

Pepper Road Church of Christ

***“READY TO GIVE
AN ANSWER”***

BIBLE DRILL FOR OLDER CHILDREN

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“Ready to Give an Answer”

Christians encounter a broad diversity of beliefs, when talking with others. Often these differences of beliefs are presented as questions or even challenges, for which we must “*be ready*” (**1 Peter 3:15**). The following questions represent prevalent questions or challenges to our faith with an answer. As you mature and your experience increases, you may develop your own answers or improve upon these, and assuming those answers harmonize with God’s Word, that’s great. However, until such time, hopefully these answers will help you “*be ready to give an answer*”.

Note: All of these answers assume those involved have at least some respect for God and the Bible. Also, all quotations are taken from Nelson’s New King James Version (NKJV), and many quotations are abbreviated.

The Bible

- “God has spoken through many prophets. Jesus is only **one** of **many** mouths for God.”
 - “*God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things*” (Hebrews 1:1-2; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 3:22; 4:12; John 14:6)
- “Although Jesus knew and taught God’s will, His apostles only recorded **some** of Jesus’ teaching as best as **they** could remember.”
 - “*The Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.*” (John 14:26; 16:13-15)
 - “*But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. ... Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. These things we also speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. ... But we have the mind of Christ.*” (1 Corinthians 2:10, 12-13, 16; 1 Thes. 2:13)
- “Well, anybody could claim to have messages from God! What stops me from writing my own Bible?”
 1. **Confirmed by Miracles:**
 - “*how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him, God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?*” (Hebrews 2:3-4; Mark 16:17, 20; John 14:11; 5:31-47)
 2. **Confirmed by Fulfilled Prophecy:**
 - “*But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die.’ And if you say in your heart, ‘How shall we know the word which the LORD has not spoken?’ – when a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him.*” (Deuteronomy 18:20-22)
 - “*Show the things that are to come hereafter, That we may know that you are gods; Yes, do good or do evil, That we may be dismayed and see it together. Indeed you are nothing, And your work is nothing; He who chooses you is an abomination.* (Isaiah 41:23-24)

- *“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; 3:1-2)*
- See also: **Luke 24:27, 44; Acts 3:18, 24; 8:32-35; 18:28; 28:23** – NT saints – even including Jesus – used fulfilled prophecies to help prove Jesus’ identity and convince the lost.

3. Confirmed by Blood of Witnesses:

- *“For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were **eyewitnesses of His majesty**.” (2 Peter 1:16)*
- *“But **in all things we commend ourselves as ministers of God**: in much patience, in tribulations, in needs, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in sleeplessness, in fastings” (2 Cor. 6:4-5)*
- “The Bible was only the **opinion** of those men. They did not intend for us to follow it, as if they were **commands**.”
 - *“Beloved, **do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God**; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. ...We are of God. He who knows God hears us; **he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error**.” (1 John 4:1-6)*
 - *“If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that **the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord**.” (1 Corinthians 14:37; see also, 1 Corinthians 7:19)*
 - In general, Bible represents God’s thoughts, not man’s thoughts (2 Timothy 3:16-17; John 14:26; 16:13-15...)
 - When Paul did write something, which was according to his opinion or applicable to the then present circumstances, he made it evident: *“But I say this as a concession, **not as a commandment**. ... I suppose therefore that this is **good because of the present distress**-- that it is good for a man to remain as he is ... But she is **happier** if she remains as she is, **according to my judgment** – and I think I also have the Spirit of God.” (1 Corinthians 7:6, 26, 40)*
- “I agree that the Bible represents God’s inspired will and commands, which we can understand, but God has communicated **additional** testimony to prophets of our day, which enhances (or, maybe even, replaces) our Bibles.”
 - *“But **even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed**. As we have said before, **so now I say again**, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed.” (Galatians 1:8-9; see also, Revelation 22:18-19; 1 Cor. 4:6)*
 - *“My covenant **I will not break**, Nor **alter the word that has gone out of My lips**” (Psalm 89:34; see also, Galatians 3:15-17; Hebrews 7:12-14)*
- “The problem with the Bible is that it has been **corrupted!** Everyone knows there are **thousands** of changes discovered in the Bible!”
 - Such changes must be demonstrated. This is almost entirely propaganda. There are very few even debatable textual variations. The vast majority of variations are trivial. This is the topic of a greater study, Christian Evidences. God’s Word **claims** to be indestructible, so any changes – if any – will not pervert the message.
 - *“... having been born again, not of corruptible seed but **incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever**, because “All flesh is as grass, And all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, And its flower falls away, But **the word of the LORD endures forever**.” **Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you**.” (1 Peter 1:23-25; see also, John 10:35; Jude 3; Psalm 118:89)*

- One cannot accept that the Bible has been essentially altered without destroying the entire Bible, since it repeatedly claims to be the work of an omnipotent God and unalterable. If one is unwilling to accept the integrity of the Bible, then a deeper study of textual criticism will be required, which is beyond this effort.
- “Do you really believe **finite** words can contain the **infinite** God? Do you really believe the Bible contains all there is to know about God?”
 - *“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is **profitable** for **doctrine**, for **reproof**, for **correction**, for **instruction in righteousness**, that the man of God may be **complete**, **thoroughly equipped** for **every good work**.” (2 Timothy 3:16-17; see also, 2 Peter 1:3; John 14:26; 1 John 1:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:18)*
- “Even if Jesus’ apostles were inspired and their writings were preserved in the Bible, surely you do not believe that we can actually **understand** it? Look at all the different denominations that claim to follow the Bible and yet they can’t agree!”
 - *“by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, by which, **when you read, you may understand** my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it **has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets**” (Ephesians 3:3-5; 5:17; 2 Corinthians 1:13)*
 - *“our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are **some things hard to understand**, which untaught and unstable people **twist to their own destruction**, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures. You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, **beware lest you also fall** from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; but **grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ**.” (2 Pet. 3:15-18; Jn. 8:32)*
- “So, even if I accept that the Bible can be understood, that does **not** mean we can understand it well enough to settle religious differences and draw lines of fellowship! The Bible **cannot** be used to provide proof-texts!”
 - *“But concerning the dead, that they rise, **have you not read in the book of Moses, in the burning bush passage**, how God spoke to him, saying, ‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’? He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living. **You are therefore greatly mistaken**.” (Mark 12:26-27)*
 - *“But even Moses **showed in the burning bush passage** that the dead are raised, when he called the Lord ‘the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.’” (Luke 20:37; see also, Matthew 22:23-33)*

Salvation

- “I don’t understand what is the **big deal** about **sin**. So what, if I have a few sins? Doesn’t everybody?”
 - For the **wages of sin is death**, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 6:23)
 - Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and **sin is lawlessness**. ... Little children, **let no one deceive you**. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. He who **sins is of the devil**, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might **destroy the works of the devil**. ... In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: **Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God**, nor is he who does not love his brother. (1 John 3:4-10)
 - Now “If the **righteous one is scarcely saved**, **Where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?**” (1 Peter 4:18)
 - Let him know that he who **turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins**. (James 5:20)
 - “He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall **not see life**, but the **wrath of God abides on him**.” (John 3:36)
- “Can I not just do some really good deeds to counterbalance the mistakes I have made – to make up for the bad with good?”
 - This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, **that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all**. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and **walk in darkness**, we lie and do not practice the truth. (1 John 1:5-6; see also, Amos 3:3)
 - Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear. But **your iniquities have separated you from your God**; And **your sins have hidden His face from you**, **So that He will not hear**. (Isaiah 59:1-2)
- “I am not good enough to be a Christian. I don’t think I can make it!”
 - ... for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being **justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus**, ... Where is **boasting** then? It is **excluded**. By what law? Of works? No, but by **the law of faith**. Therefore we conclude that a man is **justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law**. (Romans 3:23-28)
 - And you **He made alive**, who were **dead in trespasses and sins**, in which you **once walked** according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, ... But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, **made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)**, (Ephesians 2:1-5)
 - who **has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace** which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began, (2 Timothy 1:9)
 - No temptation has overtaken you except such as is **common to man**; but **God is faithful**, who will **not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able**, but with the temptation will also **make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it**. (1 Corinthians 10:13)
 - What then shall we say to these things? **If God is for us, who can be against us?** He who did not spare His own **Son**, but delivered Him up for us all, how **shall He not with Him also freely give us all things**? (Romans 8:31-32)
- “You don’t understand. I have done too many bad things. God could never forgive me!”

- ... although I **was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy** because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And **the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant, with faith and love** which are in Christ Jesus. This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that **Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief**. However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that **in me first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering, as a pattern** to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life. (1 Timothy 1:12-16; see also, Acts 26:9-11)
- "I don't understand. Why would God want to save me?"
- For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who **desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth**. For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who **gave Himself a ransom for all**, to be testified in due time, (1 Timothy 2:3-6)
- For God **so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son**, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did **not send His Son into the world to condemn the world**, but that the world through Him **might be saved**. (John 3:16-17)
- The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is **longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish** but that **all should come to repentance**. (2 Peter 3:9)
- "What must I do to be saved? How can I become a Christian?"

1. Hear the Gospel:

- For I am not ashamed of **the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation** for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. (Romans 1:16)
- How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not **heard**? And how shall they hear without a **preacher**? ... So then **faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God**. (Romans 10:14-17)
- Most assuredly, I say to you, he **who hears My word** and believes in Him who sent Me **has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life**. (John 5:24)

2. Believe the Gospel:

- "Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for **if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins**." (John 8:24)
- But **without faith it is impossible to please Him**, for he who comes to God **must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him**. (Hebrews 11:6)

3. Repent of Your Sins:

- Now when they heard this, they were **cut to the heart**, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, **what shall we do?**" Then Peter said to them, "**Repent**, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ **for the remission of sins**; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (Ac.2:37-38)
- "I tell you, no; but unless you **repent** you will all likewise perish." (Luke 13:3-5)
- "Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but **now commands all men everywhere to repent**, because He has appointed a day on which He will **judge the world in righteousness by the Man** whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead." (Acts 17:30-31)

- Do you not know that **the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived.** Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And **such were some of you.** But **you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified** in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God. (1 Corinthians 6:9-11; see also, Galatians 5:19-21)

4. Confession Jesus:

- "Therefore whoever **confesses Me before men, him I will also confess** before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever **denies Me before men, him I will also deny** before My Father who is in heaven." (Mt. 10:32-33)
- But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, **the word of faith which we preach**): that **if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart** that God has raised Him from the dead, **you will be saved.** For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and **with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.** (Romans 10:8-10)

5. Baptism:

- "And now why are you waiting? Arise and **be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.**" (Acts 22:16)
- There is also an antitype which **now saves us – baptism** (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the **answer of a good conscience toward God**), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, (1 Peter 3:21)
- Or do you not know that as many of us as were **baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?** Therefore we were **buried with Him through baptism into death**, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, **even so we also should walk in newness of life.** (Romans 6:3-4)
- For you are all sons of God **through faith in Christ Jesus.** **For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.** (Galatians 3:26-27)
- Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, **unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.**" (John 3:5; see also, John 3:23 for closest mention and identification of "water")
- Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and **cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,** (Ephesians 5:25-26; see also, Heb. 10:22)
- not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His **mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration** and renewing of the Holy Spirit, (Titus 3:5)

6. Continue in Faithful Obedience:

- Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, **goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off.** (Romans 11:22)
- And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now **He has reconciled** in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight – **if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away** from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven.... (Colossians 1:21-23)
- Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, **that you may be tested,** and you will have tribulation ten days. **Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.** (Revelation 2:10)

Summary of All Conversions in the Book of Acts

Conversion	Acts	Hear	Believe	Repent	Confess	Baptized
Pentecost	2:14-47	X	X	X		X
Jews at Temple	3:11-4:4	X	X	X		
Jewish Multitude	5:12-14		X			X
Jewish Multitude	6:7					
Samaritan Villages	8:5-25	X	X	X		X
Ethiopian Eunuch	8:26-40	X	X		X	X
Paul (Saul)	9, 22, 26	X				X
Cities of Lydda and Sharon	9:35					
City of Joppa	9:42		X			
Cornelius	10:1-48	X	X	X (11:18)		X
Cities of Antioch, Cyprus, Phoenicia	11:19-21	X	X			
Sergius Paulus	13:6-12	X	X			
Antioch Pisidia	13:13-49	X	X			
Iconium	14:1	X	X			
Derbe	14:20-21	X				
Timothy	16:1		X			
Lydia	16:13-15	X	X			X
Philippian Jailer	16:25-34	X	X			X
Thessalonians	17:1-4	X				
Bereans	17:10-12	X	X			
Athenians	17:22-34	X	X	X		
Crispus	18:5-8	X	X			
Corinthians	18:8	X	X			X
Ephesians	19:1-7	X	X	X (20:21)	X (19:18)	X

Baptism

- “What is the big deal about baptism? So what if we disagree? Why does baptism matter that much?”
 1. **Salvation** – *Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you **be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins**; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” (Acts 2:38; also, 22:16)*
 2. **Unity** – *... with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, **endeavoring to keep the unity** of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, **one baptism**; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. (Ephesians 4:2-6)*

- “Why does the Church of Christ talk and preach so much on baptism? Why do you put so much emphasis on it?”
 1. **Spiritual Importance** – See previous question.
 2. **Obligated to Correct Prevalent Wrong** – See examples of John the Baptist (**Mark 6:18**), Jesus (**Matt. 19:20-22**).
 3. **Prevalent New Testament Theme** - 115 NT occurrences compared to gospel (103), confess (33), and repent (58).
- “Well, baptism is a very difficult Bible subject that people have been arguing for centuries. Surely, you don’t think that you can resolve it now?”
 1. **Bible Can Be Understood** – Ephesians 3:3-5; Ephesians 5:17; 2 Timothy 3:16-17
 2. **Responsible for Misunderstanding** – 2 Peter 3:16-18
 3. **Not Complicated** - *Therefore, leaving the discussion of the **elementary principles of Christ**, let us go on to perfection, **not laying again the foundation** of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of the **doctrine of baptisms**, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. (Heb. 6:1-2)*
- “I was already baptized as an infant (or, into my church, etc. – not the right reason or way). Why would I need to be baptized again?”
 - *And he said to them, “**Into what then were you baptized?**” So they said, “**Into John's baptism.**” Then Paul said, “**John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.**” When they heard this, they were **baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.** (Acts 19:3-5)*
- “As long as a person is *sincere*, God is not going to keep someone out of heaven just because they were not baptized.”
 - *“**Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’**” (Matthew 7:21-23)*
 - *For I know **nothing against myself, yet I am not justified by this; but He who judges me is the Lord.** (1 Cor. 4:4)*
 - **Failures of Sincerity and Conscience** – Saul (Acts 23:1; 26:9-11; 1 Tim. 1:12-13), Jews (Rom. 10:1-3).
- “But, I *felt* like I was saved after reciting the Sinner’s Prayer! How could I not be saved?”
 - **Common Sense:** “So in the rest of life, feelings always represent reality? Even in the spiritual realm?”
 - *The **heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it? I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give every man according to his ways, According to the fruit of his doings.** (Jeremiah 17:9-10)*
 - *There is a way that **seems right to a man**, But its end is **the way of death.** (Pro. 14:12; also: 28:26; 16:25; 12:15)*
- “Both the publican and the Laodiceans were saved by reciting the Sinner’s Prayer (**Luke 18:9-14; Revelation 3:20!**)”
 - Publican was a **Jew**, already in covenant relationship with God from birth, seeking forgiveness (**1Kn.8:48-50**):

*“Two men went **up to the temple to pray**, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ... And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘**God, be merciful to***

me a sinner! I tell you, **this man went down to his house justified rather than the other**; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.” (Luke 18:10-14)

- Laodiceans were already Christians:

“And to the angel of the **church of the Laodiceans** write, ‘These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: ... As many as I love, **I rebuke and chasten**. Therefore **be zealous and repent**. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. **If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.**” (Revelation 3:14-20)

- “You are overlooking one of the most well-known passages in the Bible which says we are saved at the moment of belief, **John 3:16!**”

- Beside inserting words, overlooks context which defines true believers:

Jesus answered and said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, **unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.**” Nicodemus said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?” Jesus answered, “Most assuredly, I say to you, **unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.**” (John 3:3-5; see also, 3:23)

- “The Bible says we are saved ‘*by grace ... through faith ... **not of works***’ (Ephesians 2:8-9). Grace alone! Faith alone! Baptism is a work. It is something you do and is therefore opposite of the free gift of grace! You are a Bible-beating, self-justifying Pharisee and legalist!”

