened on the road getting there.

It's the age old question; Why am I here? Science with all of its theories that are intricately tied up with evolutionary thought, tries to make it seem that it has to do with the doctrine of the *survival of the fittest*. The thought of some kind of god in that scenario is only some kind of invisible force that is about as meaningful to our lives as a rock that just sits there.

But God has something to say about that.

*The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. **Rom 8:19-21***

Mankind has a pretty hard time believing this or understanding it, that all of what we see and experience is all about some point in time when the *children of God* will show up. But if this is true, then the rest of the book will agree with it. So let's see!

You Can't Teach an Old Dog New Tricks

Actually it would be better to say that you can't teach a dead dog new tricks.

People say that they go to church to learn more about God, even as they progress toward the end of their lives, and they admit with their actions that they are learning or trying to learn more all the time, but when a change is called for in scripture most change their tune quickly about learning new things. No longer do they imagine that they are there for learning but instead to just keep-on-keeping-on. And all of this is said while believing things about God that makes them imagine Him in a role as a priest whose job it is to hear confession 24/7 and beg for man's forgiveness. And as long as that is His job then it must be our duty to confess so He may do His part and receive our confession. For some this even takes on the aspect of the job being

so big that the Saints (Virgin Mary, Joseph, and others) are put into service to help God out. Those teaching these things even make their liturgy (worship style) appear to be following in the correct form of priesthood that God seems to present in His Word.

*"Bring the tribe of Levi and present them to Aaron the priest to assist him. They are to perform duties for him and for the whole community at the Tent of Meeting by doing the work of the tabernacle. They are to take care of all the furnishings of the Tent of Meeting, fulfilling the obligations of the Israelites by doing the work of the tabernacle. Give the Levites to Aaron and his sons; they are the Israelites who are to be given wholly to him. Appoint Aaron and his sons to serve as priests; **Num 3:6-10***

This priesthood at the time of the exodus of Israel was set on a foundation of rules of tithes and offerings, confession and prayers, washings and worship, mediation and atonement, and is imagined today as the official Biblical form of church and is taught and presented before the world as the truth. So people come to church (some by force others by duty or the need to show up at the right place to see and be seen or because they have always done so) and cannot imagine anything else or any other way that God's people are to worship Him.

But Paul speaks of this style of worship and the rules and regulations that it kept and presents a far more in-depth view of God's reasoning behind it all.

*Now the **first covenant** had regulations for worship and also an earthly sanctuary. A tabernacle was set up. In its first room were the lampstand, the table and the consecrated bread; this was called the Holy Place. Behind the second curtain was a room called the Most Holy Place, which had the golden altar of incense and the gold-covered ark of the covenant. This ark contained the gold jar of manna, Aaron's staff that had budded, and the stone tablets of the covenant. Above the ark were the cherubim of the Glory, overshadowing the atonement cover. But we cannot discuss these things in detail now.*

When everything had been arranged like this, the priests entered regularly into the outer room to carry on their ministry. But only the high priest entered the inner room, and that only once a year, and never without blood, which he offered for himself and for the sins the people had committed in ignorance. The Holy Spirit was showing by this

that the way into the Most Holy Place had not yet been disclosed as long as the first tabernacle was still standing. **THIS IS AN ILLUSTRATION FOR THE PRESENT TIME, INDICATING THAT THE GIFTS AND SACRIFICES BEING OFFERED WERE NOT ABLE TO CLEAR THE CONSCIENCE OF THE WORSHIPER. THEY ARE ONLY A MATTER OF FOOD AND DRINK AND VARIOUS CEREMONIAL WASHINGS-EXTERNAL REGULATIONS APPLYING UNTIL THE TIME OF THE REFORMATION** (the Messiah.)

When Christ came as high priest of the good things that are already here, he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not man-made, that is to say, **NOT A PART OF THIS CREATION**. He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place **ONCE FOR ALL** by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption. The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so that they are outwardly clean. How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God! **Heb 9:1-14**

That system of worship with its mediation on behalf of the people, met its fulfillment in Jesus Christ. All the liturgy, all the rituals, all the dogma and decree came to an end (met its fulfillment) at the coming of the Messiah. All of what had been done in the Levitical worship service came to an end when Christ became the *lamb slain from the foundation of the world*. No more confession and sacrifice, no more mediation for sins committed, no more dealing with sin at all, for now it was all fulfilled in His life, death and resurrection.

It was necessary, then, for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified with these sacrifices, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ did not enter a man-made sanctuary that was only a copy of the true one; he entered heaven itself, now to appear for us in God's presence. **NOR DID HE ENTER HEAVEN TO OFFER HIMSELF AGAIN AND AGAIN**, the way the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood that is not his own. Then Christ would have had to suffer many times since the creation of the world. But now **HE HAS APPEARED ONCE FOR ALL AT THE END OF THE AGES TO DO AWAY WITH SIN BY THE SACRIFICE OF HIMSELF**. Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, so **CHRIST WAS SACRIFICED ONCE TO TAKE AWAY THE SINS** of many people; and **HE WILL APPEAR A SECOND TIME, NOT TO BEAR SIN**, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him. **Heb 9:23-28**



Wars, earthquakes, catastrophes of unimaginable proportions, people's hearts failing them for fear of what is just upon them, these pictures and much more are offered up as a view of what will happen at the end of the world; and the Bible is made to appear as a crystal ball to view these things before they happen. In that kind of thinking Nostradamus and Da Vinci can't even come close to what is thought to be seen in these pages. And from pulpits all over the world these end time events are presented in a way that helps to promote a concept of worship that deals with a judgment to come and the need to seek forgiveness before it all ends. All of this is built upon a foundation of what has been called apocalyptic preaching, while all the while Christ speaks of that day of judgment from a mindset of spiritual things that are not of this world.

*Jesus said, "For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind." **John 9:39***

*But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment: in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me; in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; and **IN REGARD TO JUDGMENT, BECAUSE THE PRINCE OF THIS WORLD NOW STANDS CONDEMNED.***

John 16:7-11

All of a sudden we realize that some questions arise as to the trust of Scripture to mean just what it says and as to whether the Messiah Himself knew what He was talking about? And once we come to a decision about what we see on this issue it will determine what direction we travel in looking at God and how He talks to His children and just what form of worship He requires. But at the same time, if the Messiah knew what He meant and He spoke an understandable message to the people then we may see that what many have imagined of this issue has been misapplied and misunderstood and that God's view of the judgment has a far greater meaning than about what is to come or putting man on trial, instead it is about the removal of what has bound man to a life of ducking and dodging in order to escape the flying arrows of the devil. In fact it is about defeating Satan and revealing the lie he has told from the

beginning that God does not mean what He says. Just as he told Eve that God's Word is left to interpretation, that God speaks in riddles and coded talk, so men teach about Bible interpretation because God cannot surely mean exactly what He says.

Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, "HAS GOD INDEED SAID, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?"

And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.'"

*Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." **Gen 3:1-5***

'What it really means is.....' 'God really says'.....' These words are said continually to present an idea that the speaker has some God-given information that is not in the Scripture but has been revealed to them (or the organization they work for or are licensed through) and somehow the simple laity are never to question them or the reality of an ever growing number of churches that keep popping up like weeds in the grass with each group having their interpretation or opinion of what God has said and causing the laity to look at them as God's voice on earth. Thus in the end, issues like the judgment and just what kind of worship God has called for are not allowed to be seen as God has spoken it but instead through interpretations and human opinions.

*Jesus said, "This voice was for your benefit, not mine. **NOW** is the time for judgment on this world; **NOW** the prince of this world will be driven out. But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself." He said this to show the kind of death he was going to die. **John 12:30-33***

If this is true what the Messiah said about His death (and His death did not take place just two minutes ago or in some future time) then the *judgment* has already taken place and *the prince of this world has been driven out* just as He said.

From pulpits all over the world it has been taught that even a child can understand God's Word if they wish; but if that is true then what becomes of the expensive education that so many think they need to become ministers who are suppose to be wise in God's Word? None of course! But that does not agree with tradition or church doctrine that speaks of the need for leaders and ministers to guide their flocks and herds to pay their respect and their tithes and offerings to the leaders and ministers and to recognize the high learning of these men and women.

Yet when all is said and done, we are left with what to do with what God has spoken. And the questions arise; Is it true, and does It really mean what It says? God has spoken His Word and it is left to us to decide whether or not we can trust it or whether it takes thousands of dollars spent on religious studies to be able to know what He says.

Time for a Shift

Its kinda like a manual transmission in a car, if you leave it in first gear for too long you will burn it out. So now it's time to shift into another gear and give God our undivided attention just as we have given to others who have taught us their understanding of what God has spoken. If we will allow this to happen (though it may be one of the hardest things we ever try to do) then we will see what He has said and begin to understand what has been happening since the beginning of creation and up to the point of judgment and beyond and see the work of God in all its brilliance.

*Jesus answered, "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent." **John 6:29***

It's almost hard to believe that it could really be that simple against the backdrop of the many doctrines in the world that speak of the work a person must do in order for God to see them as worthy of being given eternal life. The list of all the things that have been said about what it means to obey God is very, very long and is backed up with the decrees that define each group that each doctrine belongs to. Yet when the Messiah spoke of His work, He revealed His understanding of what the work of God is and how He Himself had accomplished that work in His life.

After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed:

"Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. **I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do.** And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.

"**I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world.** They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you. For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me. I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours. All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory has come to me through them. I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name—the name you gave me—so that they may be one as we are one. While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled.

"I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them. **I have given them your word** and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. **They are not of the world, even as I am not of it.** Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. **As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world.** For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.

"My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. **I have given them the glory that you gave me,** that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

"Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world. **John 17:1-24**



Christians are often taught that Gods Word has two basic sides to it, one side is seen as *physical*, meaning that what is being referred to is to be *literally* understood while the other side is seen as *spiritual* which means it is left up to interpretation. But these two views or aspects are as diverse as the religions that dot the landscape. Therefore as people change from one church to another (much the same way as they change their clothes) their understanding of what is literal and or spiritual is in constant flux.

Once again God has something to say about this issue.

Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council. He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him."

*In reply Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, **NO ONE CAN SEE THE KINGDOM OF GOD UNLESS HE IS BORN AGAIN.**"*

"How can a man be born when he is old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born!"

*Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, **NO ONE CAN ENTER THE KINGDOM OF GOD UNLESS HE IS BORN OF WATER AND THE SPIRIT. FLESH GIVES BIRTH TO FLESH, but the SPIRIT GIVES BIRTH TO SPIRIT.** You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."*
John 3:1-8

In the conversation with Nicodemus Jesus pointed out what it meant to be a part of the kingdom of God and just what the kingdom was. And Nicodemus, as many, had seen the miracles being done by Jesus and he weighed them out by sight instead of seeing the real or Spiritual meaning of the words he knew well from his Pharisaical upbringing . So Jesus shifted Nicodemus's thinking into a place that went beyond where Nicodemus had gone before that required him to leave behind the physical world that he could see with his natural eyes and now see with his minds eye; He drew Nicodemus away from a religious earthly view of kingdoms made of brick and mortar to a heavenly understanding of His Spiritual kingdom.

*Once, having been asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, "The kingdom of God does not come with your careful observation, nor will people say, 'Here it is,' or 'There it is,' **BECAUSE THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS WITHIN YOU.**" Luke 17:20-21*

This is not said as some kind of metaphor and neither is the Messiah speaking in riddles. He meant just what He said and said just what He meant. This is His Way, His thoughts of His Kingdom this is not anything of this world that man had conceived of or built, it is a kingdom built within the heart. This is in agreement with Christ's prayer for those who would believe in Him, that they would be one in Him as He was with His Father in His Kingdom.

*...I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, **JUST AS YOU ARE IN ME AND I AM IN YOU.** May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. John 17:20-21*

And it also agrees with what He said to His disciples describing His relationship with them and with His Father.

*Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. On that day you will realize that **I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.** John 14:19-21*



I was very interested in the stories that missionaries who had come back from various mission fields presented in church about their many experiences in foreign lands. And one of those experiences was of casting out demons in those who had become possessed. It always surprised me as to the varied reactions within the audience to these stories. Some believed and praised God while others pooh-poohed it and said that idea of casting out devil was only for the time of Jesus and His disciples, while others might have agreed with the stories but had an idea in their mind as to just how it should have been carried out instead of how it was done. But no matter the reaction, the obvious is always the same; demons seemingly can be in a person and or possess a person but God in His infinite power cannot. Thus demons appear to have more

power and abilities than God does.

Of course this kind of belief follows along with the idea that sin (the power Satan has over a person) is so strong that no one can completely overcome it. So in the end, no matter what God says about sin (and His authority over it) and how we are to be victors in the war over sin, instead *'it will always be a part of our everyday lives and we might as well just get use to it.'* This idea then removes any concept of Christ really living in us and us in Him. Therefore by accepting this thinking it is seen that God must have been speaking in metaphorical language about overcoming sin and thus left it up to us to interpret His words as to their real meaning. And while each interpreter has his or her idea of what each thing means that God has spoken, then God is to be imagined as giving one person one idea while giving another person an equally opposite concept or doctrine so that each stays separate in their spiritual walk while serving the same God that promotes Himself as *One Lord, One Faith and One Baptism*. But the only way this kind of thinking can be accepted as truth is to allow someone else's ideas or doctrines to replace the Word of God. But for the one who actually lives in God (no matter what any man has to say about it) they know that God means what He says, and when He says the kingdom is within them, then His kingdom is within them. We may choose not to listen to this or even outright deny His Life within us, but that does not change what He has said. Yet His kingdom is one of Spirit and Truth and therefore it is left up to us to accept the Truth over what anyone thinks or demands even through officially voted on as a accepted doctrine.



Ashes to Ashes Dust to Dust

'Now you are going too far and spiritualizing scripture!'

This is said on the foundation of church doctrine against anything that would require a new view of currently accepted truth. But of course those who say such things could be correct, so we must see what God says no matter what anyone else thinks.

*The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, **BECAUSE THEY ARE SPIRITUALLY DISCERNED.** The spiritual man makes judgments about all things, but he himself is not subject to any man's judgment:*

*"For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ. **1 Cor 2:14-16***

Only Spiritual things need to be Spiritually discerned; therefore the things of the flesh, or the things of this creation (which are not Spirit) are not Spiritual. This is what Christ said to Nicodemus; **FLESH GIVES BIRTH TO FLESH, BUT THE SPIRIT GIVES BIRTH TO SPIRIT.** This is why Paul speaks about the flesh and its inability to inherit the kingdom of God.

*I declare to you, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. **1 Cor 15:50***

This is also what Christ presented to Nicodemus about being born again: **"NO ONE CAN SEE THE KINGDOM OF GOD UNLESS HE IS BORN AGAIN."** And being born again is all about seeing the Word of God through spiritual eyes and dying to sin (the world) and rising as a new creation in God.

*In him you were also circumcised, in **THE PUTTING OFF OF THE SINFUL NATURE**, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ, **HAVING BEEN BURIED WITH HIM IN BAPTISM AND RAISED WITH HIM THROUGH YOUR FAITH** in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.*

*When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross. And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross. **Col 2:10-15***

So the difference of being born of the flesh or being born of the Spirit, is the idea of leaving behind this world and its demand of physical or literalistic knowledge and the sin that goes with it, and living in God instead. It is about leaving behind the sinful nature in which no one can please God and living a victorious life in Him who is Spirit and Truth.

*Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God. **Rom 8:7-8***

In other words its all about dying, dying to ourselves and living in God and living for God. We can see this when we understand that living in Him is living as He lives, in other words; *Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect. **Matt 5:47-48***

This is achievable when we look at how God lives and that living in Him is like the saying 'when in Rome do as the Romans do.' We may admit to this saying on a earthly level by acting like those around us so we can *fit-in*, but will we admit to it on a Spiritual level and start acting like our Lord and Savior if we say we live in Him? But, if we admit to this then we must die to so much tradition and religion that teaches us that we are just faulty humans born into a literal sinful nature and bound for life.

Leave Them in the Dust

When I was in elementary school I was given a used book for one of my classes, in it the original owner summed up their feelings about what was in the pages, they wrote; *'If there is ever a flood just stand on this book, it is so dry it will float forever.'* The Bible has become that way for many and thus the understanding that they need is practically null and void, and because there is so little growth among the people the pastors keep going over the same ground teaching the little lambs the same principals that should have been left behind a long time ago. Paul had this same problem in his day.

*Since you died with Christ to the basic principles of this world, why, as though you still belonged to it, do you submit to its rules: "Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!"? These are all destined to perish with use, because they are based on human commands and teachings. Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence. **Col 2:20-23***

In today's language it would be said like this: *Since you died, as it were, with Christ and this has set you free from following the world's ideas of how to be saved-by doing good and obeying various rules --why do you keep right on following them anyway, still bound by such rules as not eating, tasting, or even touching certain foods? Such rules are mere human teachings, for food was made to be eaten and used up. These rules may seem good, for rules of this kind require strong devotion and are humiliating and hard on the body, but they have no effect when it comes to conquering a person's evil thoughts and desires. They only make him proud. **Col 2:20-23***

Dogma and rules may seem good on the surface, but in the end it is just mans determination or interpretation of what is right and good. These things have no place in God's kingdom for there is only One Ruler there who rules by only one Law, God alone; and His rule is not based upon the idea that the majority rules. So there are no committees or sub-committees to take a vote and no chairman that guides them.

One of the problems with mans thinking, of making rules and decrees that make people imagine that through them the way is opened to get into heaven, is that as time progresses on

and people change the way they used to do things that the decrees no longer fit the day and hour the people are living in. So over and over again the rules have to be modified and re-taught to the people which causes the little lambs in the audience to never grow up and mature into real sheep that are able to take the next step forward in their relationship with God. Paul saw this problem and refused to fall prey to the traditional never ending cycle of teaching the same things over and over again to the people and instead called for a maturity to be reached by those who claimed to be God's children.

LET US STOP** going over the same old ground again and again, always teaching those first lessons about Christ. Let us go on instead to other things and **become mature in our understanding, as strong Christians ought to be. Surely we don't need to speak further about the foolishness of trying to be saved by being good, or about the necessity of faith in God; you don't need further instruction about baptism and spiritual gifts and the resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment.** The Lord willing, we will go on now to other things. **Heb 6:1-3

Many ask: *But if we quit preaching about those things then what will we preach about?* Good question! These things have been preached for so long that certain parts of peoples Bible have been worn out and they have had to purchase new ones; while at the same time other parts of the same book have never even been touched. And sadly some Bibles are no longer used at all because the speaker never requires the people to even look inside its cover because they tell the people everything they want them to know without them needing to investigate. Though that kind preaching is wrong, it is done continually in the face of Truth and needful investigation to see if what the person is saying is true.

So why would this happen in a day and age of so much information where anything can be known at just the push of a few buttons or by simply reading God's Word for themselves? And why do ministers continue to preach the same things over and over again instead of going on to maturity?

Please Stop Rocking the Boat!

I will never forget talking with a minister in my beginning years of searching God's Word and

he told me about his experience of trying to preach Truth to people. *'I have done that and found that people will actually get up and walk out of the meeting and even take over the service and tell me that I will never preach another sermon there unless I preach what they want to hear.'* In my early years I was shocked by this kind of story until I saw this happen with my own eyes. Then when it happened to me I recalled what scripture says about this very thing.

Now go and write down this word of mine, so that it will stand until the end of time, forever and forever, as an indictment of Israel's unbelief. For if you don't write it, they will claim I never warned them. "Oh no," they'll say, "you never told us that!" For they are stubborn rebels. They tell my prophets, "Shut up-we don't want any more of your reports!" Or they say, "Don't tell us the truth; tell us nice things; tell us lies. Forget all this gloom; we've heard more than enough about your 'Holy One of Israel' and all he says." Isa 30:8-10

A minister who received a call to work at a new church moved his family and began his ministry with these new brothers and sisters in Christ. But it did not take long before there was a reaction to his preaching by those who felt they owned the church and were the ones who decide for the others what they should hear. It became very clear to them that this new minister liked to preach more of the Bible then they were use to hearing or wanted to hear, and that would not do. So the day came when the head elder and his cohorts called the local conference office and told the ministerial director that if that man ever showed his face again at that church, they would kill him. So come that day, they armed themselves and stood at the front doors of the church and waited to see if he would show up.

This all seems so preposterous in a day of *kinder and gentler thinking* where God's people are involved who are supposedly filled with the love and compassion of their Lord and Savior.

It almost seems that at this point of the story we should be hearing the theme song from the movie *'Deliverance'* like this must be some kind of thing that happened in a back-woods out of the way kind of place. But it did not.

Jesus used some words to describe these kind of people: **rebellious, ignorant, blind and dead**, none of which would seem to be a good thing to desire, but for many it is the only way they know how to be. And this kind of action has brought about reactions that are not those kind of things a child of God should do. Yet even Jesus ran into this very situation Himself as He was preaching and teaching the people.

Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. I know you are Abraham's descendants. Yet you are ready to kill me, because you have no room for my word. I am telling you what I have seen in the Father's presence, and you do what you have heard from your father."

John 8:34-38

It appears as though Truth is rarely ever popular with the people and their leaders; in fact death has often been the lot of those who tell the Truth in unerring lines. Politics and the lies that are its foundation are easily acceptable to the people, while Truth is and forever will be unacceptable to those who do not wish to have revealed what they have done and are doing and have it brought to the surface for all to see. The real sad part of this is what David writes about who it is that does not want to hear the truth.

*If an enemy were insulting me, I could endure it; if a foe were raising himself against me, I could hide from him. But it is you, a man like myself, my companion, my close friend, with whom I once enjoyed sweet fellowship as we walked with the throng at the house of God. **Ps 55:12-14***

Just like David, Jesus had His enemies, and He spoke about them and where the war for truth finds its battleground.

*"Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to turn "a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law, a man's enemies will be the members of his own household.'" **Matt 10:34-36***

History has proven this fact to be true over and over again, that the enemies of the Truth are always those who are on the inside. Just as Israel was their own worst enemy, so Christianity has followed in that same path today. All for the sake of seeing church leadership as being

God's representatives on earth, people have blindly followed what is preached to them and labeled it as truth (even to the point of being willing to turn in their friends and or neighbors to be tortured or killed.) And this would be a logical thing to happen if in fact what was told by so many leaders was the truth. And one of the most obvious lies that has been promoted which allows for this kind of thing to happen has not been dealt with since the days of Paul who seemed to have this same problem with so-called church leadership.

*When Peter came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he was clearly in the wrong. Before **CERTAIN MEN CAME FROM JAMES**, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But when they arrived, he began to draw back and separate himself from the Gentiles because he was afraid of those who belonged to the circumcision group. The other **Jews JOINED HIM IN HIS HYPOCRISY**, so that by their hypocrisy even Barnabas was led astray.*

WHEN I SAW THAT THEY WERE NOT ACTING IN LINE WITH THE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL, I said to Peter in front of them all, "You are a Jew, yet you live like a Gentile and not like a Jew. How is it, then, that you force Gentiles to follow Jewish customs?"

Gal 2:11-14

A war did not break out and neither did Paul hate Peter or James and there was no excommunication that took place nor a trial or any burning at the stake, just a Spiritual disagreement that in time brought all the disciples into the unity of the Truth. Yet it is to be seen that Paul did not back down or compromise for the sake of unity of the faith as so many have done and are willing to do under the many pressures that are pressed upon the one who wishes to see God's Word and what it says.

But this has been a constant dilemma with many who have or would like to ask a question or propose a possible answer to a scenario offered up by someone with a perceived rank of authority that overshadows those under them. How many times I have heard people say in private and whispered tones; *Ya, I would like to say something but ya know, you just don't stand up in the middle of a sermon and say something while the speaker is talking, and who am I to say anything?* And in the end the truth is left up to what the speaker is saying no matter what God has to say about it.

The Ground is Level Over Here

Israel made a big mistake in their calculation of man over God. They assumed that if they could put a man into a position of power as king over them that they would be like all the other nations who seemed to be strong and mighty (and at the same time no longer be the odd ones who seem to have no real leadership other than a god that was invisible.)

But what they failed to see is what God had attempted to do with their fathers in the exodus from Egypt. He promised their fathers that He would guide them, protect them, feed them and keep them from harm; He even showed them with mighty miracles that He could do this for them. Pharaoh and his military force were destroyed, water came from a rock, the cloud kept them from the scorching sun and was their light at night. He gave them food to eat and a prophet to teach them, but in the end it was not enough. Satisfaction was not achieved as far as the people were concerned and the voice of God was loud and scary for them. So God gave them laws they could not live by and a worship style that could not do what He wanted to do for them. And instead of being lead to Him by all the rituals and furnishings and human priesthood that He gave them so they would come to Him (be it at a very slow pace) they instead began to abuse the system of sacrifice and use it as a crutch to sin while imagining themselves as being forgiven and as God's special people. Instead of overcoming their sinfulness or disbelief in God they continued to sacrifice and see human priests as the way to salvation without ever realizing that sacrifice and confession was not what God wanted in the first place.

*"The multitude of your sacrifices--what are they to me?" says the LORD. "I have more than enough of burnt offerings, of rams and the fat of fattened animals; I have no pleasure in the blood of bulls and lambs and goats. When you come to appear before me, who has asked this of you, this trampling of my courts? Stop bringing meaningless offerings! Your incense is detestable to me. New Moons, Sabbaths and convocations--I cannot bear your evil assemblies. Your New Moon festivals and your appointed feasts my soul hates. They have become a burden to me; I am weary of bearing them. When you spread out your hands in prayer, I will hide my eyes from you; even if you offer many prayers, I will not listen. Your hands are full of blood; wash and make yourselves clean. Take your evil deeds out of my sight! **Isa 1:11-16***

Yet despite how un-tasteful it is for God to hear lengthy prayers and confessions of peoples

sins that they are not really sorry about anyway and are already thinking about how they are going to sin again because they are just human and therefore sin naturally, and no matter God's desire for the people to live clean and be free from evil, so called believers today act just like Israel before and see only what is presented before them as the way to heaven and eternal life no matter what God has to say on the subject.

Samuel ran into this very issue when king Saul took the position of doing things his way instead of what God had commanded.

*But Samuel replied: "Does the LORD delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of the LORD? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams. For rebellion is like the sin of divination, and arrogance like the evil of idolatry. **1 Sam 15:22-23***

It really should move us to understand the Truth so we don't continue in the same way that others have traveled in their disbelief and denial of what God wants for His children.

But if sacrifice is not what God wants, then why did He set the system before Israel of laws and decrees so that so many would follow that pattern today in the setting up of church with its tithes and offerings and hierarchical structured governance? What was it all for and what are we to do?



From Shadows to Light

Many see the Mosaic law as something God did to show humanity just how much they have missed the mark in obeying Him. They imagine that it was given to show man that they could not really keep it anyway and were bound to break them. But in the rush to work within this scenario, those who hold to this belief ignore those who lived before the law was given and see why God would wait for over 1600 years before actually giving the law.

Paul answers this quandary (but not with the kind of answer that most are looking for.) He states that the law was given because of unbelief and that the Levitical system of worship (the Aaronic priesthood) was only a shadow of the One that was to come, the Seed of Abraham, Emmanuel, *God with us*.

*Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. **THESE ARE A SHADOW OF THE THINGS THAT WERE TO COME; THE REALITY, HOWEVER, IS FOUND IN CHRIST.** Col 2:16,17*

*Every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices, and so it was necessary for this one also to have something to offer. If he were on earth, he would not be a priest, for there are already men who offer the gifts prescribed by the law. **THEY SERVE AT A SANCTUARY THAT IS A COPY AND SHADOW OF WHAT IS IN HEAVEN.** Heb 8:3-5*

THE LAW IS ONLY A SHADOW** of the good things that are coming-**NOT THE REALITIES THEMSELVES.** For this reason **IT CAN NEVER, BY THE SAME SACRIFICES REPEATED ENDLESSLY YEAR AFTER YEAR, MAKE PERFECT THOSE WHO DRAW NEAR TO WORSHIP.** If it could, would they not have stopped being offered? For the worshipers would have been cleansed once for all, and would no longer have felt guilty for their sins. But **THOSE SACRIFICES ARE AN ANNUAL REMINDER OF SINS,** because it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. **Heb 10:1-4

*The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. The Scripture does not say "and to seeds," meaning many people, but "and to your seed," **MEANING ONE PERSON, WHO IS CHRIST.** What I mean is this: **THE LAW, INTRODUCED 430 YEARS LATER, DOES NOT SET ASIDE THE COVENANT PREVIOUSLY ESTABLISHED BY GOD AND THUS DO***

AWAY WITH THE PROMISE. *For if the inheritance depends on the law, then it no longer depends on a promise; but God in his grace gave it to Abraham through a promise.*

WHAT, THEN, WAS THE PURPOSE OF THE LAW? IT WAS ADDED BECAUSE OF TRANSGRESSIONS UNTIL THE SEED TO WHOM THE PROMISE REFERRED HAD COME.
Gal 3:16-19

And just who are those who transgress God's laws? Paul tells us who they are.