- **Belief is also something we do, and it is labeled by Jesus as a “work”:**

Then they said to Him, “What shall we do, that **we may work the works of God?**” Jesus answered and said to them, “**This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent.**” (John 6:29)

- **Repentance is also something we do, labeled as work:**

For **godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation** not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. (2 Corinthians 7:10 KJV)

- **Some Believers Were Lost:**

Nevertheless even among the rulers **many believed in Him**, but because of the Pharisees **they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue**; for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. (John 12:42-43)

“Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever **denies Me before men**, him I will also **deny before My Father who is in heaven.**” (Mat. 10:32-33)

- **Grace is not Exclusive of Obedience** – Naaman (2 Kings 5:10-14), Noah (Gen. 6:8-18), Israelites & Serpents (Num. 21:6-9).

- **Obedience Perfects Otherwise Dead Faith:**

What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he **has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, “Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,” but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, **what does it profit? Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead**. But someone will say, “You have faith, and I have works.” Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. **You believe that****

there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe – and tremble! But do you want to know, **O foolish man, that faith without works is dead**? Was not Abraham our father **justified by works** when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? Do you see that **faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect**? And **the Scripture was fulfilled** which says, "Abraham **believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.**" And he was called the friend of God. You see then that **a man is justified by works, and not by faith only**. Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also **justified by works** when she received the messengers and sent them out another way? **For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also**. (James 2:14-26)

- **Baptism is Manifestation of Faith in God's Work:**

In Him you were also circumcised with **the circumcision made without hands**, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by **the circumcision of Christ, buried with Him in baptism**, in which you also were raised with Him through **faith in the working of God**, who raised Him from the dead. (Colossians 2:11-12)

There is also an antitype **which now saves us – baptism** (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but **the answer of a good conscience toward God**), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, (1 Peter 3:21)

"And now why are you waiting? Arise and **be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.**" (Acts 22:16)

- **Salvation Requires Obedience to the Gospel – Not Just Belief:**

... and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the **Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ**. (2 Thessalonians 1:7-8)

But God be thanked that though you **were slaves of sin**, yet you **obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine** to which you were delivered. And having been **set free from sin**, you became slaves of righteousness. (Rm. 6:17-18)

... And having been perfected, He became the author of **eternal salvation to all who obey Him** ... (Hebrews 5:9)

... Through Him we have received grace and apostleship **for obedience to the faith among all nations** for His name... (Romans 1:5)

... who through Him **believe in God**, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that **your faith and hope are in God**. Since you have **purified your souls in obeying the truth** through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, **having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God** which lives and abides forever ... (1 Peter 1:21-23)

- "What about the thief on the cross? He was saved without baptism (Luke 23:43)!"
- For where there is a testament, there must also of necessity be the **death of the testator**. For a testament is in force **after men are dead**, since it has **no power at all while the testator lives**. (Hebrews 9:16-17)
- Or do you not know that **as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death**? Therefore we were **buried with Him through baptism into death**, that just **as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life**. For if we have been **united together in the likeness of His death**, certainly we also shall be in the **likeness of His resurrection**. (Rm.6:3-5)
- "The Greek preposition εἰς (eis), can also be translated 'because of' just as easily as it can be translated 'for'. This means that Acts 2:38 could more accurately be translated as 'be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ **because of** the

remission of sins' instead of 'baptized ... **for** the remission of sins!' Therefore, the people on Pentecost were baptized because they were **already** saved, **not to** be saved!"

- **Consistency Test:** Compare to identical Greek in other verses:

*"For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is **shed for many for the remission of sins.**" (Matthew 26:28)*

*John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching **a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.** (Mk.1:4)*

- **εἰς**, a preposition governing the accusative, and denoting entrance into, or direction and limit: *into, to, toward, for, among.* (Thayer's Greek Lexicon, 1604)
- **εἰς** is never translated as, "because of", in KJV.
- "In **1 Peter 3:21**, Noah was not saved **by** water. He was saved **from** it, the flood! If anything, the verse steers us away from the water-salvation that you water-dogs preach!"
 - ... *who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, **were saved through water.** There is **also an antitype which now saves us – baptism** (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ ... (1 Peter 3:20-21)*
- **Water Saved Noah From His Wicked World:**

*For if God ... did not spare the ancient world, but **saved Noah**, one of eight people, a preacher of righteousness, **bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly;** ... and delivered righteous Lot, who was **oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked** (for that righteous man, dwelling among them, **tormented his righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds**) then the Lord knows how to **deliver the godly out of temptations** and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment ... (2 Peter 2:4-9)*
- "So, are **you** saying that if I am **not** baptized in water for the remission of my sins that I'm going to **hell!**?"
 - **Who** said, **Acts 2:37-38; 22:16; 1 Peter 3:21; Romans 6:1-6; Galatians 3:26-27; Titus 3:5?**
- "So, if a tree limb falls on someone on their way to be baptized, will they go to hell?"
 - **Common Sense:** So, if a tree limb falls on someone on their way to **hear the gospel** and **believe**, will they go to hell? Where will this stop, using emotional reasoning and sympathy to chip away at God's law as if **we** were the Lawgiver (**James 4:11-12**)?
- "People have been baptized by sprinkling and pouring for centuries, since the early church fathers. Why are you saying they must be **immersed**? The mode or manner of baptism is not specified anywhere in the New Testament!"
 - Greek word for baptism, **βαπτίζω**, (*baptizo*) was **transliterated** instead of translated for political correctness:
 - 1) to dip repeatedly, to **immerse**, to **submerge** (of vessels sunk) 2) to cleanse by dipping or **submerging**, to wash, to make clean with water, to wash one's self, bathe 3) to **overwhelm** (*Strong's*, #907).
 - dip, immerse—1. of Jewish ritual washings, mid. and pass, wash one's hands Mk 7:4; Lk 11:38.—2. baptize, of ritual immersion by John the Baptist and Christians (Gingrich's Greek Lexicon, pg. 33)*
 - I. **1.** properly, to dip repeatedly, to **immerge, submerge** **2.** to cleanse by dipping or **submerging**, to wash, to make clean with water; to wash oneself, bathe. **3.** metaphorically, to **overwhelm**. II. In the N. T. it is used

particularly of the rite of sacred ablution, first instituted by John the Baptist, afterward by Christ's command received by Christians and adjusted to the contents and nature of their religion, viz., an **immersion** in water ... (Thayer's Greek Lexicon, 948)

- **Symbolizes Burial:**

*Or do you not know that **as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?** Therefore we were **buried with Him through baptism into death**, that just **as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.** For if we have been **united together in the likeness of His death**, certainly we also shall be in the **likeness of His resurrection.** (Rm. 6:3-5; also, Col. 2:12)*

- **Involves "Much Water":**

*Now John also was **baptizing** in Aenon near Salim, **because there was much water there.** And they came and were baptized. (John 3:23)*

*So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch **went down into the water, and he baptized him.** (Acts 8:38)*

- "I don't need to be baptized into water, because I was already baptized with the 'Holy Spirit and fire' (Mat. 3:11)!"

- In the context, "fire" is associated with the destruction of the "chaff" – not a blessing!

*"I indeed **baptize you with water** unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will **baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.** His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His **wheat into the barn**; but He will **burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.**" (Matthew 3:11-12; Luke 3:16-17. For "unquenchable fire", also see Mark 9:43-44)*

- New Testament teaches about **multiple** baptisms (Hebrews 6:1-2). However, by the writing of Ephesians only "one baptism" was still **commanded** (Ephesians 4:5). Holy Spirit baptism only occurred twice; baptism in fire refers to immersion in hell fire! See chart for comparison and details.

"There is Only One Baptism"

Ephesians 4:5

	John's	Holy Spirit	Fire	Great Commission
Administrator	John and Luke 3:16; John 3:23 Jesus' Disciples John 3:22; 4:1-2	Jesus Christ Luke 3:16 John 1:33	Jesus Christ Luke 3:16	People Acts 8:38 Acts 22:12-16
Element	Water Matthew 3:5-6,11 John 3:23	Holy Spirit Luke 3:16 Acts 1:8	Fire Luke 3:16-17 Revelation 20:15 Revelation 21:8	Water Acts 10:47-48 Acts 8:36-39
Subjects	Penitent Jews Matthew 3:5 Mark 1:4-5	Apostles and Acts 1:2-8 Acts 1:26-2:4, 14 Cornelius' Family Acts 10:44-48 Acts 11:15-16	Wicked Matthew 3:11-12 Matthew 25:41 II Thessalonians 1:8	Believing, Penitent Sinners Mark 16:16 Acts 2:37-38 Acts 8:35-39 Acts 22:16
Purpose	Repentance unto Remission of Sins Mark 1:4 Luke 1:76-77	Power Acts 1:8 Proof of Repentance for Gentiles Acts 11:17, 21	Eternal Punishment II Thessalonians 1:6-9 Matthew 13:41-42	Remission of Sins - Salvation Mark 16:16 Acts 2:38 Acts 22:16
Location	Around Judea Matthew 3:5-6	Jerusalem Luke 24:47-49 Acts 1:4-8; 2:1-6 Caesarea Acts 10:1, 24 Acts 10:44-48	Hell Mark 9:47-48	All the World Matthew 28:18-20 Mark 16:15-16
Time	Before Jesus' Crucifixion (c.a. ~28 to 30 A.D.) Luke 3:1-3 Acts 19:1-5	c.a. ~ 30 A.D. to c.a. ~ 32 A.D. Acts 2 & 10	From Last Day Through Eternity Matthew 25:41, 46 Mark 9:47-48	Penteost (c.a. ~30 A.D.) Acts 2:38 Until the Last Day Matthew 28:18-20

Old and New Testaments

- “I believe in **all** of the Bible. I haven’t torn out and thrown away half of my Bible, like you.”
- *“For whatever **things were written before were written for our learning**, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures **might have hope**.” (Romans 15:4)”*
- *“Now all these things **happened to them as examples**, and they **were written for our admonition**, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. **Therefore** let him who thinks he stands **take heed lest he fall**.” (1 Cor. 10:11-12)*
- *“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; (2 Peter 1:19; see also, Luke 24:27, 44; Acts 3:18, 24; 8:32-35; 18:28; 28:23)*
- “God authorized instrumental music in the Old Testament, and He commanded people to observe the Sabbath in the Ten Commandments. Are you saying that you are greater than God? Are you taking away His commands?”
 - *“Therefore, my brethren, you also have become **dead to the law through the body of Christ**, that you may be married to another – to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God.” (Romans 7:4)*
 - *“Therefore the law was our **tutor to bring us to Christ**, that we might be justified by faith. But **after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor**.” (Galatians 3:24-25)*
 - *“For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having **abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances**, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God **in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity**.” (Ephesians 2:14-16; see also, Colossians 2:13-23; Hebrews 7:11-15; Romans 8:4-5; Hebrews 9:11-20; 8:7-13; 10:8-10; 1 Corinthians 7:17-19)*
- “God only took away the **ceremonial** law, not the **moral** aspects of the law, like the Ten Commandments.”
 - *“Therefore, my brethren, you also have **become dead to the law through the body of Christ**, that you may be married to another – to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God. ... What shall we say then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless **the law had said, ‘You shall not covet.’**” (Romans 7:4-7)*
 - The “Law of the Lord” is often used to refer to even the **ceremonial** parts, like circumcision – not just the **moral** parts of the Old Law (Luke 2:22-24).
- “Are you greater than Jesus? Has the world ended yet? Jesus said that even He would not take away the Old Testament as long as the earth still stood (Matthew 5:18-19)!”
 - *“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. **I did not come to destroy but to fulfill**. For assuredly, I say to you, **till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled**.” (Matthew 5:17-18; For “not-but”, compare to, John 6:27; 12:44; 1 Corinthians 1:17)*
 - *For **Christ is the end of the law** for righteousness to everyone who believes.” (Romans 10:4)*
- “The Bible says God does **not** change, so He’s the same God in the Old as the New Testament (Hebrews 13:8). You’re making Him a different God!”
 - *“I will raise up for them **a Prophet like you** from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. And it shall be that **whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him**.” (Deuteronomy 18:18-19; see also, Mark 9:4-7; John 1:17; Acts 3:22-26)*