*We know that the law is good if one uses it properly. **WE ALSO KNOW THAT LAW IS MADE NOT FOR THE RIGHTEOUS** but for lawbreakers and rebels, the ungodly and sinful, the unholy and irreligious; for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers, for adulterers and perverts, for slave traders and liars and perjurers-and for whatever else is contrary to the sound doctrine that conforms to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which he entrusted to me. **1 Tim 1:8-11***

The church structure of today is built upon the foundation of law and ritual upheld by tithes and offerings. Through its many holy prayers and seeming devotion, the church presents a picture that is in disagreement with Scripture. They teach of Abrahams seed being the nation of Israel and that future events show the fulfillment of scripture (without any concern for what God has said) and hold to the opinion that the law was done away with at the cross (and yet are now promoting its return to society to bring about some kind of order out of all the chaos they see around them.) That alone is truly a dichotomy, but to add to that, the strange part is that if the law was done away with then why is the system that stood on it as its foundation (the Levitical priesthood) still being used to present a picture of what church and its worship service is suppose to be? And then this picture is presented to the world while God speaks the opposite.

*If perfection could have been attained through the Levitical priesthood (**FOR ON THE BASIS OF IT THE LAW WAS GIVEN TO THE PEOPLE**), why was there still need for another priest to come-one in the order of Melchizedek, not in the order of Aaron?*

Heb 7:11

Regardless of religious faith or any denomination, this is a issue that presents a real problem in what is preached today from church pulpits and Bible classes around the world. The Levitical system of worship which deals with confession of sins and sacrifice is how God is seen in His role of a father confessor hearing confessions and continually forgiving (and covering the sins confessed with His bloodshed on the cross.) This is accepted by the masses despite the reality that Christ is a Priest in the order of Melchizedek not Levi. In other words, Christ is not a confessional priest nor is in charge of a temple/sanctuary set upon law, dogma or decree. His service is as Ruler and King, not as a daily priest, and His Priesthood is not even of this earth!

*If perfection could have been attained through the Levitical priesthood (for on the basis of it the law was given to the people), **WHY WAS THERE STILL NEED FOR ANOTHER PRIEST TO COME-ONE IN THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK, NOT IN THE ORDER OF AARON? FOR WHEN THERE IS A CHANGE OF THE PRIESTHOOD, THERE MUST ALSO BE A CHANGE OF THE LAW.** He of whom these things are said belonged to a different tribe, and **NO ONE FROM THAT TRIBE HAS EVER SERVED AT THE ALTAR.** For it is clear that **OUR LORD DESCENDED FROM JUDAH, AND IN REGARD TO THAT TRIBE MOSES SAID NOTHING ABOUT PRIESTS.** And what we have said is even more clear if another priest like Melchizedek appears, **ONE WHO HAS BECOME A PRIEST NOT ON THE BASIS OF A REGULATION AS TO HIS ANCESTRY BUT ON THE BASIS OF THE POWER OF AN INDESTRUCTIBLE LIFE. Heb 7:11-16***

Many demand that Christ has a ever bleeding heart that covers the sins of those who confess to Him in prayer. This version of the story of the cross is taught even though Paul speaks of a once-and-for-all sacrifice that is not built on a continual shedding of blood for mans sins.

*The death he died, he died to sin **ONCE FOR ALL;**... **Rom 6:9-10***

*Unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, **AND THEN FOR THE SINS OF THE PEOPLE.** He sacrificed for their sins **once for all** when he offered himself. **Heb 7:27***

What's Going On?

It's always amazing to realize what each person sees when they are looking at the same thing. My wife and I are a case in point, she can look at the same house that I am looking at and yet not see the beautiful old car sitting in the driveway, but instead she sees the ornate wood trim or how the front door color doesn't go well with the over-all colors of the home. Each of us has trained our minds to perceive certain things so that when we view something we are drawn to those things.

This is much the same with our view of God, in that whatever we have trained our minds to be drawn to, that is what we will see. This is the scenario that is played out in our minds as each of us thinks of what our Lord and Savior is doing for mankind (and it is left up to what has been impregnated upon the mind imagining God's role in man's salvation.) Therefore God is seen by most as a judge that is ready to bring down His gavel in His decision made in the great judgment scene in heaven, while at the same time He is seen as a priest waiting to hear confession and dole out penance for the poor sinner, as well as being seen as a continual bleeding lamb or as someone continually hanging on a cross.

No matter what each person sees in their minds eye, the Truth is what counts; and each person makes a choice as to what determines their understanding of that Truth. And for those who choose the Word of God to lead them than God speaks through His Word of what the Truth really is.

*Jesus answered, "I am the Way and the Truth and the Life. **John 14:6***

This Way is the Door to the sheep pen that those who belong to His fold must pass through, which is the only Way to the throne of God.

"I tell you the truth, the man who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. The man who enters by the gate is the shepherd of his sheep. The watchman opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger's voice." Jesus used this figure of speech, but they did not understand what he was telling them.

Therefore Jesus said again, "I tell you the truth, **I AM THE GATE FOR THE SHEEP**. All who ever came before me were thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. **I AM THE GATE**; whoever **ENTERS THROUGH ME** will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. **John 10:1-10**

Paul speaks of this Way and how we must pass through it (the Door/Curtain) to come boldly before the throne of God.

Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, **BY A NEW AND LIVING WAY OPENED FOR US THROUGH THE CURTAIN, THAT IS, HIS BODY**, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.

Heb 10:19-22

Most believers today imagine that through the Levitical system of worship of hierarchical structure and church governance, that it is the doorway to God's throne. And in that kind of setting, mediation (someone who stands in the place of God for the laity) is seen as needful and commanded by God to do so. But when the whole story is known, a different picture emerges that shows how each individual not only has the right to enter God's presence without a mediator but also helps us to understand what God's mediation is.

For there is one God and **ONE MEDIATOR** between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men-the testimony given in its proper time.

1 Tim 2:5-6

This mediation is spoken of as a NEW covenant (but not one built upon the old system of rituals, culture and sacrificial confession.)

*But the ministry Jesus has received is as **SUPERIOR TO THEIRS AS THE COVENANT OF WHICH HE IS MEDIATOR IS SUPERIOR TO THE OLD ONE, AND IT IS FOUNDED ON BETTER PROMISES.** Heb 8:6*

The old Levitical system of worship with its sacrifice, tithes, offerings, confession and so many rituals, **COULD NOT** continue in the face of the new covenant that was not built upon the blood of animals or laws to remind men of what they need to do. The new covenant was of a heavenly mediation that was not based upon a go-between (a human acting as a doorway to God) but that of *The Doorway* that was opened and each could see clearly the way to the throne of God, and the Way has a name, His name is **THE WORD OF GOD, THE WAY, THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE**. Even though man may teach their version of what mediation is in their minds, God's Word reveals the Truth on the subject.

*What, then, was the purpose of the law? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come. The law was put into effect through angels by a mediator. A MEDIATOR, HOWEVER, DOES NOT REPRESENT JUST ONE PARTY; **BUT GOD IS ONE.** Gal 3:19-20*

One of the basic principles in Scripture is the fact of God being One, not many. And as we have seen, God's Word is Spiritually understood; and here, just as in everything God says in His Word, is the real or Spiritual view spoken by God about Himself, that He is One; and with One (that is one party/one individual) mediation takes on a whole new meaning.

One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?"

*"The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: '**HEAR, O ISRAEL, THE LORD OUR GOD, THE LORD IS ONE.** Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these."*

*"Well said, teacher," the man replied. "**YOU ARE RIGHT IN SAYING THAT GOD IS ONE AND THERE IS NO OTHER BUT HIM.** To love him with all your heart, with all your*

*understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices." **Mark 12:28-33***

I do not need to have telepathic powers to know what goes on when this issue is brought up, to hear the heart rate increase and see the blood pressure building; so I would like to say at this point: Please do not grab your guns just yet, let's see where this goes before you decide to shoot me or burn me at the stake of doctrine.

God's Word Is True

*What if some did not have faith? Will their lack of faith nullify God's faithfulness? Not at all! LET GOD BE TRUE, and every man a liar. As it is written: "So that you may be proved right when you speak and prevail when you judge." **Rom 3:3-4***

Mans faithfulness (or lack of it) and their demands is not the scale we are to use to weigh out God's Word (even though many do this every moment of the day) whether it is in the world through justice and law or whether it is in church through doctrines and decrees. Truth only comes by One and through One, and He is the One, the Way, the Truth and the Life and the Light of man.

Once this issue is settled in our minds and we come to the point of letting God mean just what He says, then we see that He is just what He says He is, One, not many just as He said through Moses and Timothy.

*Did any people ever hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as you have heard, and live? Or did God ever try to go and take for Himself a nation from the midst of another nation, by trials, by signs, by wonders, by war, by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, and by great terrors, according to all that the Lord your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes? To you it was shown, that you might know that **THE LORD HIMSELF IS GOD; THERE IS NONE OTHER BESIDES HIM.** Out of heaven He let you hear His voice, that He might instruct you; on earth He showed you His great fire, and you heard His words out of the midst of the fire. And because He loved your fathers, therefore He chose their descendants after them; and He brought you out of Egypt with*

*His Presence, with His mighty power, driving out from before you nations greater and mightier than you, to bring you in, to give you their land as an inheritance, as it is this day. Therefore know this day, and consider it in your heart, that **THE LORD HIMSELF IS GOD** in heaven above and on the earth beneath; **THERE IS NO OTHER.** Deut 4:33-39*

***FOR THERE IS ONE GOD** and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men-**THE TESTIMONY** given in its proper time.1 Tim 2:5-6*

*"Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "**GOD WITH US.**" Matt 1:23*

He is that Testimony, God with us, our continual mediation the One God and there is NO other, One Lord that is Love and Truth and thus Satan stands defeated in his attempt to cause the world to see God as some kind of forgetful, blundering, multiple personage that leaves His creation to wonder through life in the dark. And the answer to this is made complete as we listen to John express in human terms the mystery that is God.

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and **THE WORD WAS GOD.** He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.*

John 1:1-5

That mystery, which is the One God, is revealed in His Word and Paul speaks of that mystery so we need not wonder just what it is and when it will be revealed.

*My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order **THAT THEY MAY KNOW THE MYSTERY OF GOD, NAMELY, CHRIST,** in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Col 2:2-3*

Now I rejoice in what was suffered for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church. I have

*become its servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness-the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, **BUT IS NOW DISCLOSED TO THE SAINTS.** To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of **THIS MYSTERY, WHICH IS CHRIST IN YOU**, the hope of glory. **Col 1:24-27***

That mystery had been hidden since ages past because of sin, and the mystery was God who had been hidden from their view. So many wanted their own way so God became a mystery and the Truth was hidden from their sight. But that mystery which is *THE WORD, AND THE WORD WAS WITH GOD, AND THE WORD WAS GOD. IN HIM WAS LIFE, AND THAT LIFE WAS THE LIGHT OF MEN*, that mystery has revealed something that was not and is not agreeable to those who hold their doctrines to be the way, their truth and their life. Those who have ever held to their own doctrines want the world to imagine that it is THEY who are the special anointed people chosen by God Himself.

This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.

Eph 3:6

Exclusivity or the act of being exclusive or thinking that because maybe you are rich and anyone else is below you or maybe you belong to the *in crowd* and everyone else is just not right or that the church body you belong to has the truth and therefore it is your duty to let the world know that you have the it and everyone needs to succumb to your doctrines, is not the mystery spoken of by God! In God the ground is level and God's body is One and is not made up of factions or different parts of the body where each part believes that they have the truth. In God is just One Head that rules over just one body.

But man does not like this because he has his way with high ranking leadership where one man gets to tell another man what he is or is not to do. And this system has been in place for so long that men think it is the only way it is to be done.

But with God all things are equal and are equally required and needed for the body to work as one. In other words, the arm (though it may appear to do more than the leg) is not greater than the leg and the hand (that appears to do even more than the arm) is not greater than the arm. The body is one and works as one with God as the Head, and the body (no matter what

part of it we are talking about) is only doing what the Head directs it to do. In other words, the Head is in control and the arm needs the head as well as it needs the trunk of the body to work, and the hand cannot work unless it has use of the arm, and the legs need the trunk as well as the foot needs the leg. And when it is all said and done, God is the One in control.

The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body-whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free-and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.

*Now the body is not made up of one part but of many. If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body. **1 Cor 12:12-20***

Impossible Mathematics

In the creation of man God set into motion a lesson to be learned. It was a deep thought but one that could be comprehended none the less. God created man with many parts that would be called A BODY. But never would that body be thought of in any other way than one body. God then created woman; and in the creation of woman a view of how two bodies become one was shown.

The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man."

*For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, **AND THEY WILL BECOME ONE FLESH. Gen 2:23-24***

Now as far as I can tell, mathematics is founded on a basic principle of 1+1=2 (1 plus 1 equals 2.) and the idea is that if you have one of something and then you add another something to it that now you have more than when you started. But God's view comes from a place not bound to mans view or mathematics but is only to be understood through Spirit filled eyes.

*Do you not know that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body? For it is said, "The two will become one flesh." **1 Cor 6:16***

*Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church-for **WE ARE MEMBERS OF HIS BODY**. "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, **AND THE TWO WILL BECOME ONE FLESH**. "Eph 5:25-31*

God's Word has never changed or altered its course. His Way is the only Way and it is left to us to see it and walk in its Light (not our own.) Paul speaks of this knowledge that is found in that Way, and for those who are awake by now it is no longer a hidden mystery or an issue of impossible mathematics. That Way, that Knowledge is of a body, one body, and not just of any man or woman but of Christ and His bride; and as two become one flesh, so Christ and His bride are one just as God and the Son are One. (It's time to take a long breath and count to ten before you explode. Now release and lets continue.)

*Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, **THAT THEY MAY BE ONE AS WE ARE**. John 17:11-12*

*This is a profound mystery-but I am talking about Christ and the church. **Eph 5:32***



WYSIWYG

What You See Is What You Get

Computer software is built upon the concept of WYSIWYG. It may progress forward and become more powerful and change its looks but it still is just what it is, a program, and what you see is what you get.

God on the other hand has a body that cannot be judged by its outward appearance. If anyone tries to do so they will not understand or comprehend God's Word. And that has been the lot for humanity that has judged God by what they think they see, and pictures have been painted and stain glass has been set in place depicting mans view of God and His church. And much like the way pictures are use in advertising to promote an idea or product, these stained glass windows and religious artwork have sold an idea of the way man is to imagine God.

These pictures (whether in stain glass or in the many magazines produced by the thousands of denominations) have presented God as wearing a halo and walking around with His hand in a constant gesture of two fingers up and two fingers down in a holy pose, and to promote a more up-to-date god they have now picture Him kicking up His heels and riding down the highway in a tricked out deep throated muscle bike. He has also been pictured as having a ever bleeding heart or working as a priest in a room that He can never leave until His Father finally says that time is up and to go and get His sinful children. These and so many other humanistic views of God have been proposed as to who He is and what He is.

So all kind of questions pop up by those who take the time to contemplate that kind of a god: Just who is God? What does He look like? Is He like us with two hands and two feet or does He glow in the dark with a halo around His head? I have sat in Bible classes where people have spent the entire study period just wondering if Jesus looks like the picture hanging in the church entrance way, while all the while the questions that need to be asked are left to fall by the wayside. Yet God reveals Himself to those who really wish to know who He is, but what He has to say is not what they are expecting.

*Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit. **Eph 2:19-22***

As we have already seen, God has a view of things that goes further than many have ever thought of traveling, and His view of who He is and what He looks like is beyond human thought. But so far as you have traveled in this book, you have seen many things:

- You have seen that His Way is not like priests and ministers who use a system of worship that is built upon a idea of tithes and offerings and sacrifice/confession.
- You have seen that God brought a completely different type of judgment into this world than that of judging man, and instead He judged sin and won the victory over it and death and defeated Satan once and for all that we might stand in that victory.
- You have seen that God's Work was done once and for all and that His mediation for us is a doorway to His throne, and that He is not working as a defense attorney in some courtroom in heaven on mans behalf.
- You have seen that God is the Head of His body that is made of many parts but is only one body.
- You have seen that we are the living temple of God and that He lives in His temple.
- And you have seen that God's view of what He has said is just as He has said it, and that we may trust His Word without needing to try to make it fit any mans doctrine or church decree.

God's understanding takes us in a direction that for many requires a paradigm shift in their thinking. And at this point it is no different. But if we will remember some of what we have already discussed we can begin to see a continual flow of God's Word that says something and then says it again so that we will not miss His view on the subject. And if we have been willing to lay aside our preconceived ideas and biases or prejudices then this seemingly herculean task will be eliminated once and for all and we may see God for the first time in our lives through His eyes.

This is what must take place as we read about God being One and His body as one, and the reality that His body has a head, and that Head is Jesus Christ.

*For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. **AND HE IS THE HEAD OF THE BODY, THE CHURCH**; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. **Col 1:16-18***

If He is the head of the body and we are His body, then what He is, is what we are. Therefore if He is our temple then we become a temple just like Him as Paul says in Eph 2:19-22.

*What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For **WE ARE THE TEMPLE OF THE LIVING GOD**. As God has said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people." **2 Cor 6:15-16***

This is where we begin to realize that we either agree with what God has spoken or it is time to get out of the kitchen. If we agree then we see that we either do not match up to what a temple of God is or we can imagine the task of becoming this temple as being out of our reach and settle instead for a covering called grace and retreat back into the doctrine of the human or sinful nature and ignore what God has said about His temple that it is not in agreement with sin/idols. But if we will allow God to speak clearly to us then we can begin to understand what He says about the sinful nature and just what position that those who are His temple are to be found in.

*Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God. **Rom 8:7-8***

So What does a Temple Look Like?

Sometimes it is easier to say what something isn't than to explain what it is. And this is one of those times.

A picture has been formed in our minds by those who have told us about what a temple looks like of people bowing down and worshipping some kind of object (which many call idol worship or idolatry.) So let's look and see what God calls idolatry or idol worship.

*Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. **Col 3:5-7***

Wow! Now who would have ever thought of that? Idolatry is what is *whatever belongs to your earthly nature*. And when we go back and look we see that this is exactly what Christ said.

*For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks. The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him. **Matt 12:34-35***

So a picture begins to form of what a temple does not look like (that it is not filled with those things that *belong to your earthly nature*) and that idolatry is not about bowing our bodies down and worshipping a image or object; instead it is carrying the sinful nature around with us instead of God's nature that is not sinful. And Paul declares in no uncertain terms what the sinful nature is.

THE ACTS OF THE SINFUL NATURE ARE OBVIOUS: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I WARN YOU, as I did before, THAT THOSE WHO LIVE LIKE THIS WILL NOT INHERIT THE KINGDOM OF GOD. Gal 5:19-21

So, what the temple of God is not, is anything that belongs to the earthly or sinful nature. This is what was spoken of earlier when Jesus was talking to Nicodemus about dying to self and becoming a new creation in Him.

*In reply Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God **UNLESS HE IS BORN AGAIN.**" **John 3:3***

Being born again puts those who want to become a temple of God in a position of making a choice; either choosing the sinful nature and living apart from God or choosing the divine nature and living in Him.

*His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these **HE HAS GIVEN US HIS VERY GREAT AND PRECIOUS PROMISES, SO THAT THROUGH THEM YOU MAY PARTICIPATE IN THE DIVINE NATURE AND ESCAPE THE CORRUPTION IN THE WORLD** caused by evil desires. **2 Peter 1:3-4***

'Hey, that's not what I heard in church. In fact I know that Paul tells us just the opposite about our fight with sin. In fact he says:

*"We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin. I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do-this I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it." **Rom 7:14-20***

See, I can't help myself, I am born with a sinful nature and I will die with one. So it doesn't matter what you are trying to make Paul say, I know the truth!'

This is actually said by grown-ups who believe that they are using Paul's writings correctly instead of what has been said up to this point. But what they fail to do is read the rest of the story. And in the rest of the story the Truth is unveiled for every eye to see.

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful

nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. **AND SO HE CONDEMNED SIN IN SINFUL MAN**, in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, **WHO DO NOT LIVE ACCORDING TO THE SINFUL NATURE** but according to the Spirit.

Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; BUT THOSE WHO LIVE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SPIRIT HAVE THEIR MINDS SET ON WHAT THE SPIRIT DESIRES. The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; **THE SINFUL MIND IS HOSTILE TO GOD. IT DOES NOT SUBMIT TO GOD'S LAW, NOR CAN IT DO SO. THOSE CONTROLLED BY THE SINFUL NATURE CANNOT PLEASE GOD.**

YOU, HOWEVER, ARE CONTROLLED NOT BY THE SINFUL NATURE BUT BY THE SPIRIT, IF THE SPIRIT OF GOD LIVES IN YOU. And **IF ANYONE DOES NOT HAVE THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST, HE DOES NOT BELONG TO CHRIST.** Rom 8:1-9

Paul does not speak with a forked tongue (he does not say one thing and then say something which is the exact opposite) he has said everything through the power of God and God does not say one thing and then speak the opposite of what He just said. Yet many actually believe that Paul speaks against himself and that God's Word is hard to read because of its continual double talk that leaves the reader confused on the subject. But what is overlooked in that kind of thinking is the fact of how men have treated God's Word. Most will not handle God's Word with as much respect as they treat human authors. They will not read it from cover to cover to know what it says and why it was said. But instead, it is read in the fashion of *a little here and a little there*.

The Great Controversy Begins

Now we have come to the point where a decision is required of those who have come this far in their reading. What shall we do? Do we go on and see what else lies ahead or do we settle for our personal doctrines? It's like being on very thin ice, kinda uncomfortable not knowing if it is going to break and if we are going to be taking a very cold swim soon.

God's Word is filled to overflowing with wisdom and knowledge that He has given about a Spiritual Journey that each of us may take. It is not the popular thing to do nor is it accepted by

those who see themselves as caretakers of God's flock. But for the ones who decide to take this road, it is the most wonderful experience of freedom, power and authority that anyone can ever have.

But some questions arise at this point; How do I get this experience? Must I be baptized all over again? And what church teaches these things?

The answers to these questions are quite simple, but never has anything so simple been so hard to understand or comprehend.

God told those who He called to *follow Him* and they did. But they were mocked, called devil worshippers and were run out of the church, yet they still followed not knowing where they would end up. But the Truth meant something to them and they did not care about the future. It was simply a call placed before them and they acted on it strait-a-way. Many talk about being called to work for God and it is a wonderful thing to do, but we want to know that we are taking the correct road and that God is the one calling us to go on this Journey.

So for those who wish to go forward and hear more of what God has given and to hear the voice of the Good Sheppard, then we will continue.



If At First You Don't succeed, Try and Try Again (are you kidding?)

One of the concepts that religion has promoted is the idea that you must help yourself and then God steps in to help whenever He feels like it. The old saying is (repeat after me); God helps those who help themselves, so such things as self-esteem, self-empowerment, self-deliverance are preached as though humanity has the power to overcome the detriment that God has inflicted upon humanity by telling them that they are to die to those things and instead He would fill them with His works, His will and a Love that knows no bounds. But in order to comprehend just what God has asked of those who would choose Him and to see what He has done we have to start at the beginning and see with open eyes what He did, what He promised He would do and just how it all was fulfilled from creation to salvation.

The story begins in the first few pages of God's Word in what is called the creation week. This story starts with Life and a plan to show that Love conquers sin.

Lucifer had brought God's character (Love) into question and had demanded that God is a liar and hides behind His Word. From the very beginning Satan convinced man to believe this, and that God's Word is therefore left to interpretation. As he came to Eve with the idea that what you see is what is real, and what God says is really not the total story; people today judge God's Word through that doctrine and leave the understanding to the ideas and opinions of those who are deemed as wise in God's Word just as Satan proposed it to be as he interpreted the issue of life and death for Eve.

Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"

The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"

"You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman. "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the

*eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. **Gen 3:1-7***

Satan began his deception by starting off with an introduction to an idea that God did not really mean what Eve had thought she heard God say. *Did God really say...* was how it all began, and from that point the anchor had been set. Now the idea could begin to grow that God does not really mean what He says and in fact it would now be proven by showing Eve that what she thought God meant was not the total story. So now Satan could take what God had spoken clearly to them and show how real logical thinking works, that true knowledge is not that which comes from the Spirit of God but instead is what comes by outward factual evidence, those things that are left up to the human senses. He then proved his case by showing that eating from the tree does not really bring about death. His supposed proof was overwhelming and from that point sin began to rule. The sad part in this story is how that same thinking pervades men's thoughts today as they seek through laws and judgments to define what is right and wrong and then as they look into what they call the fabric of life they convince themselves of what they think they see and try to prove that Life is not God and that they have seen what it really is with their own eyes. All of this becomes overwhelming to human thinking and those who once accepted God as the last word on the subject now bow to the wisdom of man and their interpretations.

From the beginning Satan instilled within God's creation a lie, that truth is bound to factual evidence presented by the accuser against the accused. And judgment (as it is taught from childhood through culture, religion and society) is brought about by the result of weighing out the evidence. Entertainment adds to this picture and convinces us that justice and vengeance is a normal part of life, and then Christians fill their minds with it until Truth is pushed out and the lie becomes complete in the mind.

So try and try again and God helps those who help themselves becomes an excepted way of thinking even among those who say they believe that God is the guide in their life or the pilot of their ship. Yet when it comes down to the bottom line, cries for help flow in the general direction of heaven for God's intercession for these very ones who talk about a life on the level of *pulling yourself up by your own boot straps*.

It would appear as though Satan has done a marvelous job at creating a false truth and causing most of God's creation to believe it.

A Way Out

Paul speaks of what happened to Israel because of their disobedience to God and the historical trail of sorrow and destruction that came upon them. As he talks we cannot help but wonder why he is retelling them of their past that they already know, and just what could it possibly do for us today to know about it. For those with eyes to see it becomes clear that if we will learn from their history that we may stand in the hour of temptation instead of participating in failure as so many of them did. And we also see that God makes a way for those who seek Him to escape from even the temptation to fall just as He did in the many lives that were bound up to Him, those ones who did not participate in the same sin as Adam before them of unbelief, of not trusting God's Word. *Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned — (For until the law sin was in the world, BUT SIN IS NOT IMPUTED WHEN THERE IS NO LAW. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, **EVEN OVER THOSE WHO HAD NOT SINNED ACCORDING TO THE LIKENESS OF THE TRANSGRESSION OF ADAM, who is a type of Him who was to come. Rom 5:12-15***

That is exactly what Christ did by living a pure example of the power of God in the life of those who live in Him, and for those who have struggled to see the Truth by dying and being raised again they now have the victory over sin and their God took care of the cost of sin (hell and the grave) and He made the way clear (with no excuses for falling to temptation) to the throne of God so that *...we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Heb 4:16* This of course brings us back around to the question of belief that God has said what He means. So will we learn from their example (what they went through) or will we continue to ignore it and make the same sinful mistakes?

*These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come. So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall! No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And **GOD IS FAITHFUL; HE WILL NOT LET YOU BE TEMPTED BEYOND WHAT YOU CAN BEAR. BUT WHEN YOU ARE TEMPTED, HE WILL ALSO PROVIDE A WAY OUT SO THAT YOU CAN STAND UP UNDER IT. 1 Cor 10:11-13***

The Way of escape has been provided and has been made visible for ALL to see through the

life, death and resurrection of the Messiah; and through that Israel of God are made joint heirs (sons and daughters) to rule with Him on His throne and have their lives wrapped up in His just as He said.

*For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit **THAT WE ARE GOD'S CHILDREN**. Now if we are children, then **WE ARE HEIRS-HEIRS OF GOD AND CO-HEIRS WITH CHRIST**, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory. **Rom 8:15-17***

*But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions-it is by grace you have been saved. **And GOD RAISED US UP WITH CHRIST AND SEATED US WITH HIM IN THE HEAVENLY REALMS IN CHRIST JESUS**, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. **Eph 2:4-8***

This is not a picture of anything any person has the power to do on their own or that God does this after they have done their part. Instead this is a picture of God's *great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions-it is by grace you have been saved*. This is why Paul states that: *God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith-and this not from yourselves, **IT IS THE GIFT OF GOD-NOT BY WORKS, SO THAT NO ONE CAN BOAST**. Eph 2:6-10*

What we do we do through God and God alone. There are no lies of human strength or intellect to find our rest in but it is only through and by the hand of God that directs our way, and thus we either believe what He has said or we deny His Word and call *man* our help.

Lending God a Helping Hand

But what work does God want me to do then?

This is a deep question. And it is not easily perceived or acted out in this world. The finest minds of men have sought to understand the work of God and are found continually changing their doctrines as each century passes by as they seek to present something that parallels more with the time they are living as well as the reality that they show that they do not comprehend what they are even presenting.

It is and has been a struggle for most to try to bring about a defined idea of just what man is to do to please God and the concepts about it are as diverse as the people who present it. And all too often the issue of the work of God's ends up being defined by men who find their foundation in the thoughts of man that have defined an idea of what is to be done.