- “Behold, **the days are coming**, says the LORD, when **I will make a new covenant** with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah” (Jeremiah 31:31-33)
- “You are proclaiming a lawless gospel! You are a grace-only, libertine, who is trying to do away with God’s commandments!”
- “Previously saying, “Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and offerings for sin You did not desire, nor had pleasure in them” (which are offered **according to the law**), then He said, “Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God.” **He takes away the first that He may establish the second.**” (Hebrews 10:8-10; see also, Isaiah 2:1-3; 42:1-6; 1 Corinthians 9:20-21; Romans 3:27; 8:2; Galatians 6:2; James 2:12-13; 1:25)
- “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but **he who does the will of My Father in heaven**. Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; **depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!**’” (Matthew 7:21-23; see also, 13:41)
- “So, why did God make an Old and New Covenant? What was wrong with the first one?”
- “For **if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second**. Because **finding fault with them**, He says: “Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah – not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because **they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them**, says the LORD. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put **My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people**. None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ **for all shall know Me**, from the least of them to the greatest of them. For **I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.**” In that He says, “A new covenant,” **He has made the first obsolete**. Now what is becoming **obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.**” (Hebrews 8:7-13)
- “For **what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh**, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, **on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh**, that the **righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us** who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.” (Romans 8:3-4)
- “For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, ‘**Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them.**’ But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for ‘the just shall live by faith.’ **Yet the law is not of faith, but ‘the man who does them shall live by them.’** Christ has **redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us** (for it is written, ‘**Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree**’) ... Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! For **if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law**. But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. (Galatians 3:10-22; see also, 2:19-21)
- “For it is **not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins**. ... By that will we have been **sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all**. And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same **sacrifices, which can never take away sins**. But this Man, after He had **offered one sacrifice for sins forever**, sat down at the right hand of God,” (Hebrews 10:4-12)
- “What **purpose then does the law serve**? It was added **because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made ...**” (Galatians 3:19)

- “Has then what is good become death to me? Certainly not! But **sin, that it might appear sin**, was producing death in me through what is good, so that **sin through the commandment might become exceedingly sinful.**” (Romans 7:13)

Hell

- “A **loving** God would never send anyone to hell!”
- “The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is **longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.**” (2 Peter 3:9)
- “And the LORD God of their fathers **sent warnings** to them by His messengers, **rising up early** and sending them, because He had **compassion** on His people and on His dwelling place. But they mocked the messengers of God, despised His words, and scoffed at His prophets, **until the wrath of the LORD arose** against His people, **till there was no remedy.**” (2 Chronicles 36:15-16; see also John 3:16)
- “Jesus bid sinners to come to him (Matthew 9:11-13), and He spoke **against** judgment (Matthew 7:1). He was about forgiveness – not condemnation (John 12:47). He was **not** a Bible-thumping, fire-breathing, hell-condemning Christian - like you!”
 - “If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your **whole body to be cast into hell**. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your **whole body to be cast into hell.**” (Matthew 5:29-30; see also, Mark 9:43-47)
 - “He who **rejects Me**, and **does not receive My words**, has **that which judges him – the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.**” (John 12:48)
 - “Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and **then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye**. **Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine**, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces.” (Matthew 7:5-6; see also, John 7:24; 1 Corinthians 5)
- “Even if God sends someone to hell, it won’t be **forever**. ‘Forever’ often means ‘age-lasting’ or just what may seem like a ‘long-time’ (Jonah 2:6).”
 - “And these will go away into **everlasting punishment**, but the righteous into **eternal life.**” (Matthew 25:46)
 - “And besides all this, between us and you there is **a great gulf fixed**, so that those who want to pass from here to you **cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.**” (Luke 16:26)
- “God is not going to send many people to hell. It is only for a **few**, really bad people.”
 - “Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and **broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it**. Because narrow is the gate and **difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.**” (Matthew 7:13-14; see also, Luke 13:23-34)
- “God will only send really **bad** people, like murderers to hell. Just because someone does not become a devout Christian, that doesn’t make them really **bad** and worthy of hell.”
 - “since it is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you, and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, **in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

These shall be **punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord** and from the glory of His power," (2 Thessalonians 1:6-9)

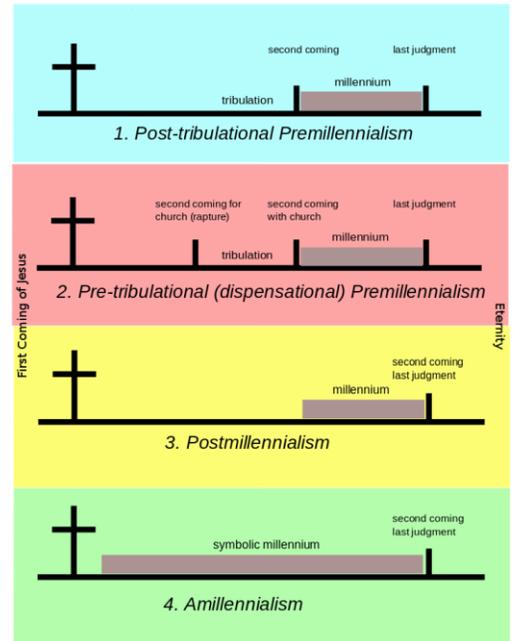
- "Then He will also say to those on the left hand, '**Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; I was a stranger and you **did not take Me in**, naked and you **did not clothe Me**, sick and in prison and you **did not visit Me.**' Then they also will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?' Then He will answer them, saying, 'Assuredly, I say to you, **inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.**'" (Matthew 25:41-45)**
- "Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that **those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God**". (Gal. 5:19-21; see also, 1 Cor. 6:9-10)
- "The Bible says that God will 'destroy' men's souls in hell (2 Thessalonians 2:9). They will not be conscious or tormented; rather, they will simply cease to exist."
 - "Then he cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for **I am tormented in this flame.**' But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now **he is comforted and you are tormented.**'" (Luke 16:24-25)
 - "**eternal life** to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality; but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness – **indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish**, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek;" (Romans 2:7-9)
- "Man **is** a soul. He does not **have** a soul. He is nothing more than a breathing, living body. Once that body is dead and destroyed, there is no 'ghost in the machine' to live on. If God does not raise the wicked, they simply will cease to exist as soon as they die."
 - "Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though **our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day**. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal. For we know that if **our earthly house, this tent**, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this **we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven**, if indeed, **having been clothed, we shall not be found naked**. For **we who are in this tent** groan, being burdened, **not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life.**" (2 Corinthians 4:16-5:4)
 - "And do not fear those who **kill the body but cannot kill the soul**. But rather fear Him **who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.**" (Matthew 10:28 – "destroy": "The idea is not extinction but ruin, loss, not of being, but of well-being. This is clear from its use ... the lost son, Luke 15:24"; Vine)
 - "But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying, '**I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob**'? God is **not the God of the dead, but of the living.**" (Matthew 22:31-32)
- Then God said, "**Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.**" So **God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He**

created them. ... And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.” (Genesis 1:26-27; 2:7; compare to Genesis 2:19; John 4:24)

Premillennialism (Heaven)

- “Jesus came to establish His kingdom on earth, but because the Jews rejected and crucified Him, God instituted the church as a temporary substitution until Jesus returns and begins His 1,000 year reign.”
 - “He has **delivered** us from the power of darkness and **conveyed** us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,” (Colossians 1:13; notice past-tense – kingdom already exists!)
 - “I, John, both **your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom** and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.” (Revelation 1:9)
 - Jesus answered, “**My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here.**” (John 18:36)
- “Jesus teaching about the kingdom being near (Matthew 4:23; 9:35; 24:14) does not apply, because that represents God’s plan **before** the Jews rejected Him! (Incidentally, most of His teaching also will not apply until He returns in His kingdom, since He was preaching the gospel of the **kingdom**.)”
 - And He said to them, “Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will **not taste death till they see the kingdom of God present with power.**” (Mark 9:1)
 - And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to **wait for the Promise of the Father, “which,”** He said, “you have heard from Me; for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be **baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.**” Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, “Lord, will You **at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?**” And He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. But you shall **receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you;** and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” (Acts 1:4-8)
 - “When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there **came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind,** and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them **divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them.** And they were all **filled with the Holy Spirit** and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” (Acts 2:1-4)
- “The book of Revelations is very clear that Jesus will return for a great battle and set up His kingdom of peace for 1,000 years (Revelation 19:9-20:6)!”
 - “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants – **things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel** to His servant John, who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw. Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; **for the time is near.**” (Revelation 1:1-3)

Comparison of Christian millennial teachings



- Then he said to me, "These words are faithful and true." And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants the **things which must shortly take place**. "Behold, **I am coming quickly!** Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book." ... And he said to me, "**Do not seal** the words of the prophecy of this book, **for the time is at hand.**" (Revelation 22:6-10; compare to Daniel 8:26)
- "The prophets foretold that Jesus would come and reign on David's throne in Jerusalem in His kingdom (2 Samuel 7:12-13). He never did that, so He must return. Do you not believe the prophets?"
 - "Is this man Coniah a despised, broken idol – A vessel in which is no pleasure? Why are they cast out, he and his descendants, And cast into a land which they do not know? O earth, earth, earth, Hear the word of the LORD! "Thus says the LORD: 'Write this man down as childless, A man who shall not prosper in his days; For **none of his descendants shall prosper, Sitting on the throne of David, And ruling anymore in Judah.**'" (Jeremiah 22:28-30)
 - Josiah begot **Jeconiah** and his brothers about the time they were carried away to Babylon. And after they were brought to Babylon, Jeconiah begot Shealtiel, and Shealtiel begot **Zerubbabel**. ... And Jacob **begot Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ**. So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations, from David until the captivity in Babylon are fourteen generations, and from the captivity in Babylon until the Christ are fourteen generations. (Matthew 1:11-17)
 - "Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him **that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne**, he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the **resurrection of the Christ**, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption. This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses. Therefore being **exalted to the right hand of God**, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear. For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself: "**The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool."**" Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that **God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.**" (Acts 2:29-36)
- "God promised the Jews that He would give them Israel as their land **forever** (Genesis 13:14-17). Until Jesus comes and rules over them in Jerusalem, God's promise will remain unfulfilled. Do you not believe God will keep His promise to the Israelites?"
 1. "Forever" does not always mean "until the end of time" or "for all eternity". It often has "lifetime" or "age-lasting" limitations. For example:
 - "then his master shall bring him to the judges. He shall also bring him to the door, or to the doorpost, and his master shall pierce his ear with an awl; and **he shall serve him forever.**" (Exodus 21:6)
 - "He who is born in your house and he who is bought with your money must be **circumcised**, and **My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.**" (Genesis 17:13; see also, Gal. 5:4; 1 Cor. 7:19)
 2. The land promise to Abraham had definite geographical boundaries:
 - On the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying: "To your descendants I have given **this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates** ..." (Genesis 15:18)
 - "Little by little I will drive them out from before you, until you have increased, and you **inherit the land**. And I will set **your bounds from the Red Sea to the sea, Philistia, and from the desert to the River**. For I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand, and you shall drive them out before you." (Exo. 23:30-31)
 3. God **fulfilled** His promise to Abraham, as recognized by the Jews **themselves** through inspiration:

- “So **the LORD gave to Israel all the land of which He had sworn to give to their fathers**, and they took possession of it and dwelt in it. ... **Not a word failed** of any good thing which the LORD had spoken to the house of Israel. **All came to pass.**” (Joshua 21:43-45; also see, Deuteronomy 19:7-9; Joshua 20:7-9)
 - So he **reigned over all the kings from the River to the land of the Philistines, as far as the border of Egypt.** (2 Chronicles 9:26)
 - “You are the LORD God, Who chose Abram, And brought him out of Ur of the Chaldeans, And gave him the name Abraham; You found his heart faithful before You, And made a covenant with him **To give the land** of the Canaanites, The Hittites, the Amorites, The Perizzites, the Jebusites, And the Girgashites – To give it to his descendants. **You have performed Your words**, For You are righteous.” (Nehemiah 9:7-8)
4. God’s promise to give the land to Abraham’s descendants has been fulfilled, but keeping it was conditional. Their failure to retain the land represents their own failure, not God’s:
- “But it shall come to pass, **if you do not obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes** which I command you today, that **all these curses will come upon you** and overtake you: ... Moreover all these curses shall come upon you and pursue and overtake you, **until you are destroyed, because you did not obey the voice of the LORD your God**, to keep His commandments and His statutes which He commanded you. And they shall be upon you for a sign and a wonder, and **on your descendants forever**. Because you did not serve the LORD your God with joy and gladness of heart, for the abundance of everything, ... And it shall be, that just as the LORD rejoiced over you to do you good and multiply you, so the LORD will rejoice over you to destroy you and bring you to nothing; and **you shall be plucked from off the land which you go to possess**. ... Now it shall come to pass, when all these things come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you call them to mind among all the nations where the LORD your God drives you, and you return to the LORD your God and obey His voice, according to all that I command you today, you and your children, with all your heart and with all your soul, that the LORD your **God will bring you back from captivity, and have compassion on you**, and gather you again from all the nations where the LORD your God has scattered you. ... The LORD your God will make you abound in all the work of your hand, in the fruit of your body, in the increase of your livestock, and in the produce of your land for good. For the LORD will again rejoice over you for good as He rejoiced over your fathers, **if you obey the voice of the LORD your God, to keep His commandments and His statutes which are written in this Book of the Law, and if you turn to the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul**. ... I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore **choose life**, that both you and your descendants may live; that you may love the LORD your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling to Him, for He is your life and the length of your days; and **that you may dwell in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them.**” (Deuteronomy 28:15-30:20)

Calvinism

John Calvin (1509-1564) wrote, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, in 1536 at age 27. His teaching was very influential in Reformation movement and most Protestant denominations. The cornerstone of Calvinism is God’s sovereignty, that He not only rules over all but that He also makes at least all moral decisions. Upon this foundation, 5 key doctrines are built and taught, which can be remembered by the acronym, TULIP. Very few false doctrines other than Calvinism are so pervasive and perverse in corrupting man’s concept of God and God’s requirements for man to be saved.

Introduction

- “God is absolutely sovereign, but man is absolutely responsible for his sins. This is a divine paradox and mystery. It cannot be understood or reconciled by our limited human mind, but it must be accepted and believed. Who are we to question God (**Romans 9:20**)?”