But God spoke about this work issue and what it was that His Father sent Him to do and what He gave those who believed on Him to do.

*"My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and **TO FINISH HIS WORK**. Do you not say, 'Four months more and then the harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. Even now the reaper draws his wages, even now he **HARVESTS THE CROP FOR ETERNAL LIFE**, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together. Thus the saying 'One sows and another reaps' is true. I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labor." John 4:34-38*

The benefit of doing the will/work of God has always been eternal Life, and that Life has always been the payment for a job well done. Yet we do not get eternal Life by farming or working with our hands, but by working in God's field and laboring just as He did, by giving His Word. That work started in the beginning and ends IN you and I.

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

By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done. Gen 2:2-3

God's work began at creation and that work was creation, and in His Word we have no other work that He has ever done. That would explain why those like Paul would speak so much

about the work of recreation taking place in those who would choose to believe, and that if the work was able to be accomplished in each one who believed it would bring about a harvest, so the Messiah sent out workers into His field to bring in the harvest. All of a sudden Christ's prayer in the garden begins to make sense as to why He would say that He finished the work He was given/sent to do, the work of reconciliation or mediation through His life, death and resurrection. It was the work of Salvation and Grace. Not a work of building houses, planes, trains or automobiles but instead it was making a new creation out of the rubble of what sin had done. It was the work of building a temple not made with hands. In other words, not a building made of brick and mortar nor a part of this creation, but a new creation built of Spirit and Truth.

*So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, **IF ANYONE IS IN CHRIST, HE IS A NEW CREATION**; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, **WHO RECONCILED US TO HIMSELF THROUGH CHRIST** and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. **WE ARE THEREFORE CHRIST'S AMBASSADORS**, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. **2 Cor 5:16-21***

There is no other work that anyone has been called to, and no other field to work in. That field had no denominational name applied to it or any doctrine of man to guide it. Many may think that they are God's foreman's or directors and imagine themselves as helping God to run the work, but in His work there is ONLY One Ruler and King, One owner, and everyone got the same pay for the work performed.

"For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire men to work in his vineyard. He agreed to pay them a denarius for the day and sent them into his vineyard.

"About the third hour he went out and saw others standing in the marketplace doing nothing. He told them, 'You also go and work in my vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went.

"He went out again about the sixth hour and the ninth hour and did the same thing. About the eleventh hour he went out and found still others standing around. He asked them, 'Why have you been standing here all day long doing nothing?'

"'Because no one has hired us,' they answered.

"He said to them, 'You also go and work in my vineyard.'

"When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Call the workers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last ones hired and going on to the first.'

"The workers who were hired about the eleventh hour came and each received a denarius. So when those came who were hired first, they expected to receive more. But each one of them also received a denarius. When they received it, they began to grumble against the landowner. 'These men who were hired last worked only one hour,' they said, 'and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the work and the heat of the day.'

*"But he answered one of them, 'Friend, I am not being unfair to you. Didn't you agree to work for a denarius? Take your pay and go. I **WANT TO GIVE THE MAN WHO WAS HIRED LAST THE SAME AS I GAVE YOU**. Don't I have the right to do what I want with my own money? Or are you envious because I am generous?'*

"SO THE LAST WILL BE FIRST, AND THE FIRST WILL BE LAST." Matt 20:1-16

The work of God had nothing to do with money but is all about laying up treasures in heaven where moths cannot eat or rust destroy. And since money was not created by God nor has anything to do with Him the only pay that God has to give for the work done is what He said that those who believed in Him would have, eternal Life, and that Life is the Light of men.

Yet many have imagined this work to be what they do six days a week and then get paid for their labors, and they then turn to the law and use it as a proposed example for that kind of thinking.

Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. Ex 20:8-10

No doubt, at first glance, God's Word can be made to appear to back up mans idea of work, but when put to the test it fails in the face of what God said.

*Jesus answered, "The work of God is this: **TO BELIEVE IN THE ONE HE HAS SENT.**"*

John 6:29

Wow! Could it really be that simple? Well that can only be answered by checking out the rest of the story.

*If your brother is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer acting in love. Do not by your eating destroy your brother for whom Christ died. Do not allow what you consider good to be spoken of as evil. **FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS NOT A MATTER OF EATING AND DRINKING, BUT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, PEACE AND JOY IN THE HOLY SPIRIT,** because anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and approved by men.*

*Let us therefore make every effort to do **WHAT LEADS TO PEACE AND TO MUTUAL EDIFICATION.** Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food.*

Rom 14:15-20

*If Timothy comes, see to it that he has nothing to fear while he is with you, for he is carrying on **THE WORK OF THE LORD,** just as I am. No one, then, should refuse to accept him. Send him on his way in peace so that he may return to me. I am expecting him along with the brothers. **1 Cor 16:10-11***

*"Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the **WORK OF GOD MIGHT BE DISPLAYED IN HIS life.** As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. While I am in the world, I am the light of the world." **John 9:3-5***

Creation, setting men free from sin, healing, raising the dead, cleansing the temple and preaching the Word of God, this was/is the work of God. The disciples lived that example and went about doing this work as did the prophets before them. So how many times does it have

to be seen by us just how the prophets and disciples lived and what kind of character they had before we are willing to admit just what it is was God had called to be done?

*He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well." **Mark 16:15-18***

God called all those who would come to Him to do His work. But God never set up a system for the church to send out missionaries so they could say they were fulfilling the gospel commission while the rest of the church could stay home and feel that somehow they were a part of the work by paying their tithes and offerings. And He never told any of the church/His body that the fulfillment of the gospel commission was to feel that it was ok to live in sin. Instead the work giving the gospel that set the soul free from the life they once lived against God while a sinner.

Keeping up Appearances

I can't help but think back to my childhood growing up in church where there was a head elder, a few deacons, a pastor and a church board. But today the list of job titles has become so long that in many churches it takes an office of full time employees just to keep things under control so that at least it appears as though the left hand knows what the right hand is doing.

So God gets a hand in helping to do His job through those who work to receive a paycheck for doing the work of the church.

This is almost an overwhelming issue within what is called church today as the laity have looked at the scene set before them and have heard the reasoning as to what is taking so long to get the most simple things accomplished, that there are just so many hours in a day to get things done as well the reality that the board needs to meet and take a vote to see what the majority agree to do. Then through the reality of monkey-see monkey-do, when it comes to studying the lesson quarterly or getting to church on time the laity act just like their leaders and

the reason is given that there is just so little time after work and the kids and the lawn and the 'honey-do' list to study God's Word.

Is this to be understood as to what it means to work for God? Is this what He set before His children to do in His name?

No it isn't but when you have so much to do what are you suppose to do? There are taxes to pay and mouths to feed, there is an offering expected at church each week and tithe to pay; then there is the missionary fund that needs to be provided for and the church needs a new roof and the church rec-room needs to be remodeled. There is the weekly golf game and dues to pay, and the car is not going to fix itself and the game is on TV so leave me alone till its over anyway. The wife wants a new washer and dryer, the kids need their cell phones and you know they cant go to school without an iPod. Gotta build that pen for the dogs, paint the shed and go fishing with Frank. The church baseball league starts this week and soccer next month. The food must be prepared for pot-luck this week and I need my time alone to play Solitaire so I can relax. The newest movie is playing at the cinema and my favorite show is on tv. The kids are into everything and the house needs to be cleaned. Gotta answer my emails and see what's new on Facebook and you think I have time for God? You must be kidding! Hurry up! Get dressed its time for church. Now brush your teeth and for God's sake please don't act like a fool in church. If you don't listen to me I will take away your cell phone privileges. We have a image to uphold!

Sound a little familiar?

Chasing a Dream

God is watching us from a distance. At church gatherings this has been sung and is believed as though in fact God is just out of our reach at a distance. Like a fantasy waiting to come true, God is looking down on His creation waiting, hoping and wishing that somehow His children will get their acts together before He comes and wipes out their existence from the earth or burns them in hell forever. And though He is made to be seen as human and often being caught off guard having no knowledge of what is going to happen next, those who say they believe in Him say they are so happy that He has their future in His hands. But then they say that they are left to try to be what they think He wants them to be and so they continually try to figure out just where they fit in His will and His thoughts about them and just what the judgment holds in store. They wonder if God will see what they have done as being good enough to get into heaven or will He say *I never knew you?*

Yet the God of creation that gave everything men would need to survive, the God who created this world with what man would need to live here, and created the universe so intricately that nothing is out of place, and even though He has done all that, He is still imagined as just being out of reach like some elusive dream that will ever be somewhere out there in the distance.

This thinking courses through the veins of so many who call themselves God's children, His church and His body. But if *...no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church-for we are members of his body. Eph 5:28-31* then are we to believe that God does not take care of His own body and does not provide for it as He promised He would? Does He show this care and concern by not providing the basic need of the body for Spiritual nutrition to grow strong in Him and thus be left to failures and mistake/sins?

We must stop and think why anyone would imagine such a thing of God, and then out of the other side of their mouth declare that God is Love.

What Goes Up Must Come Down

When people seek to build doctrines that are not found in God's Word they do not realize the fall-out that occurs when the point of saturation is reached and the last straw is added to the camels burden and it finally collapses.

Christians are at that fulcrum point today and the back is about to break.

Doctrines are only as good as the teachers ability to make them appear to be the truth and keep the students mesmerized by them. But just as the saying goes: *We love an informed audience, but an informed audience is our worst enemy.* Lies are not lies until they are realized to be lies, but at that point of realization the audience becomes the teachers worst enemy.

It is now time to become an informed audience and escape the bondage of slavery to sin and leave behind the old ways of allowing men and what they have said to guide our life. We must look at the face of God and see His beauty instead of looking at each other and comparing ourselves to each other. God's work and His will is all about living in Him and therefore living like Him. The payment for this work is eternal life and no one gets more and no one gets less, all receive the same gift of God's Grace and Love that knows no bounds.

So let's become that informed people so that we need never worry about being misled about what God says ever again.



A Few Things

More

We've come a long way and have seen that there are some serious issues that need to be dealt with as each one makes a decision for or against what God has spoken, and to decide whether or not to become a child of God. The title *child of God* has some very serious connotations applied to it. It is no small thing to take on this name for it implies that the one using this label knows what it means to do so. But as we have seen so far that many who do this do not realize just what they are talking about or who it is that they are talking about.

This is never so more obvious than when people begin to talk about the Godhead and paint a picture of just what this Godhead consists of and what role it plays in each person's life.

In basic terms, what is proposed about this group/Godhead (the trinity as many refer to it) is what sociology or psychology would call a dysfunctional unit (that which is not working toward a common goal.) In the doctrine of the Godhead God the Father is seen as a judge of mankind with a desire to destroy His creation while Christ is seen as an attorney pleading each person's case in front of the bar and the angels acting as the jury; and while all this is taking place, the Holy Spirit is convicting the sinner of their sins and causing the sinner to feel guilty for what they know or do not know of what they have done or might have done. And since the poor sinner sees no way out of the never ending cycle of sinning and confessing for the wrongs they have done Christ is then seen as pleading His blood (or grace as many refer to it) on behalf of their case asking for their forgiveness, and all of heaven is awaiting to hear the verdict spoken by God, *guilty or forgiven*. (Some propose that even the spirits of the dead saints get involved in trying to save the soul from possible purgatory.)

Yet after all is said and done, the only thing spoken on this subject by God is that He is One, but still the idea of three persons/three different characters continues to be taught. This belief has even become the chief cornerstone and test of fellowship of the religion called *Christian* though God has spoken something totally different.

*Jesus replied. "There is only **ONE** who is good.*

Matt 19:17

*"Yes, it is as you say," Jesus replied. "But I say to all of you: In the future you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the **MIGHTY ONE** and coming on the clouds of heaven." **Matt 26:64***

*Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of **THE ONE** who can destroy both soul and body in hell. **Matt 10:28-29***

*They will treat you this way because of my name, for they do not know **THE ONE** who sent me. **John 15:21***

*"Well said, teacher," the man replied. "You are right in saying that **GOD IS ONE** and there is no other but him. **Mark 12:32-33***

*Hear, O Israel: The **LORD** our God, **THE LORD IS ONE**. **Deut 6:4-5***

These scriptures are used in religion to mean that God is not really only One but is in fact just speaking a metaphor that is referring to some kind of state of mind that fills each entity of the Godhead. And as long as that is the accepted and duly voted on position to take on the subject, then no matter what God says, mans ideas will be the correct doctrine to believe in.

But no matter what man may say God has something to say, and His Word is always the final Word on the subject.

*"The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel, **the Lord our God, THE LORD IS ONE**. **Mark 12:29***

*"Well said, teacher," the man replied. "You are right in saying that **GOD IS ONE AND THERE IS NO OTHER BUT HIM**. **Mark 12:32** (now wait just a cotton-pickin minute! How could this be right if Jesus was also God in the flesh? Why in the world would He say that that there is no other God but One and it is His Father in heaven? So what did that make the Christ, just a human and not God at all?)*

*For there is **ONE GOD AND ONE MEDIATOR** (if we will notice the sentence structure here it is not talking of two separate individuals but the same person; A *mediator*, however, does not represent just one party; **BUT GOD IS ONE**. **Gal 3:20**) between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men-the testimony given in its proper time.1 **Tim 2:5-6***

*You believe that there is **ONE GOD**. Good! **EVEN THE DEMONS BELIEVE THAT**-and shudder. **James 2:19***

There is no doubt, to the doubt that quickly rises about where this is going, but for those who are growing in their knowledge of God this brings up some questions about what this all means. John helps us to figure this out as he tries with earthly words to describe what is actually an understandable thought of what and who God really is.

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, **AND THE WORD WAS GOD.** He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.*

John 1:1-5

So it is not mistaken or believed that this is not being presented with all the facts, we will now hear what the Messiah said about just who this *Word* is.

*"This is the meaning of the parable: The seed is the word of God. **Luke 8:11***

And when we dig a little deeper we can see just who He is referring to as the seed.

*The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. The Scripture does not say "and to seeds," meaning many people, but "and to your seed," **MEANING ONE PERSON, WHO IS CHRIST. Gal 3:16***

If we can accept God at His Word then we can see with open eyes why John would say (while receiving the testimony of Jesus Christ) *I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, **whose rider is called FAITHFUL AND TRUE.** With justice he judges and makes war. His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, **and his name is THE WORD OF GOD.** The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter." He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh **he has this name written: KING OF KINGS***

AND LORD OF LORDS. Rev 19:11-16

But of course, even if God is correct that He is One and only One, another question arises: *Just who or what is the Spirit?* The Holy Spirit is that other proposed person who has a job and title that has been taught the world over.