- "... being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God **set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness**, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, **to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier** of the one who has faith in Jesus." (Romans 3:24-26)
- "Ahhh, this is a completely academic discussion. People have been arguing about this for hundreds of years. We will never be able to settle this. We can ask God to explain this when we get to heaven, but otherwise, don't worry about it."
- ... the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, "**My wrath is aroused against you and your two friends, for you have not spoken of Me what is right, as My servant Job has.** Now therefore, take for yourselves seven bulls and seven rams, go to My servant Job, and **offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and My servant Job shall pray for you. For I will accept him, lest I deal with you according to your folly; because you have not spoken of Me what is right, as My servant Job has.**" So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite went and did as the LORD commanded them; **for the LORD had accepted Job.** (Job 42:7-9)

Sovereignty of God (Soil of TULIP)

- "You do not believe in the sovereignty of God!? Calvinism elevates God by magnifying His sovereignty, whereas you blaspheme Him with your arrogant notions of free-will!"
- "For the **children of Judah have done evil in My sight,**" says the LORD. "They have set their abominations in the house which is called by My name, to pollute it. And they have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, **to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire, which I did not command, nor did it come into My heart.**" (Jeremiah 7:31; see also, Leviticus 18:21; Deuteronomy 18:10)
- "The Bible **clearly** teaches that God predestined us, **then** called us, and **then** justified us (Romans 8:29-30). Therefore, we were predestined **before** being saved based on **His good pleasure** – not our own will (Eph. 1:3-11)!"
- For ⁰whom He foreknew, He **also predestined** to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover **whom He ¹predestined**, these He **also ²called**; whom He called, these He **also ³justified**; and whom He justified, these He **also ⁴glorified.** (Romans 8:29-30)
- But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "**God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.**" Therefore **submit to God.** Resist the devil and he will flee from you. **Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.** Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. (James 4:6-8)

Total Hereditary Depravity (T)

- "Jeremiah 17:9 says that man's heart is 'deceitful above all, and desperately wicked'. So, how can you say we have the ability to choose that which is good?"
- "The heart is deceitful above all things, And **desperately wicked**; Who can know it? I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give every man **according to his ways, According to the fruit of his doings.**" (Jeremiah 17:9-10)
- "Romans 3:10-12 clearly says, 'There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God'. So, who does that leave available with the ability to look for God, much less choose to follow Him?"
- As it is written: "There is **none righteous, no, not one**; There is **none who understands**; There is **none who seeks after God. They have all turned aside**; They have together **become unprofitable**; There is none who does good, no, not one." (Romans 3:10-12)
- "The Psalmist plainly declares that he was born sinful, 'Surely I was **sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me**' (Psalm 51:5, NIV). How can you say we were born otherwise?"

- **Spurious Translation** – Compare NIV to NKJ, ASV, NASB, ESV, RSV, YLT
- **Figurative Language** – Compare to **Psalm 58:3**
- **The Truth:** Man is born initially innocent and only becomes depraved through repetitive, insistent sin. God does not punish men for their fathers' sins.
 - *“Moreover **your little ones and your children**, who you say will be victims, **who today have no knowledge of good and evil**, they shall go in there; to them I will give it, and they shall possess it.” (Deuteronomy 1:39)*
 - *Then **Jesus called a little child to Him**, set him in the midst of them, and said, “Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and **become as little children**, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore whoever **humbles himself as this little child** is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 18:2-4; see also, Mt. 19:14)*
 - *For since the creation of the world ¹**His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made**, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, because, although **they knew God, they ²did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but ³became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened**. Professing to be wise, **they ³became fools**, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man – and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. ⁴**Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness**, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, who ³**exchanged the truth of God for the lie**, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. ⁴**For this reason God gave them up to vile passions**. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due. And ³**even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge**, ⁴**God gave them over to a debased mind**, to ⁵**do those things which are not fitting; being filled with all unrighteousness ...** (Romans 1:20-29)*
 - *“If, however, he begets a son **Who sees all the sins which his father has done, And considers but does not do likewise**; ... But has executed My judgments And walked in My statutes – **He shall not die for the iniquity of his father; He shall surely live!** ... **Yet you say, ‘Why should the son not bear the guilt of the father?’** Because the son has done what is lawful and right, and has kept all My statutes and observed them, **he shall surely live. The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son.** The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself. But if a wicked man turns from all his sins which he has committed, keeps all My statutes, and does what is lawful and right, he shall surely live; he shall not die. None of the transgressions which he has committed shall be remembered against him; because of the righteousness which he has done, he shall live. **Do I have any pleasure at all that the wicked should die?**” says the Lord GOD, “and not that he should turn from his ways and live? ... Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, **every one according to his ways**,” says the Lord GOD. **“Repent, and turn from all your transgressions, so that iniquity will not be your ruin. Cast away from you all the transgressions which you have committed, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit.** For why should you die, O house of Israel? **For I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies,**” says the Lord GOD. **“Therefore turn and live!”** (Ezekiel 18:14-23, 30-32)*

Unconditional Election (U)

- “Your faith is directly instilled by God. Does not **Ephesians 2:8-10** teach that **even** your faith is given to you, apart from your works, and worked by God? We are not saved by anything we do (**2 Timothy 1:9**)!”
- *For **by grace** you have been saved through faith, and **that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.** (Ephesians 2:8-9)*

1. **Assumption:** Does “it ... *the gift of God*” refer to our individual faith or to salvation by faith, in other words the whole system of being saved? The Greek for “it” does not match “faith”.
- ... who has **saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace** which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began, (2 Timothy 1:9)
 - **Not-But** construction emphasizes God’s effort relatively over our own, but it does not eliminate our will. Compare to: **John 6:28-29**; also, **John 6:27; 12:44**.
 - “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How **often I wanted** to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, **but you were not willing!**” (Matthew 23:37)
 - Now let me sing to my Well-beloved A song of my Beloved regarding His vineyard: My Well-beloved has a vineyard On a very fruitful hill. **He dug it up and cleared out its stones, And planted it with the choicest vine. He built a tower in its midst, And also made a winepress in it; So He expected it to bring forth good grapes, But it brought forth wild grapes. And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, Judge, please, between Me and My vineyard. What more could have been done to My vineyard That I have not done in it? Why then, when I expected it to bring forth good grapes, Did it bring forth wild grapes?** (Isaiah 5:1-4)
 - “How can you deny that Jesus ‘finished’ our salvation on the cross (John 19:30)!? BTW, the word, ‘finish’, is an accounting term meaning, ‘paid for, in full!’”
 - Assumes too much? Jesus may have finished his work on earth, but does that mean there was nothing left for anyone to do, even Him?
 - “**And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty. ... And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins!** Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable.” (1 Cor. 15:14-19)
 - “Are you spiritually **alive** or **dead** before being saved? What can dead people do for themselves, especially people born that way (see Ephesians 2:1-3)?”
 - “**And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.”** (Eph. 2:1-3)
 - **Assumption:** Pushed illustration too far. For example, can the dead hear?

“Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live.” (John 5:25)
 - How did man become “dead”? Birth or habitual sin?

“Nature” (Gr., *phusis*) can mean “mode of feeling and acting which by long habit has become nature” (Strong’s, Thayer’s).

Limited Atonement (L)

- “Jesus gave His life a ransom for ‘many’, not ‘all’ (Mark 10:45), so why do you think He gave His life for **all**?”
 - “*For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.*” (Mark 10:45)

- “Many” stands in opposition to “few” (for example, see **Luke 13:23-24**). “Many” can mean “all”. It does not eliminate “all” any more than “all” eliminates “many”.
- *But the free gift is not like the offense. For if by the one man’s offense **many** died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many. (Romans 5:15)*
- If Calvinists can accept that “many” can include and actually mean “all” in **Romans 5:15** in regards to the consequences of Adam’s sin, why can’t they accept that possibility with **Mark 10:45**?
- “Jesus gave His life for His sheep, His friends, and the church – no one else (**John 10:11, 15; 15:13; Ephesians 5:25**)! Why are you suggesting otherwise?”
 - Where does it say “only” (i.e., meaning “no one else”) in the text?
- “Passages that refer to God wanting “all to be saved” or providing Jesus as a “ransom for all” (**1 Timothy 2:3-6; 2 Peter 3:9**) should be understood in the context of letters written to Christians. In other words, it should be interpreted in the light of God wanting all **Christians** to be saved – not the lost, unelected, and reprobate!”
- *My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He Himself is **the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.** (1 John 2:1-2)*
 - The “world” cannot be used in limited application to “all elect around the world”, based on usage in **1 John**.
 - **3:1** – “*the world does not know us, because it did not know Him*”
 - **3:13** – “*Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you.*”
 - **4:4-5** – “*He who is in you is greater than he who is in the **world**. They are of the world. Therefore they speak as of the world, and the world hears them*”
 - **5:4** – “*For whatever is born of God **overcomes the world**. And this is the victory that **has overcome the world** – our faith.*”
 - **5:19** – “*We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one.*”
- *For to this end we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, **who is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe.** (1 Timothy 4:10)*
- **Contrast:** God has provided Jesus as a potential Savior for all men (**Universal Provision**), but few will answer God’s call and obey (**Limited Acceptance**).

Irresistible Grace (I)

- “A God that tries and fails is no God at all! If God wants us to be saved, and tries to save us, and yet we reject Him, then He is not very ‘powerful’, is He? It’s inconceivable that man could ever resist God!”
- **Assumes** that God could never give us a choice. What if **God** chose to offer **us** a choice, free will? What if God wanted a people who **chose** Him? What would He do with those who rejected His invitation?
- “Your people shall be **volunteers** In the day of your power.” (**Psalm 110:3**)
- “**I have stretched out My hands all day long to a rebellious people, Who walk in a way that is not good, According to their own thoughts; A people who provoke Me to anger continually to My face; ... Who say, ‘Keep to yourself, Do not come near me, For I am holier than you!’** These are smoke in My nostrils, A fire that burns all

the day. Behold, it is written before Me: I will not keep silence, but will repay ... Therefore I will number you for the sword, And you shall all bow down to the slaughter; Because, **when I called, you did not answer; When I spoke, you did not hear, But did evil before My eyes, And chose that in which I do not delight.**" (Isaiah 65:2-12)

- "We are only saved by the miraculous, direct 'dragging' of the Holy Spirit of God (John 6:37, 44-45, 65)."
- **"All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. ... No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught by God.' Therefore everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me. ... It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life. But there are some of you who do not believe."** For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who would betray Him. And He said, "Therefore I have said to you that **no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father.**" (John 6:37-65)
- Ultimate question refers not to **if** – but **how** God and the Holy Spirit "draw" us: Is it directly, miraculously, or is it indirectly through the persuasive power of the gospel?
- "this is the will of Him who sent Me, that **everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life**" (John 6:40)
- "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. **The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.**" (John 6:63)
- "Lord, to whom shall we go? **You have the words of eternal life.**" (John 6:68)
- For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because **when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.** (1 The. 2:13; see also, Isa. 2:2-3; Ps. 119:97-102; Rm. 1:16; 2 Tm. 3:16-17)
- "Therefore, behold, **I will allure her, Will bring her into the wilderness, And speak comfort to her.** And it shall be, in that day," Says the LORD, "That you will call Me '**My Husband,**' And no longer call Me '**My Master,**' (Hosea 2:14-16)
- "For example, God directly opened Lydia's heart before hearing the gospel! (Acts 16:14)"
 - "Now a certain woman named **Lydia heard us.** She was a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira, **who worshiped God. The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul.**" (Acts 16:14)
 - **How** did God open Lydia's heart?
 1. Lydia was already a worshipper of God. Total Depravity?
 2. Lydia was **already** listening to gospel ("Lydia **heard us**").
 3. "Open" and "heed" are durative. These words show ongoing process, action – not a single event.
 4. "Heed" means more than just listen. It means "to apply" (See: "to pay attention", **ESV**; "to attend", **KJV, YLT**; "to respond", **NASB, NIV**; compare to **Heb. 7:13; 1 Timothy 4:13**). This refers to her baptism, conversion – not just hearing.
- "But, Paul tells us that, 'the **natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned**' (1 Corinthians 2:14). Therefore, we **cannot** know God's will without the direct operation of the Holy Spirit!"

- “Carnal” minds can be touched. And, even the elect can regress and exhibit “carnal” minds:

And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able; for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men? For when one says, “I am of Paul,” and another, “I am of Apollos,” are you not carnal? (1 Cor. 3:1-4)

- Through God’s choice, both the Holy Spirit and the gospel through which He operates and calls may be resisted and rejected:
 - *But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. (2 Thessalonians 2:13-14)*
 - *“It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first; but since you reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles.” (Acts 13:46)*
 - *“... For many are called, but few are chosen.” (Matthew 20:16)*
 - *“You stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You always do resist the Holy Spirit, as your fathers did, so do you.” (Acts 7:51)*
 - *“And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, Judge please between Me and My vineyard. What more could have been done to My vineyard that I have not done in it? ...” (Isaiah 5:3-4)*
 - *“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!” (Matthew 23:37)*

Perseverance of the Saints (P)

- **“Nothing** can remove us from God’s hand, so how can we ever be lost, once we are in God’s hand (John 10:27-30; Romans 8:31-39). Are you **stronger** than **God**?”