This third personage of the God-head has ever been seen in such a way that certain portions of scripture such as **2 Cor 3:17-18** are either ignored or quickly read over with no or very little comment as to what it says. But we will read it just as we have read the rest of what God has spoken so far and will allow it to mean just what it says.

*Now **THE LORD IS THE SPIRIT**, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from **THE LORD, WHO IS THE SPIRIT**.*

2 Cor 3:17-18

This is not a misprint nor is to be interpreted by anyone to mean anything other than what God has spoken, and it was given to men under His guidance as they wrote these things down and put them into print for all to read and understand.

God, did you really says things that could be understood without a Divinity degree?

One of the things that I have noticed when I have attended church meetings is what happens when the scriptures are read. Almost without fail the speakers gives an oration on what he or she has just read as though what they read was not to be understood the way it was written. Inevitably this takes place over and over again without the readers being taught to not expect a sermon on the subject being presented but instead to study and talk about what has been read and to read the entire story so it may be understood.

A case in point on this subject is in the reading of **Isaiah 28**. Many use this reading to promote a doctrine of how the Bible is to be used when studying it. The idea is given of

something called a **proof-text** method where *a little here and a little there* of what God has said is to be gathered together to point out what God was really trying to say. In that kind of study a small little section is read in one spot and then another section somewhere else is used without ever reading what was said before it or after it. Yet these same people would not treat worldly authors in that same way but would read the book in its entirety so to grasp the WHOLE story.

And for those who would say that I am doing the exact same thing and that I am not practicing what I preach, then may this be said; **PLEASE** read the entire story in God's Word of everything quoted in this book, and pray for God to open your eyes and your mind that the Truth may be seen that not one thing that has been said in this book has been misrepresented or interpreted to fit any personal or church doctrine agenda. And unlike many who use a system to filter out any correspondence that would show them the possible error in their teaching, instead I love to hear from people even if they demand that I am going to hell for what I have said.

So whatever your reaction is to this book, I pray that you will check out everything around each verse that has been mentioned within these pages.

Now, at the same time, *IF* what has been said here is the Truth, then it means that each of us are going to have to ask ourselves an important question: Why do we believe what we claim to believe? And also, another question needs to be asked: Why have we allowed others to interpret for us what God has said in plain words? If the creator Loves His creation and provides exactly what is needed, then it would appear that He would need to speak to us in a way that is not outside of our understanding. If He is our brother then to speak beyond our abilities to understand is not a brotherly thing to do and is not caring for His body as He proclaims He does.

Yet this is how many see the character of God, as though He were playing hide and seek with His creation and has left them to fend for themselves in a world of sin. This has caused God to be left up to interpretation and concepts that are continually evolving as time progresses forward. So dependent upon a mood or an event in time God is seen as being as diverse as human kind itself, and in living with this kind of thinking, God's Word becomes only as pertinent as it is demanded at the moment and becomes understandable only as it is interpreted by the social and political standards of the day.

But now let's read **Isaiah 28** (as it was being used as an example) in its entirety. Let's see about that idea of studying God's Word with the idea of a little here and there as being a good way to read it.

WOE TO THAT WREATH, THE PRIDE OF EPHRAIM'S DRUNKARDS, to the fading flower, his glorious beauty, set on the head of a fertile valley--to that city, the pride of those laid low by wine! See, the Lord has one who is powerful and strong. Like a hailstorm and a destructive wind, like a driving rain and a flooding downpour, he will throw it forcefully to the ground.

That wreath, **THE PRIDE OF EPHRAIM'S DRUNKARDS, WILL BE TRAMPLED UNDERFOOT**. That fading flower, his glorious beauty, set on the head of a fertile valley, will be like a fig ripe before harvest--as soon as someone sees it and takes it in his hand, he swallows it.

In that day the LORD Almighty will be a glorious crown, a beautiful wreath for the remnant of his people. He will be a spirit of justice to him who sits in judgment, a source of strength to those who turn back the battle at the gate.

AND THESE ALSO STAGGER FROM WINE AND REEL FROM BEER: PRIESTS AND PROPHETS STAGGER FROM BEER AND ARE BEFUDDLED WITH WINE; THEY REEL FROM BEER, THEY STAGGER WHEN SEEING VISIONS, THEY STUMBLE WHEN RENDERING DECISIONS. ALL THE TABLES ARE COVERED WITH VOMIT AND THERE IS NOT A SPOT WITHOUT FILTH.

"Who is it he is trying to teach? To whom is he explaining his message? To children weaned from their milk, to those just taken from the breast? For it is: Do and do, do and do, rule on rule, rule on rule; a little here, a little there."

Very well then, with foreign lips and strange tongues God will speak to this people, to whom he said, "This is the resting place, let the weary rest";and, "This is the place of repose"--**BUT THEY WOULD NOT LISTEN**. So then, the word of the LORD to them will become: Do and do, do and do, rule on rule, rule on rule; a little here, a little there--**SO THAT THEY WILL GO AND FALL BACKWARD, BE INJURED AND SNARED AND CAPTURED**.

Therefore hear the word of the LORD, you scoffers who rule this people in Jerusalem. You boast, "We have entered into a covenant with death, with the grave we have made an agreement. When an overwhelming scourge sweeps by, it cannot touch us, for we have made a lie our refuge and falsehood our hiding place."

So this is what the Sovereign LORD says:

"See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation; the one who trusts will never be dismayed. I will make justice the measuring line and righteousness the plumb line; hail will sweep away your refuge, the lie, and water will

*overflow your hiding place. Your covenant with death will be annulled; your agreement with the grave will not stand. **WHEN THE OVERWHELMING SCOURGE SWEEPS BY, YOU WILL BE BEATEN DOWN BY IT.** As often as it comes it will carry you away; morning after morning, by day and by night, it will sweep through."*

*The understanding of this message will bring sheer terror. The bed is too short to stretch out on, the blanket too narrow to wrap around you. The LORD will rise up as he did at Mount Perazim, he will rouse himself as in the Valley of Gibeon--to do his work, his strange work, and perform his task, his alien task. Now stop your mocking, or your chains will become heavier; the Lord, **THE LORD ALMIGHTY, HAS TOLD ME OF THE DESTRUCTION DECREED AGAINST THE WHOLE LAND.***

Listen and hear my voice; pay attention and hear what I say. When a farmer plows for planting, does he plow continually? Does he keep on breaking up and harrowing the soil? When he has leveled the surface, does he not sow caraway and scatter cummin?

Does he not plant wheat in its place, barley in its plot, and spelt in its field? His God instructs him and teaches him the right way.

*Caraway is not threshed with a sledge, nor is a cartwheel rolled over cummin; caraway is beaten out with a rod, and cummin with a stick. Grain must be ground to make bread; so one does not go on threshing it forever. Though he drives the wheels of his threshing cart over it, his horses do not grind it. All this also comes from the LORD Almighty, wonderful in counsel and magnificent in wisdom. **Isa 28***

This is not a picture of grace and peace and a way to treat God's Word, but instead it is the way those who stagger from intoxication of pride and ignorance act when they refuse to walk in righteousness and listen to the voice of God. They are sent into slavery as Israel was, a slavery of foreign words, words that come from sinful lips. They become bound to confusion and are taken away from Life and enter into a contract with death.

Now, you may need to read that over and over again before it really soaks into your mind just what is going on, but if you will do just that you will begin to see that God had to speak in that fashion to those who would not listen to Him. This is not what He wanted, but it is the **ONLY** way they would listen to Him. So He sent them into slavery and they fell backwards instead of going forward with God as their guide. Yet even though what is said is clearly seen, the idea of a little here and a little there has been taught as a good thing from pulpits the world over.

As in the days of Christ, the Word of God is not trusted to mean what It says, and with so many voices claiming to be heard as the one that we all should listen to and give our money to and trust them for the correct interpretation, it becomes an almost impossible task to ever hope to understand what God has said or to trust Him to guide His people into all Truth.

Help is on the Way

No matter what has happened, God's Word is sure and it is available to anyone who wants to see the Truth and walk in His Light.

*"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened. **Matt 7:7-8***

God's means what He says and for the one who seeks Him out, who knocks on the door and asks for wisdom and knowledge is the vision given that unveils what to so many is not understandable. When the one who wishes to know seeks for the Truth like looking for buried treasure then the understanding comes so that even when verses like Revelation 1:1 are read that it may be seen for just what it says and trusted to mean just what it written, that the book of Revelation is the Revelation (revealing) OF Jesus Christ then: they do not have to change or alter what is written so that it is made to say that it is the revelation **by** Jesus Christ. And when they read in God's Word that He is One, they may trust that God really is One, and that when we says that He sends His Word to those *who stagger with wine and are drunk with beer in a fashion of here a little and there a little because they will not listen any other way* then they do not have to imagine that it says something else.

Allowing God to speak to us in simple language will start a Spiritual Journey in our life that we will never forget, and it will allow Him to speak to us in ways we could never have imagined.



I have sat in meetings where I have heard the speaker present an idea that in order to understand God's Word that some words have to be changed because the writers did not say

what they really meant. This is an amazing statement to make especially in the face of the accepted doctrine of holy men writing what they received by or through the Holy Spirit. But if what they say is true, then did God cause these writers to incorrectly pen words that would create confusion purposefully throughout time and cause people to believe things that were not true? Is that what we believe about God and how we see Him as a friend? Yet these thoughts are taught as if it were true about God by those who claim to believe in Him. But if it is true then who is it that makes the determination what parts are not correct and therefore need to be interpreted so that the people will understand just what has been said? Who is the one/s who get to make that decision for the rest and which denomination is then going to be the one who is the holder of such truth?

With over 2500 different denominations the world over this becomes a daunting task to say the least. And of course with the disagreements between churches in many of the doctrines that they hold, it can never be achieved.

This is a dilemma indeed, and as long as men try to solve this problem as they usually do through the means of politics and financial persuasion, then the problem never gets solved.

But there is a solution to this problem; letting God mean exactly what He says. It is no doubt a controversial thought and one that is not accepted in the face of hierarchical governance, but we must allow God to speak for Himself and admit that He alone has the power, dominion and authority to rule His people. So the question begs to be asked: Will we finally allow God that privilege to lead His people, or will we act just like Israel and demand for humans to play that role?

So all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah. They said to him, "You are old, and your sons do not walk in your ways; now appoint a king to lead us, such as all the other nations have."

*But when they said, "Give us a king to lead us," this displeased Samuel; so he prayed to the LORD. And the LORD told him: "Listen to all that the people are saying to you; it is not you they have rejected, but **THEY HAVE REJECTED ME AS THEIR KING**. As they have done from the day I brought them up out of Egypt until this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so they are doing to you. Now listen to them; but warn them solemnly and let them know what the king who will reign over them will do."... But the people refused to listen to Samuel. "No!" they said. "**WE WANT A KING OVER US. THEN WE WILL BE LIKE ALL THE OTHER NATIONS, WITH A KING TO LEAD US AND TO GO OUT BEFORE US AND FIGHT OUR BATTLES.**" **1 Sam 8:4-9 & 19-20***

This has ever been the way of those who will not allow God to be their ruler and king. But for those who reject men's traditions and culture as the rule of their life, to those who will allow God to be their all-in-all, God will be their Ruler and King. But again, it is not an easily agreed upon idea today anymore than it has ever been; for man ruling over man has become the accepted truth while anything else is seen as ludicrous. Just as in the days of the Messiah when Israel accepted the leadership's word that this man should be crucified, the same idea of human rulership is accepted today.

But they shouted, "Take him away! Take him away! Crucify him!"

"Shall I crucify your king?" Pilate asked.

"WE HAVE NO KING BUT CAESAR," THE CHIEF PRIESTS ANSWERED. John 19:15

It is easy for many to look at what Israel did and imagine in themselves that they would never do such a thing, yet those same people allow men in so called *high-positions* to make decisions for them, even in regards to their own salvation. And those who sit in the seat of Moses have decided that the laity are "*poor instruments to make God's holy Truth to be yet more and more known unto the people, whom they desire still to keep in ignorance and darkness.*" (EPISTLE DEDICATORY OF BIBLE TRANSLATORS, in the year 1611)

Most have forgotten or just plainly do not know history itself that reveals the common mistake men make in putting men in the place of God to rule over them. GOD NEVER SET THAT SYSTEM IN PLACE FROM THE BEGINNING. Only when men had rejected God as their king was that kind of rulership to be found among God's people.

And sadly, as long as men reject God as their leader and king then anyone who makes the decision to not follow tradition or church doctrine and decree will not be accepted as anything but an outsider, dissident or heretic to the truth.

Yet, as long as there are those who allow God to be the only rule in their life, then the Truth will not be covered up or become just another interpretation in a sea of interpretations.



The End of the Road

Prophetic Revelations

The idea of God leading His people and being able to speak to His children as friends and not as if they are distant relatives, and allowing His Word to speak of its own understanding (to mean what it says) is a bridge that must be crossed so God may give us clear vision that we may understand His Word in its entirety.

It's always amazing to me to listen as people present ideas and opinions as to what they believe God has spoken in His Word especially in the books labeled as *prophecy* or *end time events*. Inevitably God's Word is seen by those who teach prophecy as possibly not having been penned correctly or that the writer was not given understanding about what they were given. So it is proposed by many that at times the people need to cross out a word or two and write in the correct word/s. This has been done without a thought being given about:

*And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, **THAT NO PROPHECY OF SCRIPTURE IS OF ANY PRIVATE INTERPRETATION**, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. **2 Peter 1:19-21***

Even though men use II Peter 1:19-21 to prove how no one can change or alter God's Word or privately interpret, they turn right around and do the same thing themselves and tell the people that what God has said really does not mean what it says and should be understood this way or that way. This kind of thing is done on a continual basis in Christianity while in the same breath they claim that the Bible is a God inspired book and that no one has the right to alter it without feeling the hand of condemnation on them. Yet they themselves do it!

Over and over again pictures are painted of enormous theories and gigantic ideas (and though they may be colorful it does not make them truthful) and make appear to be scriptural. And for most it appears to be the easier to allow that to be done rather than believing that God spoke just what He meant.

With all the voices wanting to be heard and believed it has become an almost

insurmountable hill to climb to allow God to say what He has said and to read His Word with any real clarity. But for those who choose to believe God alone, to them God's Word is the ONLY Word to be heard, to them the future becomes the past and the present is in the hand of their God and King.

Future Past

There is an old adage: When you see everyone going one particular direction, then go the other way. Just like a bunch of sheep that get caught in the same fence row, so many find themselves being caught unaware because it was easier to follow the herd than to be odd-man-out. For the sake of not wanting to rock the boat or to take a stand on knowing the truth no matter what, most will follow the herd. But for those who want more and wish to know the Truth rather than what has been accepted by the majority, to them God's Word is like a mine of jewels just waiting to be discovered.