“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father’s hand.” (John 10:27-29)

- Agreed, believer is secure in Christ. No one can **forcibly remove** us. But, what if the believer **chooses** to leave? Where does the above text address that point? ... It doesn’t, so we must look elsewhere.
- “Jesus said He would never cast us out, no matter what (John 6:37)! Why do you say otherwise?”
 - *“All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day.” (John 6:37-39)*
 - Passage is focused on Jesus’ reluctance to abandon those who come to Him. Therefore, application and context are limited to those “who come to” Jesus. It does not in any way address those who **voluntarily** abandon Jesus.
- Can genuinely saved Christians sin, fail to repent, and be eternally lost? Can true Christians apostatize? Notice the previously saved and sanctified state of those either being warned or actually lost:

- “Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were **written for our admonition**, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. **Therefore, let him who thinks he stands, take heed lest he fall.**” (1 Cor. 10:11-12)
- “**Beware**, brethren, lest there **be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God**; but **exhort one another daily**, while it is called ‘Today’, **lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.**” (Hebrews 3:12-13)
- “**Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away.** For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, **how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? ...**” (Hebrews 2:1-3)
- For if **we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries.** ... **Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?** (Hebrews 10:26-39)
- **You have become estranged from Christ**, you who attempt to be justified by law; **you have fallen from grace.** (Galatians 5:4)
- But **I discipline my body** and bring it into subjection, **lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.** (1 Corinthians 9:27)
 - Context is gospel salvation: **1 Corinthians 9:14, 16, 18-23, 25.** Degrees of salvation is absent from text.
 - Compare to **all** other uses of the same Greek word, “disqualified”, found in **1 Corinthians 9:27**:
 - “God gave them over to a **debased** mind, to do those things which are not fitting” (Romans 1:28)
 - “these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, **disapproved** concerning the faith” (2 Timothy 3:8)
 - “in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and **disqualified** for every good work.” (Titus 1:16; see also, **2 Corinthians 13:5, 6, 7**)
 - “but if it bears thorns and briars, it is **rejected** and near to being cursed, whose end is to be burned.” (Hebrews 6:8)
- But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be **false teachers among you**, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, **even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction.** They are spots and blemishes, carousing in their own deceptions while they feast with you, ... having eyes full of adultery and that **cannot cease from sin, enticing unstable souls.** They have a **heart trained in covetous practices, and are accursed children.** They have **forsaken the right way and gone astray**, ... These are wells without water, clouds carried by a tempest, for whom is **reserved the blackness of darkness forever.** For when they speak great swelling words of emptiness, **they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through lewdness, the ones who have actually escaped from those who live in error.** While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption; for **by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage.** For if, **after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning.** For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than **having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them.** But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: “A dog returns to his own vomit,” and, “a sow, **having washed**, to her wallowing in the mire.” (2 Peter 2:1, 13-22)

- So then **each of us shall give account of himself to God**. Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather resolve this, not to put a stumbling block or a cause to fall in our brother's way. ... Yet if your brother is grieved because of your food, you are no longer walking in love. **Do not destroy with your food the one for whom Christ died**. ... **Do not destroy the work of God** for the sake of food. All things indeed are pure, but it is **evil for the man who eats with offense**. ... Do you have faith? Have it to yourself before God. Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves. But he who doubts is **condemned if he eats, because he does not eat from faith; for whatever is not from faith is sin**. (Romans 14:12-23)

False Teachers

- "Why should I be concerned about false teachers? What is the harm in a little false teaching?"
- You have **become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace**. ... You ran well. **Who hindered you from obeying the truth? This persuasion does not come from Him who calls you. A little leaven leavens the whole lump**. (Galatians 5:4-9)
- But there were also false prophets among the people, even as **there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction**. (2 Peter 2:1)
- "I don't argue about doctrine, theology, or other academic issues."
- For certain men have **crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness** and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ. . . . Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, **prophesied about these men also, saying, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him."** These are grumblers, complainers, **walking according to their own lusts; and they mouth great swelling words, flattering people to gain advantage**. (Jude 4-16)
- And so it was, after the LORD had spoken these words to Job, that the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, **"My wrath is aroused against you and your two friends, for you have not spoken of Me what is right, as My servant Job has."** (Job 42:7)
- For not even those who are circumcised keep the law, but **they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh**. (Galatians 6:13)
- "<Insert Name> is a great person. Everyone loves them and looks up to them. They do so many good deeds for other people and in Jesus' name. They can't possibly be a false teacher!"
- **"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits**. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. **Therefore by their fruits you will know them. Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'"** (Matthew 7:15-23)
- For such are **false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ**. And no wonder! For Satan himself **transforms himself into an angel of light**. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also

transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works. (2 Corinthians 11:13-15)

- “I have known <Insert Name> all of my life. His family has been friends with my family since we were little kids. He couldn’t possibly be a false teacher!”
 - Nadab and Abihu – Aaron’s sons (**Leviticus 10:1-7**).
 - **“For I know this, that after my departure *savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.*” (Acts 20:29-31)**
 - **“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.” (Matthew 10:34-37)**
- “<Insert Name> says and boldly teaches so many important truths! Just because he teaches error on one point, does that make him a false teacher? How can you injure the reputation of such a great man?”
 - Paul withstood Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the face – **Galatians 2:11-14**
- “What is so bad about believing false teachers? Surely God would not condemn me for being deceived by a false teacher?”
 - **And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber. ... For when they speak great swelling words of emptiness, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through lewdness, the ones who have actually escaped from those who live in error. While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage. For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. (2 Peter 2:2-3, 18-20)**
 - **Then His disciples came and said to Him, “Do You know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying?” But He answered and said, “Every plant which My heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. Let them alone. They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch.” (Matthew 15:12-14)**
 - **And their message will spread like cancer. Hymenaeus and Philetus are of this sort, who have strayed concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection is already past; and they overthrow the faith of some. (2 Timothy 2:17-18)**
 - **Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves. (Matthew 23:15)**
- “How can I defend myself and others against false teachers and their error?”
 - **The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness. (2 Thessalonians 2:9-12)**

- “So now, brethren, **I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.**” (Acts 20:32)
- These were **more fair-minded** than those in Thessalonica, **in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.** (Acts 17:11)
- **Be diligent** to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, **rightly dividing the word of truth.** But **shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness.** (2 Timothy 2:15-16)
- Beloved, **do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits,** whether they are of God; because **many false prophets have gone out into the world.** (1 John 4:1)
- I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that **you cannot bear those who are evil.** And you have **tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars;** (Revelation 2:2)
- **Test all things;** hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil. (1 Thessalonians 5:21-22)
- But you, beloved, **remember the words which were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ:** how they told you that there would be mockers in the last time who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts. These are **sensual persons, who cause divisions,** not having the Spirit. But you, beloved, **building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.** (Jude 17-21)
- and consider that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation – as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are **some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction,** as they do also the rest of the Scriptures. You therefore, beloved, **since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.** To Him be the glory both now and forever. (2 Peter 3:15-18)
- And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of **the body of Christ,** till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; **that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love,** may grow up in all things into Him who is the head – Christ – from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes **growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.** (Ephesians 4:11-16)
- “Won’t God take care of false teachers? As long as my family is safe, we should not worry about answering false doctrine!”
- Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, **I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith** which was once for all delivered to the saints. For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who **long ago were marked out for this condemnation,** ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ. (Jude 3-4)
- For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should **set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city** as I commanded you – if a man is ... holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, **by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.** For there are **many insubordinate, both idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole households,** teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonest gain. (Titus 1:5-11)

- Now when Peter had come to Antioch, ***I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed***; for before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision. And ***the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy***. But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, ***I said to Peter before them all ...*** (Galatians 2:11-14)
- Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, ***do not receive him into your house nor greet him; for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds***. (2 John 9-11)
- “So, you are just opposed to people asking questions? Is it my fault for having doubts?”
- Good, honest questions are always welcomed:
 - Now we exhort you, brethren, ***warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all***. (1 Thessalonians 5:14)
 - And ***on some have compassion, making a distinction***; but ***others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh***. (Jude 22-23)
- But, some use questions to beguile and masquerade as truthseekers, evidenced by ongoing resistance to learning or correction:
 - For of this sort are those who ***creep into households and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts, always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth***. Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, ***so do these also resist the truth***: men of corrupt minds, ***disapproved concerning the faith***; (2 Timothy 3:6-8; see also, 1 Corinthians 14:7-9, “uncertain sound”)
- “You are judging my heart! Jesus said not to judge (Matthew 7:1). Only people as righteous as Jesus or the apostles have the right to judge (Matthew 7:5)!”
 - Hypocrites, who judge by double standards (7:2) and who have their own more glaring issues (7:3-4), should always address their own needs first (7:5).
 - However, He does expect us to “judge with righteous judgment” (John 7:24).
 - Furthermore, He expects us to judge to identify “dogs” and “swine” (Matthew 7:6).
 - The command to resist false teachers is never qualified or predicated upon first achieving the same level of righteousness as Jesus or the apostles (Jude 3; 2 Timothy 2:15-16; Titus 1:5-11; 1 John 4:1; 2 John 9-11). The second half represents an unjustified assertion.
- “So, you are saying if I don’t know everything, I can’t go to heaven?”
 - **False Dilemma** – There are other options between ignoring false doctrine and requiring everyone know everything.
 - **False Identity** - Addressing public false teaching is not equivalent to requiring perfect knowledge.
- “So, you have never taught something wrong or made a mistake? I guess you are a false teacher too!”
 - If I publicly teach error, it is resolved by publicly repenting and declaring the truth. However, if I continued to maintain publicly taught error, then yes, I would be a false teacher too. All that is sought is retraction and repentance as public as the original teaching of error.

- “So, you and everyone at your church agree on every single verse, issue, and question of the Bible?”
- *I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, **endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit** in the bond of peace. (Ephesians 4:1-3)*
- *Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you **stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together** for the faith of the gospel. (Philippians 1:27)*
- ***till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God**, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, **may grow up in all things** into Him who is the head – Christ – from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what **every joint supplies**, according to the effective working by which **every part does its share, causes growth of the body** for the edifying of itself in love. (Ephesians 4:13-16)*

Denominationalism and the Church of Christ

- “What is so wrong with denominations? Is the Church of Christ not a denomination too?”
- **Denomination** ([Oxford dictionary](#)) – noun:
 1. recognized autonomous branch of the Christian Church:
the Presbyterian community is the second-largest denomination in the country
 - a branch of any religion:
Orthodox Jewish denominations
 2. the face value of a banknote, coin, or postage stamp:
[as modifier]:
high-denomination banknotes
 - the rank of a playing card within a suit, or of a suit relative to others:
two cards of the same denomination
 3. *formal* a name or designation.
 - [mass noun] the action of naming or classifying something:
the denomination of a consideration as relevant or irrelevant
- **Recognizing Differences:** *“But this I confess to you, that **according to the Way which they call a sect, so I worship** the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets.” (Acts 24:14)*
- **Not Approving Differences:**
 1. *“Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all **speak the same thing**, and that there **be no divisions among you**, but that you **be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.**” (I Corinthians 1:10)*
 2. *Now the **deeds of the flesh are evident**, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, **enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these**, of which I forewarn you just as I have forewarned you that **those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.** (Galatians 5:19-21 NAS)*

3. *I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to **walk worthy of the calling** with which you were called, with all ¹**lowliness** and ²**gentleness**, with ³**longsuffering**, ⁴**bearing with one another in love**, ⁵**endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.** (Ephesians 4:1-3)*
 4. *“I do not **pray** for these alone, but also for **those who will believe in Me through their word**; that they **all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You**; that they also may **be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.** And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, **that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me**; that they may be made perfect in one, and **that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.**” (John 17:20-23)*
 5. *But Jesus knew their thoughts, and said to them: “**Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand.**” (Matthew 12:25)*
- “Jesus said that He was the vine and all of the denominations are branches (John 15:5)!”
 - **Context is Individuals – not Denominations:**
*“**You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.**” (John 15:3).*
 - **Only One Church:**
 - There is **one body** and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; (Ephesians 4:4)
 - And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be **head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.** (Ephesians 1:22-23)
 - For as we have many members in **one body**, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, **are one body in Christ**, and individually members of one another. (Romans 12:4-5)
 - For the husband is head of the wife, as also **Christ is head of the church**; and **He is the Savior of the body.** Therefore, just as **the church is subject to Christ**, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as **Christ also loved the church** and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself **a glorious church**, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. ... For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord **does the church.** For we are members of **His body**, of His flesh and of His bones. ... This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and **the church.** (Ephesians 5:23-32)
 - **Church Consists of Saved Individuals – Not Denominations:**
*Then those who gladly received his word **were baptized**; and that day about **three thousand souls were added** to them. ... And **the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.** (Acts 2:41, 47)*
 - “If denominations are so wrong, then why are there so many denominations?”
 - For God is **not the author of confusion** but of peace, as in **all the churches of the saints.** (I Corinthians 14:33)
 - ... for you are still carnal. For where there are **envy, strife, and divisions** among you, **are you not carnal and behaving like mere men?** (I Corinthians 3:3)
 - They went out from us, but they were not of us; for **if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.** (I John 2:19)

- “It seems the only way to avoid denominations and division is to **agree to disagree** – to focus only what we share in common and ignore the differences.”
 - *Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, **contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them**. (Romans 16:17)*
 - ***If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which accords with godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing, but is obsessed with disputes and arguments over words, **from which come envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicions, useless wranglings of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain. **From such withdraw yourself****. (I Timothy 6:3-5)***
 - *Whoever transgresses and **does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God**. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and **does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; for he who greet him shares in his evil deeds**. (2Jn 9-11)*
- “The Baptist Church is a Bible church with a Bible name! It was started by John the Baptist (**Matthew 3:1-2**)!”
 - **Jesus Built His Church – not John:**

*“And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock **I will build My church**, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.” (Matthew 16:18)*
 - **John prepared Jesus’ way, going before Him:**

*“For this is he of whom it is written: ‘Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will **prepare Your way before You**.’” (Matthew 11:7-10)*
 - **John died before Jesus prophesied to build it in the future:**

*At that time Herod the tetrarch heard the report **about Jesus** and said to his servants, “**This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead**, and therefore these powers are at work in him.” (Matthew 14:1-12; compare, Matthew 16:18).*
 - **John was never “in the kingdom”:**

*“Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has **not risen one greater than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he**. And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force. **For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John**.” (Matthew 11:11-13)*
 - **Jesus Purchased His Church with His Blood – not John:**

*Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd **the church of God which He purchased with His own blood**. (Acts 20:28)*
 - **The Church is Jesus’ Body – not John:**

*And **He is the head of the body, the church**, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that **in all things He may have the preeminence**. (Colossians 1:18)*
 - **Jesus Adds People to His Church – not John:**

... praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved. (Acts 2:47)

Bible Interpretation and Authority

- “God is a loving Father who wants to give me good things (**Matthew 7:9-11**). Would your father condemn you if you went to the store on his behalf and bought yourself a candy bar with his money in addition to the bread and milk he commanded you to buy?”
 - “You shall **not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.**” (Deuteronomy 4:2)
 - “Therefore you shall **be careful to do as the LORD your God has commanded you; you shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left.**” (Deuteronomy 5:32; see also, Deuteronomy 12:32; 17:9-13; Proverbs 4:26-27; Joshua 1:7; 23:6)
 - There is **a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.** (Pr. 14:12; 16:25; 12:15; 16:2; 28:26)
 - O LORD, I know the **way of man is not in himself; It is not in man who walks to direct his own steps.** (Jer. 10:23)
- “Well, that was the God of the Old Testament, not the New!”
 - Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes, **that you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up on behalf of one against the other.** (1 Corinthians 4:6; see also, Numbers 22:18; 24:13)
 - Whoever **transgresses** [“goes too far”, NAS; “goeth onward”, ASV; “runs ahead”, NIV] **and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God.** He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. (2 John 1:9)
 - I marvel that **you are turning away** so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, **to a different gospel, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed.** As we have said before, so now I say again, **if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed.** (Galatians 1:6-9)
 - For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: **if anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.** (Revelation 22:18-19)
- “The New Testament is best understood as a **love letter** either written by a father to his beloved children or a bridegroom to his bride – not as a catalog of commands!”
 - “**If you love Me, keep My commandments.** ... He who **has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me.** And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him. ... You are My friends **if you do whatever I command you.**” (John 14:15, 21; 15:14)
 - “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, **but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.** Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, **you who practice lawlessness!**’” (Matthew 7:21-23; also, 1 Corinthians 9:21; Romans 3:27; 8:2; Isaiah 2:3; Galatians 6:2; James 1:25; 2:12)

- *And **whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus**, giving thanks to God the Father through Him. (Colossians 3:17)*
- *If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that **the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord**. (1 Corinthians 14:37)*
- “But, God wants me to be happy! He would not constrain me with so many rules and regulations!”
 - *“And the LORD commanded us to observe **all these statutes**, to fear the LORD our God, **for our good always**, that He might preserve us alive, as it is this day.” (Deuteronomy 6:24)*
 - *For this is the love of God, **that we keep His commandments**. And **His commandments are not burdensome**. (1 John 5:3)*
- “Well, I understand and believe that Jesus’ words are authoritative, but the rest of the New Testament was written by fallible men, offering conflicting opinions on Jesus’ words.”
 - *“He **who hears you hears Me**, he **who rejects you rejects Me**, and he **who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me**.” (Luke 10:16)*
 - *“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who receives **whomever I send receives Me**; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.” (John 13:20; also, Matthew 10:40-42)*
 - *Now then, **we are ambassadors for Christ**, as though **God were pleading through us**: we implore you **on Christ's behalf**, be reconciled to God. (2 Corinthians 5:20)*
 - *... consider that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation – as also **our beloved brother Paul**, according to the **wisdom given to him, has written to you, as also in all his epistles**, speaking in them of these things, **in which are some things hard to understand**, which untaught and unstable people **twist to their own destruction**, as they do also the **rest of the Scriptures**. (2 Peter 3:15-16)*
- “I will admit that the Bible contains a few commands and regulations that we must follow, but why would anyone assume that we are supposed to use the example of Christians from almost 2000 years ago as a pattern?”
 - *For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, **leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps**: (1 Peter 2:21)*
 - *Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as **you have us for a pattern**. (Philipp. 3:17)*
 - *For **you yourselves know how you ought to follow us**, for we were not disorderly among you; (2 The. 3:7)*
- “Even if I grant that we must pay attention to examples, the notion that we can make necessary logical conclusions from some verses as ‘proof texts’ is without any pattern or support.”
 - *“But concerning the dead, that they rise, **have you not read in the book of Moses, in the burning bush passage**, how God spoke to him, saying, ‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’? He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living. **You are therefore greatly mistaken**.” (Mark 12:26-27)*
 - *“But even Moses **showed in the burning bush passage** that the dead are raised, when he called the Lord ‘the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.’” (Luke 20:37; see also, Matthew 22:23-33)*
- “Ok, maybe I can use 1 passage to prove something, but you can’t expect me to stack passages on top of each other like a house of cards!”

- For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, ... Now consider **how great this man was, to whom even the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils**. And indeed those who are of the sons of Levi, who receive the priesthood, have a commandment to receive tithes from the people according to the law, that is, from their brethren, though they have come from the loins of Abraham; but he whose genealogy is not derived from them received tithes from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises. Now **beyond all contradiction the lesser is blessed by the better**. Here mortal men receive tithes, but there he receives them, of whom it is witnessed that he lives. Even **Levi, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, so to speak**, for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him. **Therefore, if perfection were through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need was there that another priest should rise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be called according to the order of Aaron? For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the law.** (Hebrews 7:1-12)

Note: The writer uses the facts that:

1. Abraham gave tithes to Melchizedek, and Melchizedek blessed Abraham (**Genesis 14:18-20**).
2. Levi was a descendent of Abraham (**Genesis 21:3; 25:21-26, 35:23**).
3. The Messiah was to be a priest like Melchizedek (**Psalms 110**).
4. Old Law only approved of priests from the tribe of Levi (**Numbers 1:50-51; 3:6-10; 18:1-7**).

To conclude that the Old Law was **replaced** with a **superior** New Law because:

1. Its priesthood was changed.
 - a. The Law mandated priests come from Levi, not Judah
 - b. Jesus came from Judah, not Levi; therefore, a New Law was introduced.
2. Jesus was superior to Levi:
 - a. Jesus' priesthood was like Melchizedek's priesthood, not Levi's.
 - b. Melchizedek was superior to Levi, because he was superior to Abraham, who was the father and superior to Levi.
 - c. Therefore, the New Law built on Jesus' priesthood was superior to the Old Law built on Levi's priesthood.

How is that for an inspired example of necessary inference? 😊

- "Well, if I accept that God communicates to us through the Scriptures using commands, examples, and implications, I still think that we can't learn anything from God's silence. Whatever God has **not** forbidden is authorized!"
- Now it came to pass when the king was dwelling in his house, and **the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies all around**, that the king said to Nathan the prophet, "See now, **I dwell in a house of cedar**, but the ark of **God dwells inside tent curtains**." Then Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that is in your heart, **for the LORD is with you**." But it happened that night that the word of the LORD came to Nathan, saying, "Go and tell My servant David, '**Thus says the LORD: "Would you build a house for Me to dwell in? For I have not dwelt in a house since the time that I brought the children of Israel up from Egypt, even to this day, but have moved about in a tent and in a tabernacle. Wherever I have moved about with all the children of Israel, have I ever spoken a word to anyone from the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd My people Israel, saying, 'Why have you not built Me a house of cedar?'"**'" (2 Samuel 7:1-7; see also, 1 Chronicles 17:1-6)
- Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, **the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.**" (John 5:19)

- ***If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen. (1 Peter 4:11)***
- “Ok, so maybe we should not practice something that excludes or prevents us from obeying God’s specific, positive commands, but I don’t see what would be wrong with adding something extra as long as we are still practicing the positive commands. For example, adding mechanical instruments doesn’t prevent anyone from singing. We’re still singing, even if someone adds a piano or guitar!”
- *So they came to Jerusalem. Then Jesus went into the temple and began to drive out those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. And He would not allow anyone to carry wares through the temple. Then He taught, saying to them, “Is it not written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations’? But you have made it a ‘den of thieves.’” (Mark 11:15-17)*

Even them I will bring to My holy mountain, And make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices Will be accepted on My altar; For My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations.” (Isaiah 56:7)

“Will you steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, burn incense to Baal, and walk after other gods whom you do not know, and then come and stand before Me in this house which is called by My name, and say, ‘We are delivered to do all these abominations’? Has this house, which is called by My name, become a den of thieves in your eyes? Behold, I, even I, have seen it,” says the LORD. (Jeremiah 7:9-11)

Note: Neither Isaiah 56:7 nor Jeremiah 7:9-11 forbids the **addition** of money changing nor selling animals from occurring at the temple, neither did the practice prevent anyone from offering sacrifices generally. The **addition** was condemned!

Worship of the Church

- “It does not matter how you worship God, as long as you give your best and do everything in His name (Col. 3:17)”
 - *“God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.” (John 4:24)*
 - **Obedience Required on Judgment Day – Matthew 7:21-23**
 - **Failures of Sincerity and Conscience - Saul (Acts 23:1; 26:9-11; 1 Tim. 1:12-13), Jews (Rom. 10:1-3)**
 - **Emptiness of Self-Approval - 1 Corinthians 4:4; Jeremiah 10:23; Proverbs 12:15; 14:12; 16:2, 25; 28:26**
- “God accepts any worship that has the right form, regardless of the motives and thoughts of the heart.”
 - *“Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. .. And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward.” (Matthew 6:1-5)*
- “Only five acts of worship? The notion that acceptable worship of the church is limited to only five authorized acts is not to be found in Scripture!”
 - **Lord’s Supper – Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord’s Supper. ... For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, “Take, eat; this is My body which is**

broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.” In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.” For **as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death** till He comes. (1 Corinthians 11:20-26; see also, Acts 20:7; Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:17-20)

- **Prayer** – And they **continued steadfastly** in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in **prayers**. (Acts 2:42)

Peter was therefore kept in prison, but **constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church**. ... So, when he had considered this, he came to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose surname was Mark, where **many were gathered together praying**. (Acts 12:5-12)

Pray without ceasing, (1 Thessalonians 5:17; see also, 1 Thessalonians 3:10; Romans 12:12; Colossians 4:2; Luke 5:16; 1 Timothy 2:1-3; Philippians 4:6)

- **Singing** – speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, **singing and making melody in your heart** to the Lord, (Ephesians 5:19)

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, **teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing** with grace in your hearts to the Lord. (Colossians 3:16; see also, 1 Corinthians 14:12-19; James 5:13; Matthew 26:30)

- **Preaching** – Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, **spoke to them and continued his message until midnight**. (Acts 20:7)
- **Giving** – Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: **On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come**. (1 Corinthians 16:1-2)

So let each one **give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver**. (2 Corinthians 9:7)

- “All of a Christian’s life is worship (Romans 12:1). Therefore, whatever a Christian can do to worship God in his personal life is fitting for expression of thanks in the public assembly.”

Instrumental Music

- “We can use mechanical instruments to worship God, because the Bible does not contain such specific information on how to worship God!”
- *Having received such a charge, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks. But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them.* (Acts 16:24-25)
- *Now I say that Jesus Christ has become a servant to the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers, and that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy, as it is written: “For this reason I will confess to You among the Gentiles, And sing to Your name.”* (quoted prophesy referring to Jesus, Romans 15:8-9)
- *What is the conclusion then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding.* (1 Corinthians 14:15)

- *And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, **speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.** (Ephesians 5:18-20)*
- *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, **teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.** (Colossians 3:16)*
- *saying: "I will declare Your name to My brethren; **In the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You.**" (quoted prophesy referring to Jesus, Hebrews 2:12)*
- *Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, **the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.** (Hebrews 13:15)*
- *Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? **Let him sing psalms.** (James 5:13)*
- "The Bible does **not forbid** the use of mechanical instruments to praise God!"
 - Throughout God's Word, His people are instructed not to "add to" or "take away" from His commands (**Deuteronomy 4:2; 5:32; 12:32; Proverbs 4:26-27; 30:5-6; Joshua 1:7; 26:6; Jeremiah 26:2; Rev. 22:18-19).**
 - "Not go beyond the Word of the Lord" (**Numbers 22:18; 24:13; 1 Corinthians 4:6; 2 John 9; Matthew 7:21-23).**
 - God's interaction and divine commentary demand respect for His positive commands and to not presume upon His silence:

Case	Scriptures	Pattern	Category	Addition	Result
David Proposes to Build God a House	II Samuel 7:1-7; I Chronicles 17:1-6	Tent, Tabernacle	God's House of Worship	Temple of Cedar	Corrected by God
Divorce Forbidden from Creation	Matthew 19:3-8; Genesis 2:24; I Corinthians 6:16	1 Man + 1 Woman	Marriage	1 Man + 1 Woman and later, More Women	Condemned in NT
Promise Made to Abraham's Seed, Singular	Galatians 3:15-17; Genesis 22:18	Seed, Singular	Number of Offspring	Seeds, Plural	Error
House of Prayer and Merchandise	Mark 11:15-17; Isaiah 56:7; Jeremiah 7:11	House of Prayer	Temple's Purpose	House of Prayer and Merchandise	Condemnation
Houses to Eat and Drink In	I Corinthians 11:20-27	Bread and Fruit of Vine	Elements of Lord's Supper	Common Supper	Condemnation
Strange Fire of Nadab and Abihu	Leviticus 10:1-3; 16:1-13; Exodus 30:7-10, 34-38	Fire from the Altar before the Lord	Source of Fire	"Strange Fire", "Commanded Not"	Death
Jesus, of the tribe of Judah, Serving as a Priest	Hebrews 7:11-14	Priest from Levi	Tribe of Priest	Judah	Violation and Change of Law
Noah's Ark of Gopher Wood	Genesis 6:14-16	Gopher Wood	Ark's Wood	Gopher and Pine	Unknown for Sure, But Condemned by

Case	Scriptures	Pattern	Category	Addition	Result
					All
New Testament Praise	Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16	Sing	Music	Sing <i>and</i> Play	???

- “Did not God’s people use musical instruments in the book of Psalms?”
 - The Old Law and its worship was done away at the cross (**Romans 7:1-7; Colossians 2:11-14; Galatians 3:19-25**).
 - To submit ourselves to one part of the law is to become “*debtor to the whole law*” (**James 2:10-11; Gal. 5:1-4**).
 - God **commanded** David to use mechanical instruments as part of tabernacle and temple worship (**2 Chr. 29:25-27**). Where is our command today? Will we bring back the temple and its sacrifices too (**2 Chr. 29:20-30**)?
- “The Bible depicts God’s people worshipping with mechanical instruments in Revelation?”
 - Revelation is written in **figurative** language (**Revelation 1:1-3; 2:20; 9:17; 10:7; 10:11; 11:3; 11:6; 11:10; 11:18; 16:6; 16:13; 18:20; 18:24; 19:10; 19:20; 20:10; 22:6; 22:7; 22:9; 22:10; 22:18; 22:19**).
 - Much of its language refers to fantastic, spiritual events – not literal worship of God on earth: incense (**5:8; 8:3-4**), dragon knocking down one third of all stars with his tail (**12:1-4**), number of saved limited to 144,00 Hebrew males (**7:4-8; 14:1-5**), beheaded saints crying out to God (**6:9-11**), 1000 year reign (**20:4-6**), throne of heaven (**4:1-11**), bottomless pit (**9:1-11; 11:7; 17:8; 20:1-3**), John eating a book (**10:8-11**), incredible multi-headed beasts with horns (**4:6-9; 13:1-18**) Obviously, not to be applied literally.
 - Referenced passages refer to worship in **heaven, not earth** (**Revelation 5:8-9; 14:2-3; 15:2-3; 18:22**).
- “Are not musical instruments implied by the original word to sing, “*psallo*” (**Ephesians 5:18-20; Colossians 3:16**)?”
 - It used to mean that at one point but changed meaning by time of writing NT (Thayer’s).
- “Since we are commanded to psalms, and the psalms command to use mechanical instruments, we are therefore commanded to use mechanical instruments!”
 - Not required to sing all Old Testament psalms or duplicate their commands, for example (**Psalms 118:1-29; 137:1-9**), which are done away.
 - The command “*to sing*” shows us how to use the Psalms, and it prohibits the use of the instrument (Thayer).
 - Why are only the words preserved if the music is so important?
- “The mechanical instruments are an aid to singing, not an addition!”
 - It is a kind of music. Has God specified or left generic the type of music He wants?
 - Do the musicians who play them think they are praising God or serving no purpose more than a pitch-pipe?