That is exactly what we find when we look at prophecy with open eyes. When our eyes become opened a whole new view is revealed so that just as it says it is in Revelation 1:1 we may believe what God says is the Truth.

The revelation OF Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place. Rev 1:1

I can remember when I read Revelation chapter 1 and verse 1 for the first time with a desire to see what I had not seen before. I could not believe my eyes! It had been there the whole time; but I was told by leaders not to read it the way it reads, so I didn't.

But now a whole new picture formed before me. This was a revelation OF Jesus Christ, and not only that but as John was writing this letter he wrote it in the same way that the Messiah spoke to the Samaritan woman at the well.

The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship."

*Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. But **THE HOUR IS COMING, AND NOW IS**, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." **John 4:19-24***

Jesus was not speaking in some unknown way or hiding behind words so that man would endlessly search out the meaning of what was said, but was uncovering to this woman what had been spoken as a prophecy for so many years and was now fulfilled right before her eyes. Because He was the fulfillment of what had been spoken!

John was using the same language as he spoke about what seems like it was something to come (someone to come) but had now been fulfilled. This was something that was new to those who he was writing to but something that was as old as time and eternity. What he was writing about was the revealing (revelation) of Jesus Christ to those who had not seen (known) Him.

I did some calculating and realized that this book or letter was written some 1941 (one thousand nine hundred and forty one) years ago and to a people that no longer exist (at least I have never heard of anyone still alive from that time long ago.) And if these things were written to them and is was understood by them to SOON take place, then it would be a sensible thing to believe that what was SOON to take place, DID. But if that was the truth then the book of Revelation (as well as the rest of God's Word) would have to bear witness of the same.



One of the issues in Revelation is what John sees of creatures that have been presented by those who teach Revelation as meaning nations and peoples. Throughout time past these creatures have been applied to such persons as Napoleon, Hitler, Mussolini, the Pope, and nations such as Russia, Turkey, America, China and others. But as each successive person or nation failed to fulfill what others said they were going to do faded into the past, the prophecies then had to be re-applied to other peoples or nations. Over and over again this has taken place while what God has spoken has not been considered as having anything to do with what was being revealed.

Lions, Leopards and Bears, oh My!

As a child I was sent to private Christian schools that used the Bible as the foundation for their beliefs. One of the requirements in these schools was scripture memorization. We were taught to memorized many parts of the Bible, but there was one type of memorization that was unusual—we had numerous groups of texts, each group supporting a particular doctrine of the church that ran each school. For example, on the issue of worship to God and the reason for going to church we'd have certain texts about the Sabbath to memorize, each verse supposedly proving that one ought to rest and worship on a particular day.

Then maybe we would study about what happens when you die to prove the doctrine of heaven and hell and the resurrection. And there would also be texts that would show that Jesus was going to return soon and that we were to take this literally and get ready for His coming and His judgment. This took place day after day and year after year.

The owners of the school and those who taught in it were convinced that if we simply had enough of these proof texts solidly engraved in our memories that we would be able to resist the waves of false doctrine (the ideas that other religions would try to use to prove their beliefs) that were said to be coming in our direction as we went out into the world (which of course meant the church down the street that did not teach what we believed or the thousands of others that called themselves Christian.) If we were faithful to believe what we had learned then we would know what the truth was, because by the time we had memorized all of these proof-texts we would have memorized enough scripture to *prove* any particular doctrinal position of our religion.

I appreciate the efforts of that kind of schooling, and I'm glad I had a chance to attend, because it gave me the opportunity to learn the proof-text method very, very thoroughly (many times far better than most of its practitioners.) Thus today I can recognize it instantly and respond to it as necessary.

I suggest that the use of proof-texts is a manifestation of laziness and the desire to get something for nothing. People do not wish to spend the time firmly grounding their understanding in what various Bible writers actually teach. They would much rather have a short list of texts that support precisely what they have decided to believe anyhow. Thus, the use of proof-texts tends toward hypocrisy. To the uninformed, the purveyor of proof-texts can appear to be wonderfully informed and be a deep scholar of the Bible. But in fact, the result of reliance on proof-texts is a moral certainty and overbearing arrogance that is not supported by one's study or learning.

But first let me define what I mean by proof-texting. By proof-texting I mean the use of individual scripture texts to produce apparent support for a doctrinal position without adequate regard for the contexts of the individual texts which may indicate differences and nuances. I'm referring to the creation of entire doctrines which one demands that others believe or commands which one then demands that others obey, taken from a part of the words of texts but ignoring what is actually said.

Let me use an example. If someone were to write a biography of me, he could truthfully state that I accepted Jesus as my personal savior and received baptism in water by immersion. We can also say that I did this at the age of nine and felt that it was in obedience to the commands of Jesus.

Now if the next generation were to read that passage in my biography and apply the proof-text method to it, they might well conclude that I believe as some do that water baptism is a **requirement** for salvation. They would of course be wrong. I don't believe anything of the sort. But the key statements are there. I underwent baptism, I did so at the time that I was saved (or received salvation in one sense of the term) I did so because I believed that I was obeying a command of Jesus, and I did it all in such a way that the events were connected.

Now I think most people will be able to see easily that the conclusion that I believe that baptism is a requirement for salvation is not a necessary conclusion based on these facts. Based on the statements above, I **might** believe that. You can't be certain that I don't. But it is not actually stated. It is not even implied.

The difficulty is that by taking words outside of their immediate context or even their broader context will tend to make something seem extremely plain that may not have been intended in the first place. So the fact is that it's very easy to take statements out of context and create an entire set of doctrinal beliefs from them which are not a valid conclusion based on the intent of those statements.

And one of the sad parts of this issue is that for the deeper reader, they see that other parts of scripture are left out while others are promoted to an elevated position.

This is what we find when we look at the attempt through prophecy that has been made to make nations and peoples that are nowhere to be found in the Bible to somehow apply to what God has spoken about Himself instead. How can this be? Would seemingly dedicated teachers and ministers do such a thing in the face of Truth and honesty? Well, before we go on any further speaking of such things, let's take a look at God's wild kingdom of creatures and see how He applies His understanding of such things.

In the books of Daniel and Revelation there are four prominent creatures or animals (a lion, a leopard a bear and a conglomerate beast) that have been made to apply to many things as we have said (and all these different applications have all so far all come to nothing.) But when we remove the *little here and little there* mentality and read the rest of the story we can see why this has taken place.

First we will read a part of Daniels vision that speaks of these animals (for this example we will be looking at three of them) and then read Johns vision on this issue. Last we will read something that next to no-one seems to even know that has been said by God about these creatures.

In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream, and visions passed through his mind as he was lying on his bed. He wrote down the substance of his dream.

*Daniel said: "In my vision at night I looked, and there before me were the four winds of heaven churning up the great sea. **FOUR GREAT BEASTS**, each different from the others, came up out of the sea.*

*"**THE FIRST WAS LIKE A LION**, and it had the wings of an eagle. I watched until its wings were torn off and it was lifted from the ground so that it stood on two feet like a man, and the heart of a man was given to it.*

*"**AND THERE BEFORE ME WAS A SECOND BEAST, WHICH LOOKED LIKE A BEAR**. It was raised up on one of its sides, and **IT HAD THREE RIBS IN ITS MOUTH** between its teeth. It was told, 'Get up and eat your fill of flesh!'*

*"**AFTER THAT, I LOOKED, AND THERE BEFORE ME WAS ANOTHER BEAST, ONE THAT LOOKED LIKE A LEOPARD**. And on its back it had four wings like those of a bird. This beast had four heads, and it was given authority to rule. **Dan 7:1-6***

Now what John writes.

And I saw a beast coming out of the sea. He had ten horns and seven heads, with ten crowns on his horns, and on each head a blasphemous name. The beast I saw

*resembled **A LEOPARD**, but had feet like those of **A BEAR** and a mouth like that of **A LION**. Rev 13:1-2*

Now we will read something that very few seem to know that has been said by God about these creatures and just who they represent.

When Ephraim spoke, men trembled; he was exalted in Israel. But he became guilty of Baal worship and died. Now they sin more and more; they make idols for themselves from their silver, cleverly fashioned images, all of them the work of craftsmen. It is said of these people, "They offer human sacrifice and kiss the calf-idols." Therefore they will be like the morning mist, like the early dew that disappears, like chaff swirling from a threshing floor, like smoke escaping through a window.

*"But **I AM THE LORD YOUR GOD**, [who brought you] out of Egypt. You shall acknowledge no God but me, no Savior except me. I cared for you in the desert, in the land of burning heat. When **I FED THEM**, they were satisfied; when they were satisfied, they became proud; **then they forgot me. So I will come upon them like A LION, like A LEOPARD I will lurk by the path. Like A BEAR robbed of her cubs, I will attack them and rip open the cowl of their heart (THEIR RIB CAGE.) Like a lion I will devour them; a wild animal will tear them apart.***

"YOU ARE DESTROYED, O ISRAEL**, because **you are against me, against your helper**. Where is your king, that he may save you? Where are your rulers in all your towns, of whom you said, 'Give me a king and princes'? **SO IN MY ANGER I GAVE YOU A KING, AND IN MY WRATH I TOOK HIM AWAY. Hosea 13:1-11

Even though God claims to be these creatures it appears to be something that Christians have a hard time believing. Yet those who claim to believe what the Bible says believe they find eternal life within its pages. But yet the one thing that the book speaks about and God has said it with His own mouth, is not accepted to mean what He said.

You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal

life. THESE ARE THE SCRIPTURES THAT TESTIFY ABOUT ME, yet you refuse to come to me to have life. John 5:39-40

"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; (the old testament) I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. Matt 5:17-18

Christ came to fulfill all the words of the Law and the Prophets, not do-away-with, but to accomplish what the old testament/old covenant was saying to anyone who would listen. And these words were those spoken about God and spoken by God. These words were a revelation of God and spoken by Him of the redemption that was there for the one who would *read and understand*. These words were about Him and in Him the fulfillment of time would come and had come. This is what He spoke to the Pharisees.

But if I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, THEN THE KINGDOM OF GOD HAS COME UPON YOU. Matt 12:27-28

And today, with the study methods that cause students to overlook God's Word just like Israel before who did not understand what had been written, Christians see things that are not to be found in God's Word. Israel refused the knowledge of Messiah and His soon coming as well as all the signs that had been given to them that this Jesus was the Kingdom of God sent at the time appointed. He showed in every way that He was the Word of God, Eternal Life, the Resurrection, the Light, God in the flesh, God with us, King of Righteousness, King of Holiness, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, Melchizedek, the Angel of God, the Arm of God, the Testimony of God, the Love of God, Salvation, the Atonement, Justification, Sanctification, the Beginning and the End, the Breath of God, the Spirit of God and everything that is or forever will be God. In other words, just as it is said about Him:

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on

earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

Col 1:15-20

All of God's Word pointed to Him, and all of God's Word was about Him, for He is the Word (the Word of God.) There is nothing that does not speak of Him nor anything that takes pre-eminence over Him. Everything is under Him and everything exists in Him. Therefore nothing can fulfill His own Word but Him.

ALL THE PROPHETS TESTIFY ABOUT HIM *that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."* **Acts 10:43**

This is the testimony of God, by God and through God. There is only One Testimony given by God, His Word, that is the Testimony that was given by God, Jesus Christ.

Blow Your Nose, You'll Get More out of It

I remember when I began to see God's Word as a whole unit instead of bits and pieces with a little here and a little there, it was an exciting experience to say the least. All of a sudden all the things that did not make sense began to make sense. And prophecy that was once totally out of reach of my understanding, now began to click into place as I saw God being spoken of in every Word.

This of course does not make many very happy that continue to use prophecy for financial gain by one means or another. But in fact it is what sets the soul free and to be one in God and have God in them, and it allows God to mean just what He says and to say just what He means. Yet it is not for the faint of heart, for there are many things that God has said that point out what man so many times so easily becomes, and yet points out what they need to become and will become if they will just believe. But unless we are honest individuals, then it will not be an easy road to travel or a road that will be found at all.

But I would challenge each one to test these words and find out if what has been said is true or not. Do not lean on your own understanding or someone else's, but dig and scratch and see

what God unveils to your mind. I am not asking you to believe what I have said but to see what God has said in His own Word as we each contemplate the many things we have seen like the creatures in Hosea being a representation of God visiting the sin of His people Israel upon their heads because of their rejecting Him as King and Ruler.

We see that God sent Israel into slavery and gave nations that could otherwise have not touched them to now take them captive and kill many of them. God did this and was to them like a devouring creature, and all because they had turned their back on Him. And for those with thinking minds, yes, what many have called prophecy, meaning future events, is in fact a picture for us of history past, but was once Israel's future.



Where Do We Go From Here?

*(No one's ever gonna
believe this)*

God has given His Word, and all of scripture was given under inspiration and for salvation that all may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

*But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. **ALL SCRIPTURE** is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. **2 Tim 3:14-17***

These words have been read and taught as upmost truth with a demand attached to it to stay within its boundaries in study and meditation. Yet out of the other side of the mouth of those who claim this as the truth comes an idea that God's Word is to be read and contemplated from a platform of belief that states that it is to be understood in specific ways at specific times to be understood as past history or present truth and at other times to be future events yet to take place. In other words, some of scripture is made to appear as being of a major importance (as we see how it pertains to us today) while other parts are of lesser importance (that which only happened way back when and does not have anything to say to us today other than the knowledge that took place sometime in past history.)

From the law and how we worship to the idea of prophecy, the teaching of what is *lesser than* and *greater than* pervades the thinking of those who claim that God's Word stands as one while at the same time stating that what God says is not necessarily what He really means.

This kind of thinking shows its ugly head especially when the sins of the laity are compared to the sins of the leadership. When church leaders commit sin the laity are told that the leadership are in God's hands and that He will take care of His own, while on the other hand laity are excommunicated and punished in many different ways for their faults. In other words,

God's rules and His Word is not the same for one as it is for the other. And society as a whole embraces this thinking and thus the 'little man' is punished by it ever so severely while those at the top of the food chain can be left with only a simple slap on the wrist or nothing at all.

The last will be first and the first will be last

God's system of Love (how He rules His Kingdom) and how so many treat each other is as different as night is from the day. But His form of Love is not accepted or taught as being needful today as it does not fit the view of hierarchical leadership. So the issue of love has been broken down into the many aspects of human thinking and definition (also known as psychological framing) and it is determined that God is a multifaceted personage with a god-complex and we are just slaves to a higher thought process than we can ever fully hope to imagine. This kind of thought is presented before people while the picture of God becoming a slave to His creation and revealing Himself completely to those with eyes to see is not presented as being how we are to live our lives but is relegated to past history as to what God did for a specific time and purpose. Yet He gave this way of life to the disciple and said *do as I do* and be as a slave to a master, with you being the slave serving those around you and being willing to give your very life for them, for the first will be last and the last will be first.

*"So the last will be first, and the first will be last." **Matt 20:16***

*But many who are first will be last, and the last first." **Mark 10:30-31***

Indeed there are those who are last who will be first, and first who will be last."

Luke 13:30

*Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, "If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all." **Mark 9:37***

*Jesus called them together and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave- just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." **Matt 20:24-28***

In today's rat-race, dog-eat-dog, hierarchical life style, being a servant/friend has virtually been consigned to yesterdays old worn out adages and clichés. And living a life that is not concerned with self-esteem or what each person gets in return for the effort they have put out, is considered as a lie or at best a ridiculous notion. Even Christians that claim the Bible as their rule of faith have allowed the ideas of psychology and sociology to be an accepted form of thinking and have placed these ideas over scripture so that they may have a more realistic view of God from their perspective.

(But there are no dreams of grandeur here that somehow everyone will see the fault in this kind of thinking and thus the Truth will sweep the world like a peal of rolling thunder; but instead a battle will begin between right and wrong, Truth and error. As history has shown to anyone with eyes to see, Truth has never been the popular stand to take.)

This is no doubt a hard thing to face and even harder to imagine of trying to give this message to someone else who is steeped in doctrines and laws where men have set up their rules in an attempt to *help* God out and to show that human rulership is a part of God's great plan for mankind. But for those who have God living in them, they know the Truth and they know what it means to be free from the disobedient lifestyle that has turned God's desire around and made it appear to be dysfunctional at best. But His Way is something that will shine out of those who travel the Way God has made in the midst of so many winds of doctrine; and this Way is the only road they can take to enter that kingdom that is given to those who love God and are called according to His purpose.

It's Easy as 1,2,3

With so many prepared Bible studies and pre-recorded sermons that can be ordered for just a simple price and subscriptions to the many magazines and video clubs to help spread the gospel of the church to the world, presenting accepted truth should be an easy task. And yet for so many, speaking what they believe to others is an almost insurmountable hurdle to get over. And of course it would be in the face of so much doctrine that is hard for many a ministers to even explain.

But God has laid out plainly in His Word just what it takes to give His message and just who will be the ones to do it; and has given to us His knowledge of what it takes in three basics steps.

1. "COME TO ME, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." Matt 11:28-30

Many of us have heard this thousands times. And we have imagined ourselves coming into that rest of God by doing what we have been told to do. Yet we find ourselves continually searching for that rest as our lives become more and more complicated every day. But if we are doing as we are told, to pay our tithe, attend church, study our lesson, put money in the offering plate, get baptized, take a church office when it is presented to us, sing in the choir, put more money in the offering plate, give out pamphlets and booklets that are printed by the church to tell others of the God heaven, attend prayer meeting, put more money in the offering plate, then what is the problem?

The rest that God wants to give to His children has been believed to be all these things and more that are suppose to lead a person to believe that they are saved and that everything is ok between themselves and God. Yet all of these things still leave the sinner powerless to overcome their simplest of sins and in the end are left bound to their human sinful nature. So they work and work toward the goal that has been set before them and yet go to their graves still trying to come into God's rest.

But no matter the picture that is painted of how to come to God and find His rest, God makes it very clear just what each one is to do to find that rest and what kind of life they will live if they choose Him over all the words of men.

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

"Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Matt 5:10-12

All men will hate you because of me, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved. Matt 10:21-23

Remember the words I spoke to you: 'No servant is greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. John 15:20

Persecution? Insults? All kinds of evil against us? But is that what is happening when we look around us, is that our experience in walking with God, and just who was it that was persecuting those that the Messiah was talking to? Persecutions and trouble do not come because everyone is going in the same direction, but comes because someone is rocking the boat or trying to paddle up-stream. In other words, just as when Christ said this to the multitude this will happen when the truth is told in unerring lines. But all those things do not come from the world anymore than they did in the days of Jesus Christ. It has ALWAYS been THE CHURCH that has stood against the Truth and it has ALWAYS been THE CHURCH that persecutes and speaks all manner of lies against those who accept the Truth. But as long as everyone is willing to just live-and-let-live and follow the crowd, everything is alright. But the moment someone like the Messiah comes along and begins to reveal the thoughts that have been hidden from peoples sight and to teach about the power to overcome sin, then persecution is revived.

Yet through all of this (and as time has progressed in my own personal life) I have come to appreciate the reality of falling in love with God and the wonderful Word He has given to us that we may stand against all the winds of doctrine and persecution that try to remove God's rest from our view. Now I know why God could say *Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven,...* and when He said; *For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*
Matt 6:21

This is truly wonderful knowledge, but it is not a knowledge that is gained by being a part of this world and following the herd; it can only come from having an experience with God, a relationship with God that is based upon an idea of victory. And that leads us now to point number 2.

Do What?

2. *He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might **DIE TO SINS** and live **FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS**; by his wounds you have been healed. **1 Peter 2:24***

*What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! **WE DIED TO SIN**; how can we live in it any longer? Or don't you know that **ALL OF US WHO WERE BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST JESUS WERE BAPTIZED INTO HIS DEATH**? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, **WE TOO MAY LIVE A***

NEW LIFE.

*If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. For we know that **OUR OLD SELF WAS CRUCIFIED** with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—because anyone who has died has been freed from sin.*

*Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, **HE CANNOT DIE AGAIN**; death no longer has mastery over him. The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God.*

*In the same way, **COUNT YOURSELVES DEAD TO SIN BUT ALIVE TO GOD IN CHRIST JESUS**. Therefore **DO NOT LET SIN REIGN IN YOUR MORTAL BODY** so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness. For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace.*

*What then? **SHALL WE SIN BECAUSE WE ARE NOT UNDER LAW BUT UNDER GRACE? BY NO MEANS!** Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching to which you were entrusted. **YOU HAVE BEEN SET FREE FROM SIN AND HAVE BECOME SLAVES TO RIGHTEOUSNESS.** Rom 6:1-18*

It's interesting to me how people instinctively know that when they are about to take a trip somewhere that they must begin to prepare to take that trip, so they begin getting together a list of all the things that they will need. Yet it is taught and believed that the journey to heaven does not require any spiritual preparation. Most have been told that all they have to do is acknowledge that they want to go there and pay their tithe and obey the doctrines of the church and that is what prepares them for the trip. But at the same time they hold to the doctrine of heaven being a place of tranquility where every tear is removed from every eye and nothing dies anymore and sin will never again raise its ugly head. Yet even though sin is no longer going to be a part of the lives of those who go to heaven (and God seems to have the power to change them when they come into heaven) they see no need to try to stop sinning here (through the same power that comes from God and changes them in heaven) and prepare

to live that same way in heaven.

This kind of thinking is simply amazing. For believers openly admit that God's Word is true and that they are to show their love to God by obeying Him, yet when it comes to obedience they say they are nothing but lowly sinners that cannot obey Him. Yet they say they are headed to heaven because they love God and obey Him.

Paul talks about this kind of thinking and says that those who believe this lie stand condemned.

*But if our unrighteousness brings out God's righteousness more clearly, what shall we say? That God is unjust in bringing his wrath on us? (I am using a human argument.) Certainly not! If that were so, how could God judge the world? Someone might argue, "If my falsehood enhances God's truthfulness and so increases his glory, why am I still condemned as a sinner?" Why not say-as we are being slanderously reported as saying and as some claim that we say-"Let us do evil that good may result"? Their condemnation is deserved. **Rom 3:5-8***

There is a preparation that must be achieved before the trip is taken into God's kingdom. It is a simple but concise demand of God and it speaks about what it takes to be prepared. Paul reveals this when he says: *You should have as little desire for this world as a dead person does. Your real life is in heaven with Christ and God. And when Christ who is our real life comes back again, you will shine with him and share in all his glories.*

Col 3:3-4 And of course this can be understood when we stop to realize that if our treasures are not found in this world then why would we be concerned with the things of this world? But of course that means leaving behind all the things that we have counted as being of value to us in this world and realize WHAT THE REAL TREASURE IS.

*"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field. **Matt 13:44***

Even though many of us have heard text this over and over again, a change of mind must

take place to be able to take this to heart and have it be processed so that it makes the change in our life where the things of this world become strangely dim in the Light of God's Glory and Grace. In other words, we must lose our worldly mind so we may gain the heavenly mind of God.

*Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. **Phil 2:5-9***

It is truly a change of thinking that was laid out for us in Jesus Christ that showed the incorrectness of human thinking that has kept so many from being a part of kingdom of God. For if we believe that we are His sons and daughters, being made that way through the Spirit of adoption then why would we think that as God is our Father that He would not give His family what is needed to live a life wholly for Him? If our earthly fathers can supply what we need, then cannot our heavenly Father do likewise?

*"So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. **IF A SON ASKS FOR BREAD FROM ANY FATHER AMONG YOU, WILL HE GIVE HIM A STONE? OR IF HE ASKS FOR A FISH, WILL HE GIVE HIM A SERPENT INSTEAD OF A FISH? OR IF HE ASKS FOR AN EGG, WILL HE OFFER HIM A SCORPION? IF YOU THEN, BEING EVIL, KNOW HOW TO GIVE GOOD GIFTS TO YOUR CHILDREN, HOW MUCH MORE WILL YOUR HEAVENLY FATHER GIVE HIS SPIRIT TO THOSE WHO ASK HIM!" Luke 11:9-13***

And if we live in Him and He in us then we are no longer a part of this world as well, nor are we here because a man and a woman decided to have a child.

*Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God-**CHILDREN BORN NOT OF NATURAL DESCENT, NOR OF***

HUMAN DECISION OR A HUSBAND'S WILL, but born of God. John 1:12-13

God meant exactly what He said and He did not speak in riddles or was playing hide-n-seek with us, but has spoken clearly in understandable language. It is therefore up to us to decide whether we will listen and agree with Him or demand church authorized doctrine to prevail (and there is no attempt here to trivialize all that is involved with making that choice.) But for those who wish to know the Truth and be set free and begin a whole new Journey into that place where all may come boldly before God's throne and receive Grace in their times of need, to them this is not a hard choice at all even though it may mean and does mean that ALL those things that once held a high value in this world (even to the point of leaving behind the old feelings of *blood being thicker than water*) must be just as God said it will be for those who make Him their desire.

*"Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword. For I have come to 'set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law'; and 'a man's enemies will be those of his own household.' He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it. **Matt 10:34-39***

This is what Peter spoke of when he wrote; *For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.* **1 Peter 1:23** This was not spoken as a metaphor, but of a Spiritual kingdom where the things of God are Spiritually understood.

*The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. **1 Cor 2:14-15***

Therefore, all those who live in God will be born again, but no longer of this world or of this creation but born of a Kingdom that is above. So if we are born again then we can no longer be

a part of this world and its cares or thoughts (just as Christ prayed for His disciples.)

*"I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them. I have given them your word and the world has hated them, **FOR THEY ARE NOT OF THE WORLD ANY MORE THAN I AM OF THE WORLD.** My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified. **John 17:13-19***

Being born again is far more than a simple acknowledgement of the name of Jesus and a quick stroll up to the front of the church during an altar call, but is a life changing event that calls for all who will, to leave behind their old life of sin and now live free from it. It is about becoming one with God and living in His kingdom. It is about knowing that we are His children, children who are not brought up in some future judgment or who are made to feel continually guilty for the sins they have committed but are now free, free from sin and the things that have so easily entangled them.

*Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, **LET US THROW OFF EVERYTHING THAT HINDERS AND THE SIN THAT SO EASILY ENTANGLES,** and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. **Heb 12:1-2***

If by this time we have made a choice to walk with God no matter the cost then we are ready for the last **easy** step in this Spiritual Journey into Eternity.

3. Finally, **BE STRONG IN THE LORD** and in his mighty power. **PUT ON THE FULL ARMOR OF GOD** so that you can **TAKE YOUR STAND** against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil

*in the heavenly realms. Therefore **PUT ON THE FULL ARMOR OF GOD**, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to **STAND YOUR GROUND**, and after you have done everything, to stand. **STAND FIRM** then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. **Eph 6:10-18***

Anyone who ignores this fact is set to be doomed from the start. But for those who see this clearly, it is God's saving Grace. And as long as the armor is worn and used to fight the real enemy of Truth, it will keep the bearer free from this world's issues and make the wearer mighty in God. It is the thing that must be done so that when all has been done, each may stand in their place, in His victory. Each must stand, for falling down is only for those who do not know what God has said and do not believe or understand God's power and authority.

So, after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then.... .

This is end of this book but a whole new beginning for those who wish to have a wonderful new relationship in God. Yes, there is more to the story than is in these pages but there is enough here to start you on your journey. Pray and walk with God and do not stop, make Him the center of everything you do and say and think, and you will begin to see just how much He loves you and wants to become the meaning of your life and that He will provide for you ALL what He has promised to give to those who love Him and will hear what He has to say.

Final Remarks

This book was not written to convince anyone of anything other than the fact that God has far more to say than many have ever imagined and to drive as many as possible to begin to search God's Word for themselves. If that has been accomplished in even a small way, then the time that it took to pen these words and publish this book was worth all the effort.

More Resources to Help in Your Spiritual Journey

The Spiritual Journey Into Eternity:

The Spiritual Journey Into Eternity sees a grander view of God's Word than many have contemplated or imagined since the beginning of time. It is a expansive experience that will leave you with a new vision into the Mind of God.

The Body As One:

The Body As One takes a closer look at what Christ said He would do for man when He went back to the Father. The question is often asked if Christ is really building real mansions for His people in Heaven. This book finds the answer to this question while contemplating the victory of the cross of Christ and the freedom His children may have of living in Him.

Pulling Back The Veil:

Pulling Back The Veil reveals one of the most hidden truths in scripture. It finds the answer to what kind of Priest our God is and just why the liturgy and ceremonies performed around the world have kept the masses from understanding the work God has given to His children. Pulling Back The Veil is not for the casual reader, but is full of the Truth, the Way and the Life.

A Road Less Traveled, *The Writings of Paul*:

A Road Less Traveled, The Writings of Paul is a journey that leads to the throne of God and invites us to look at the divine nature of God and become one with the body of God. It makes the Way clear that no one need stumble over opinions or doctrines of men in the search for Truth.

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