Work of the Church

- “Just as each person has the right to attend a church of his choice, each church has the right to select its own leadership and pursue the work and mission of its choice.”

- “And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock **I will build My church**, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.” (Matthew 16:18)
- And He put **all things under His feet**, and gave Him to be **head over all things to the church, which is His body**, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. (Ephesians 1:22-23)
- **And He Himself gave** some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,¹**for the equipping of the saints² for the work of ministry, ³for the edifying of the body of Christ**, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; (Ephesians 4:11-13)
- “Just because the Bible identifies **a** ‘mission of the church’, we cannot conclude that is **the only** mission of the church!”
 - Arguing from silence. Please see “Bible Interpretation and Authority” and “Instrumental Music” for more details.
- “In writing to the Corinthians church who was taking up a collection, Paul commented that as part of their ‘ministering to the saints’ they were providing ‘liberal sharing with them and all men’ (2 Corinthians 9:1, 13), which necessarily implies that they were also providing benevolence to those who were **not** saints!”
- The Corinthians’ collection was for saints in Judea. The contrast in 2 Corinthians 9:13 is with saints in Judea versus other parts of the world, not saints versus unbelievers.

But now I am going to Jerusalem to minister to the saints. For it pleased those from Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints who are in Jerusalem. It pleased them indeed, and they are their debtors. For if the Gentiles have been partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister to them in material things. (Romans 15:25-27)
- “Paul told the Galatians to ‘do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith’ (Galatians 6:10). Clearly, this passage authorizes benevolence to those who are not Christians, authorizing orphans homes and hospitals.”
 - General benevolence is very much required from the individual. Context is instruction to the **individual** or individuals, **not** the collective church (Galatians 6:1-9).
- “The New Testament states that ‘pure and undefiled religion’ is to ‘visit orphans and widows in their trouble’ (James 1:27). Doesn’t that not only authorize buy commission the church to provide general benevolence to orphans and widows regardless of their religion?”
 - General benevolence is very much required from the individual. Context of James 1:27 is instruction to the **individual, not** the collective church:

If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one’s religion is useless. Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world. (James 1:26-27)
- “While Jesus was on earth, in His physical body, He ‘went about doing good and healing’ (Acts 10:38). The church is Christ’s body (Colossians 1:18, 24). We are the hands and feet of Jesus. He works through us today. Therefore, as His body on earth today, we are not only authorized but commissioned to do the same works that Jesus did in His body while on earth, such as benevolently ‘doing good and healing’.”
 - Arguing that the work of the church is the same as the work of the individual:

If any **believing man or woman** has widows, **let them relieve them**, and **do not let the church be burdened**, that it may relieve those who are really widows. (1 Timothy 5:16)

- “As part of His evangelism and edification, Jesus provided food for His hearers on more than one occasion (Matthew 14:14-21; 15:32-38). Therefore, the church is authorized to do the same.”

- Jesus performed this as an individual, not from the funds or work of any assembly.
- Furthermore, the result on the crowd highlights the danger:

Therefore when Jesus perceived that **they were about to come and take Him by force to make Him king**, He departed again to the mountain by Himself alone. ... On the following day, ... when they found Him on the other side of the sea, they said to Him, “Rabbi, when did You come here?” Jesus answered them and said, “Most assuredly, I say to you, **you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled.**” ... Therefore they said to Him, “What sign will You perform then, that we may see it and believe You? What work will You do? **Our fathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written, ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’**” Then Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but **My Father gives you the true bread from heaven.** For the bread of God is **He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.**” Then they said to Him, “**Lord, give us this bread always.**” And Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst. **But I said to you that you have seen Me and yet do not believe.**” (John 6:15-36)

- “Yes, Paul did correct the Corinthians who were eating common meals as part of worship; however, he was only condemning their greed, arrogance, and drunkenness – not eating a common meal (1 Corinthians 11:21-22).”
- This does not answer the real problem. Do greed, arrogance, and drunkenness become acceptable if displayed in the privacy of one’s home?

Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not **to eat the Lord’s Supper.** For in eating, each one takes his own supper ahead of others; and one is hungry and another is drunk. What! **Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing?** What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise you. (1 Corinthians 11:20-22)

- “The early church collectively ‘continued steadfastly in ...fellowship, in the breaking of bread’, and they were all ‘together, and had all things in common’ (Acts 2:42, 44). They ‘sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all’, and no one said ‘that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common’ (Acts 2:45; 4:32). In such a commune, there is no distinction between the church and the individual. Fellowship meals were shared by the church and the individual.”

- The individual has authority and responsibility outside of the collective, despite the above assertion:

But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession. And he kept back part of the proceeds, his wife also being aware of it, and brought a certain part and laid it at the apostles’ feet. But Peter said, “Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and **keep back part of the price of the land for yourself? While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God.**” (Acts 5:1-4)

- “Even Jude refers to the Christians having ‘love feasts’ (Jude 12), so fellowship meals were assumed!”
- “Love feasts” are not defined in Jude 12, and their exact nature cannot be determined from the context. The phrase could just as easily refer to the Lord’s Supper or individual acts of hospitality; therefore, it proves nothing:

*These are spots in your **love feasts**, while **they feast with you without fear**, serving only themselves. They are clouds without water, carried about by the winds; late autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, pulled up by the roots; (Jude 12)*

- “What is the harm of providing food, prizes, or other incentives for visitors?”
 - Detracts, confuses, and misleads people from the true nature of the church.
 - ... for **the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking**, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. (Romans 14:17)
 - And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that **your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.** (1 Corinthians 2:4-5)
 - For I am not ashamed of **the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation** for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. (Romans 1:16)

Organization of the Church

- “The New Testament does not indicate that Jesus provided any kind of organization to the church. Local churches and other organization simply developed over time as was convenient and expedient; therefore, we are free to organize today however we think is best.”
 - “And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock **I will build My church**, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.” (Matthew 16:18)
 - ... having been **built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone** ... (Ephesians 2:20)
 - According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. For **no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.** ... **If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him.** For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are. (1 Corinthians 3:10-17)
 - Argument from silence. Assumes that apparent organization was unplanned by God.
- “If one church plants (or starts) another church by providing preachers, teachers, people, finances, a meeting place, and other resources, what would be wrong with this “mother” church directing the affairs of these “satellite” churches while they are small and just getting started?”
 - **Violates Autonomy of Local Church.** Elders’ oversight was limited to local church they were “among”.
 - The **elders who are among you** I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: **Shepherd the flock of God which is among you**, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but **being examples to the flock**; (1 Peter 5:1-3)
 - From Miletus **he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church.** “... Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all **the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers**, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.” (Acts 20:17, 28)
 - So when they had **appointed elders in every church**, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed. (Acts 14:23)

- “But, no one is **forcing** our church to give money to a particular organization or church. Our autonomy is not being violated because we are **voluntarily** surrendering this control!”
 - Autonomy or control is still lost, but now it is worse because an unscriptural practice is **voluntarily** enjoined.
- “But, churches have many other practices today that have no support in Scripture – for example, the **treasury**! Where is the New Testament Scripture authorizing a church treasury?”
 - *And he kept back part of the proceeds, his wife also being aware of it, and brought a certain part and laid it at the apostles’ feet. But Peter said, “Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself? While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God.” (Acts 5:2-4)*
 - *Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come. (1 Corinthians 16:1-2)*
- “Multiple passages speak of the church represented as Jesus’ body with multiple members, which are organized, coordinated, and function as a single body (Ephesians 4:13-16; 1 Corinthians 12:14-23; John 15:1-6). These members can represent various denominations or individual local churches working together!”
 - All these passages refer to individual Christians functioning together within a single local church.
- “What is wrong with multiple churches sending representatives and working together through conventions and other representative, inter-congregational meetings? We have examples of New Testament churches doing this in Acts 15 and 2 Corinthians 8:18-24.”
 - Origin was people teaching false doctrine in the name of Jerusalem, requiring apostles to investigate (Acts 15:1-6).
 - The decision making rested in Holy Spirit, apostles, and prophets – not a convention (Acts 15:22-32).
 - “chosen by churches” (2 Corinthians 8:18-22) could indicate that one “messenger” was used by multiple churches (1 Corinthians 16:1-4)
 - *And when I come, whomever you approve by your letters I will send to bear your gift to Jerusalem. But if it is fitting that I go also, they will go with me. (1 Corinthians 16:3-4)*
 - *And we have sent with him the brother whose praise is in the gospel throughout all the churches, and not only that, but who was also chosen by the churches to travel with us with this gift, which is administered by us to the glory of the Lord Himself and to show your ready mind, (2 Corinthians 8:18-19)*
- “Did not New Testament churches cooperate in benevolent needs? If those churches could work together, why cannot churches in our area contribute to the **Limestone County Churches Involved** food bank?”
 - Benevolence was sent directly to elders of church in need – not individuals:

Then the disciples, each according to his ability, determined to send relief to the brethren dwelling in Judea. This they also did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul. (Acts 11:29-30)
 - Benevolence was directed for saints – not general population:

Now concerning the collection for the saints ... (1 Corinthians 16:1)

*But now I am going to Jerusalem **to minister to the saints**. For it pleased those from Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain **contribution for the poor among the saints** who are in Jerusalem. (Romans 15:25-26)*

*... imploring us with much urgency that we would **receive the gift and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints**. (2 Corinthians 8:4)*

- “Paul said that other churches funneled through support to him through the Philippian church – that they were the only ones to “*communicate*” with him (4:15). Doesn’t that authorize sponsoring churches to coordinate the evangelism and spreading of the gospel in certain areas or with certain preachers?”
 - KJV only – Bad translation of Greek word for “*fellowship*” or “*sharing*”. He meant they were the only church supporting him financially at that time.
 - *But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at last **your care for me has flourished again**; though you surely did care, but you lacked opportunity. ... Nevertheless **you have done well that you shared in my distress**. Now you Philippians know also that **in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me concerning giving and receiving but you only**. For even in Thessalonica you sent aid once and again for my necessities. ... Indeed I have all and abound. I am full, **having received from Epaphroditus the things sent from you, a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God.** (Philippians 4:10-18)*
- “The church does not specify how to take care of its needy!”
 - *Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because **their widows were neglected in the daily distribution**. Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, “It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and **serve tables**. Therefore, brethren, **seek out from among you seven men** of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, **whom we may appoint over this business**; but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.” And **the saying pleased the whole multitude**. And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch, **whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them.** (Acts 6:1-6)*

Women Preachers

- “Can women teach other men, or speak to a general assembly of the church as an evangelist, preacher or minister?”
 - *“Let a woman learn **in silence with all submission**. And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. **For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.**” (1 Timothy 2:11-14)*
- “Everyone knows Paul only forbade women to preach or lead an assembly because that represented the culture of his day, the 1st century. Some have even suggested that he may have been a male chauvinist!”
 - **From Creation** – “For Adam was formed first, then Eve ...”
 - **From the Fall** – “And, Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression”
- “Well, women may not be able to be preachers, but they can still lead with other speaking parts!”
 - *Let your women **keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but they are to be submissive, as the law also says. And if they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is***

shameful for women to speak in church. Or did the word of God come originally from you? Or was it you only that it reached? **If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord.** (1 Corinthians 14:34-37)

- “That was just Paul’s opinion. Jesus’ law of love would not forbid women from serving just because of their gender!”
 - *“So I said, ‘Who are You, Lord?’ And He said, ‘I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. But rise and stand on your feet; for I have **appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you.**”* (Acts 26:15-16)
 - *Now then, **we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God.*** (2 Corinthians 5:20)
 - *“He who hears you hears Me, **he who rejects you rejects Me, and he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me.**”* (Luke 10:16)
- “Even if women cannot lead in public-speaking roles, can they not serve as elders or deacons, since they are less public?”
 - *This is a faithful saying: **If a man** desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work. **A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, ... Likewise deacons must be reverent, not double-tongued, ... Likewise their wives must be reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things. Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.*** (1 Timothy 3:1-12, see also Titus 1:5-9)
- “The Greek language did not have a word for ‘wives’. It only had a word for ‘women’. Only context can determine which is under consideration. Therefore, the qualifications for male deacons are listed first, and then the qualifications for female deacons are listed second in **1 Timothy 3.**”
 - Only men are called deacons. Women are never called deacons in **1 Timothy 3:8-13**:
Likewise deacons must be reverent, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy for money, holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience. But let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons, being found blameless. Likewise their “women” (wives?) must be reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things. Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus. (1 Timothy 3:8-13)
- “Are there not female deacons mentioned in the Bible?”
 - *I commend to you **our sister Phoebe, a deacon of the church in Cenchreae.** I ask you to receive her in the Lord in a way worthy of his people and to give her any help she may need from you, for **she has been the benefactor of many people, including me.*** (Romans 16:1-2)
 - “*deacon*” is translated from the common word for servant. Many translations use “servant” instead: KJV, NKJV, NAS, and ESV.
 - Anyone can serve the church, but only those qualified can maintain the office of deacon (**1 Timothy 3:8-13; Philippians 1:1-2**).
- “So, women cannot do anything for the church?”
 - *For man is not from woman, but woman from man. Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man. ... Nevertheless, **neither is man independent of woman, nor woman independent of man, in the Lord.** For*

as woman came from man, **even so man also comes through woman**; but all things are from God. (1 Corinthians 11:8-12)

- Then he came to Derbe and Lystra. And behold, a certain disciple was there, named **Timothy, the son of a certain Jewish woman who believed**, but his father was Greek. He was well spoken of by the brethren who were at Lystra and Iconium. (Acts 16:1-2)
- ... when I call to remembrance the **genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice**, and I am persuaded is in you also. (2 Timothy 1:5)
- ... **the older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things — that they admonish the young women** to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed. (Titus 2:3-5)
- “Do not let a widow under sixty years old be taken into the number, and not unless she has been the wife of one man, **well reported for good works: if she has brought up children, if she has lodged strangers, if she has washed the saints’ feet, if she has relieved the afflicted, if she has diligently followed every good work**. But refuse the younger widows; ... Therefore I desire that the younger widows marry, bear children, manage the house, **give no opportunity to the adversary to speak reproachfully**.” (1 Timothy 5:9-14)
- At Joppa there was a certain disciple named Tabitha, which is translated Dorcas. **This woman was full of good works and charitable deeds** which she did. But it happened in those days that she became sick and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room. ... Then Peter arose and went with them. When he had come, they brought him to the upper room. And **all the widows stood by him weeping, showing the tunics and garments which Dorcas had made while she was with them**. But Peter put them all out, and knelt down and prayed. And turning to the body he said, “Tabitha, arise.” And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter she sat up. Then he gave her his hand and lifted her up; and when **he had called the saints and widows**, he presented her alive. (Acts 9:36-41)
- “Doesn’t this make women inferior? Are you saying women are not as good as men?”
- “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.” (Philippians 2:5-7)
- “Now there was also a dispute among them, as to **which of them should be considered the greatest**. And He said to them, ‘The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called ‘benefactors.’ **But not so among you; on the contrary, he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves**. For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? **Yet I am among you as the One who serves**.’” (Luke 22:24-27)
- At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, “**Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?**” Then Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them, and said, “Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and **become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven**. Therefore whoever **humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven**.” (Matthew 18:1-4)
- For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is **neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus**. (Galatians 3:26-28)
- “But, there were women prophets and judges in the Bible, like Deborah, Anna, and Huldah!”

- Deborah was known by her husband (“wife of Lappidoth”, **Judges 4:4**), indicating her submission. (Men were rarely known by their wives.)
- The “people of Israel came up to her for judgment” (**Judges 4:5**). She did not lead the assembly.
- Deborah went with Barak, but he summoned and led the army (**Judges 4:6-14**).
- Likewise, Deborah “arose as a mother in Israel” – not a general or commander.
- Similarly, Huldah was also known by her husband, and men came to her (**2 Kings 22:14**).
- Although women prophesied, there is no record or implication that they ever led an assembly.

Deity of Christ

- “Does the New Testament ever actually say that Jesus was divine, that He was God?”
- ***In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. (John 1:1-3)***
- “**John 1:1** is badly translated in most versions. It should be translated that Jesus ‘was a God!’”
- *No one has seen [no definite article] God at any time; the only-begotten god who is at the Father’s side, is the one who has explained Him. (John 1:18, New World Translation)*
- *“YOU are my witnesses,” is the utterance of Jehovah, “even my servant whom I have chosen, in order that YOU may know and have faith in me, and that YOU may understand that I am the same One. **Before me there was no God formed, and after me there continued to be none. I am Jehovah, and besides me there is no savior.**” (Isaiah 43:10-11, New World Translation)*
- *This is what Jehovah has said, the King of Israel and the Repurchaser of him, Jehovah of armies, “**I am the first and I am the last, and besides me there is no God** ... And YOU are my witnesses. **Does there exist a God besides me? No, there is no Rock. I have recognized none.**” (Isaiah 44:6-9, New World Translation)*
- “Jesus may have been divine, but He gave up His deity when He came to earth!”
- Accepted Worship - compare **John 20:27-28; Matthew 2:1-11; 8:2-3; 9:18; 14:33; 15:25; 28:9, 17; Luke 24:52; John 9:38; Revelation 5:4-14** versus **Matthew 4:9-10; Acts 10:25-26; 14:14-15; Revelation 19:10; 22:8-9**
- Forgave sins - **Mark 2:3-12; John 8:10-11; Luke 23:40-43**
- Knew the secret minds of people - **John 2:24-25; 1 Corinthians 2:11**
- Maintained complete power over His own mortality - **John 10:17-18**
- Spoke with the authority of divine Legislator and Judge - **Matthew 5:21-22, 27-28, 31-32, 33-34, 38-39, 43-44; 7:28-29; James 4:11-12**
- Deliberately fulfilled prophecy - **Isaiah 41:21-26; 44:7; 46:5, 9-11; Matthew 4:12-17; 5:17-18; 8:16-17; 12:15-20; 13:34-35; 21:1-5; 26:51-56; John 13:18-31; 18:1-9; 19:28-30**
- “But, Jesus subjected himself to God as his Father. There was no way he could have been equal to 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. (Philippians 2:5-8)***
- “Other people said Jesus was God, but Jesus never said that. He only claimed to be ‘the Son of God’ – not God!”
- *Jesus answered, “If I honor Myself, My honor is nothing. It is My Father who honors Me, of whom you say that He is your God. Yet you have not known Him, but I know Him. And if I say, ‘I do not know Him,’ I shall be a liar like*

you; but I do know Him and keep His word. **Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad.**" Then the Jews said to Him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?" Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, **before Abraham was, I AM.** Then they took up stones to throw at Him; but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by." (John 8:54-59; compare, Exodus 3:13-14)

- **"I and My Father are one."** Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him. Jesus answered them, "Many good works I have shown you from My Father. For which of those works do you stone Me?" The Jews answered Him, saying, "For a good work we do not stone You, but **for blasphemy, and because You, being a Man, make Yourself God.**" Jesus answered them, "Is it not written in your law, 'I said, "You are gods" '? If He called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken), do you say of Him whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'? If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; but if I do, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him." **Therefore they sought again to seize Him, but He escaped out of their hand.** (John 10:30-39)
- "The New Testament writers never claimed that Jesus was God!"
 - God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us **by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, ... But to the Son He says: "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your Kingdom...."** And: **"You, LORD, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth ..."** (Hebrews 1:1-10)
 - **He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell.** (Colossians 1:15-19)
 - **For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;** and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power. (Colossians 2:9-10)
 - And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: **God was manifested in the flesh, Justified in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Preached among the Gentiles, Believed on in the world, Received up in glory.** (1 Timothy 3:16)
- "Why would Jesus be called the 'Son of God', if he really was God?"
 - For the same reason Jesus called Himself "the Son of Man" (e.g., Mark 2:10). It shows his nature – humanity and deity.
 - "And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and **the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.**" (Luke 1:35)
 - "And though they found no cause for death in Him, they asked Pilate that He should be put to death. Now when they had fulfilled all that was written concerning Him, they took Him down from the tree and laid Him in a tomb. But God raised Him from the dead. He was seen for many days by those who came up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are His witnesses to the people. And we declare to you glad tidings -- that promise which was made to the fathers. God has fulfilled this for us their children, **in that He has raised up Jesus. As it is also written in the second Psalm: 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.'** And that He raised Him from the dead, no more to return to corruption, He has spoken thus: 'I will give you the sure mercies of David.'" (Acts 13:28-34)

- “How could Jesus have possibly been God, since he was a weak, finite, human being?”
 - *Philip said to Him, “Lord, **show us the Father**, and it is sufficient for us.” Jesus said to him, “**Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?”** (John 14:8-9)*
- “If Jesus was God, how could they function? Would God not be talking to Himself, whenever He was talking to Jesus?”
 - *“I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; **that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You**; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, **that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one**, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.” (John 17:20-23)*

Holy Spirit

Deity and Nature of the Holy Spirit

- “I thought the Holy Spirit was a lesser, created being – not divine!”
 - *“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in **the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit**” (Matthew 28:19)*
 - *“And I will pray the Father, and He will give you **another [of the same kind, class] Helper**, that He may abide with you forever – **the Spirit of truth**, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.” (John 14:16-17)*
 - *But Peter said, “Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart **to lie to the Holy Spirit** and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself? While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have **not lied to men but to God.**” (Acts 5:3-4)*
- “Just because the Holy Spirit is used comparably to the Father and the Son, that does not mean he is divine too!”
 - Eternal – **Hebrews 9:14**
 - Omnipresent – **Psalms 139:7-12; 1 Corinthians 6:19**
 - Omniscient – **1 Corinthians 2:10-11; John 16:13-14**
 - Omnipotent – Creates (**Genesis 1:1; Job 26:13; Psalm 104:30**), Works Miracles (**Matthew 12:28; 1 Corinthians 12:8-11**), Joined in Crucifixion (**Hebrews 9:14**), Joined in Resurrection (**Romans 8:11**).
- “Maybe the Holy Spirit actually *is* the Father? Or, Jesus? Maybe he is not a being at all?”
 - Equal but distinct in commissioning the gospel and baptism (**Matthew 28:18**).
 - Separate presence at baptism of Jesus (**Matthew 3:16**).
 - Referenced separately from other members of the Godhead (**Isaiah 48:16; Romans 15:30**).
- “Maybe the Holy Spirit is just a manifestation of the Father, an impersonal force or presence emanating from God?”
 - Divine Qualities of Character – Holiness (**Hebrews 10:29**), Grace (**Hebrews 10:29**), Goodness (**Nehemiah 9:20**), Truthful (**John 16:13**).
 - Attributes and Activity of Individual Being – Makes Choices (**Acts 16:7**), Knows (**1 Corinthians 2:10-11**), Wills (**1 Corinthians 12:11**), Loves (**Romans 15:30**), Thinks (**Acts 15:28**), Speaks (**1 Timothy 4:1; Acts 13:2**), Hears (**John**

16:13), Reproves or Convicts (John 16:7-11), Leads (Matthew 4:1; Romans 8:14), Transports (Acts 8:39; Ezekiel 43:5), Teaches and Reminds (John 14:26), Comforts (John 14:16; Acts 9:31), Strives with Man (Genesis 6:3), Strengthens (Ephesians 3:16), Forbids (Acts 16:7), Part of Spiritual Birth and Giving Life (John 3:6; Galatians 6:8), Testifies (John 15:26), Bears Witness (Romans 8:16), Guides (John 16:12-13), Searches the Mind of God (1 Corinthians 2:10), Bears Fruit (Galatians 5:22), Gave 9 Miraculous Gifts (1 Corinthians 12:4-11), Fills and dwells in men (Luke 1:15; Acts 2:4; John 14:17), Gives Life (2 Corinthians 3:6), Communes (2 Corinthians 13:14), Can be received (Acts 19:2) and resisted (Acts 7:51), Able to be Quenched (1 Thessalonians 5:19), Able to be lied to (Acts 5:3), Able to be blasphemed (Matthew 12:31).

- Emotional Characteristics – Grief (Ephesians 4:30), Vexation (Isaiah 63:10).

Revelation and Leading of the Holy Spirit

- “What do you mean the Holy Spirit is *not* guiding me? Did not Jesus promise to send the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, who would guide us into *all* truth, help us remember truth, help us understand truth, and help us bear witness of Jesus (John 14:16-18, 26; 15:26-27; 16:13-15)?”
- The promise of inspiration was given specifically to the apostles (Matthew 26:20; Mark 14:17; Luke 22:14-15) – not all Christians. Please note the many personal references that are specific and applicable to the apostles – not us – in Jesus’ conversation with them in John’s gospel (13:33, 36-38; 14:9, 14, 16-18, 25, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31; 15:3, 16, 19, 20, 26, 27; 16:1-4, 5-6, 7, 12, 13, 16, 17-20, 22, 24-33).
- We know the mind of God through the chain of authority and revelation: Father → Jesus → Holy Spirit → Apostles and Prophets → Bible → Us:

However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you. (John 16:13-15; 12:49; 14:10)

... how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: (Ephesians 3:3-5)

That which was from the beginning, which we have ¹heard, which we have ²seen with our eyes, which we have ³looked upon, and our ⁴hands have handled, concerning the Word of life – the life was manifested, and ^Awe have seen, and ^Bbear witness, and ^Cdeclare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us – that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that ^Dyou also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things we ^Ewrite to you that ^Fyour joy may be full. (1 John 1:1-4)

- “Well, the Holy Spirit may have revealed some truth to the apostles, which they may have recorded in the Bible. But, we still need the Holy Spirit today to understand it, fill in the gaps, and make application.”
- 2 Timothy 3:16-17 – “*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God... that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”*
- Ephesians 3:3-5 – “*by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ),”*
- Galatians 1:6-9 – *But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed.*

- **Hebrews 4:12** – *For the **word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.***
- See also: **2 Peter 1:3; Jude 3; 1 Peter 1:23-25; John 12:48**
- If the work of the Holy Spirit in influencing us today is also attributed to the Word that He revealed, inspired, and confirmed, why would we ever assume He influences us outside of His Word, since it is sufficient and understandable?

Holy Spirit	Work	Gospel, God's Word
Nehemiah 9:20	Instructs	II Timothy 3:16-17
John 14:26	Teaches	Psalms 119:97-102
John 16:8	Convicts	Titus 1:9; Romans 3:9-19
John 6:63	Quickens	Psalms 119:50
John 16:13	Guides	Psalms 119:105
John 3:5	Gives Birth	I Peter 1:23
I Peter 1:2	Sanctifies	John 17:17; II Thessalonians 2:13
Titus 3:5	Saves	James 1:21
I Corinthians 6:11	Washes	Ephesians 5:26
Acts 9:31	Comforts	I Thessalonians 4:18
Ephesians 1:13	Seals	Ephesians 1:13
John 15:26	Testifies	John 5:39
Romans 8:16	Witnesses	Matthew 24:14
Romans 5:5	Gives Love	I John 2:5
Galatians 5:22	Gives Joy	Jeremiah 15:16; I Thessalonians 1:6

- “So, you have **never** felt bad when you did wrong? You have **never** felt an internal pressure to do right?”
 - **Assumption:** Mistaken **conscience** for Holy Spirit leading.
 - Conscience is an independent “**voice**” (**Rom. 2:15**).
 - **Hurts** when we do wrong and know our guilt (**II Samuel 24:9-10; John 8:9; Isaiah 30:21**).
 - Quieted even **ruined**, as it is ignored and overruled (**I Timothy 4:2; Ephes. 4:17-19**).
 - **Restored** when heeded and forgiven (**Heb. 9:14; 10:22; I Peter 3:21**).
 - **Limited** by our knowledge (**Acts 23:1; 22:4; I Timothy 1:13**).
 - **Answer:** Is the Holy Spirit **limited** by our knowledge?
- “Just the other day, I had a strange feeling that I should go straight through a green stop-light, so I could go home through the back entrance of my subdivision. I don’t know why, because I always slow down and turn left at that light. And then, just after I cleared the light, a huge SUV ran the red light from the other way! If I turned left, like I always do, I would be dead now! **The Holy Spirit saved me**. There is **no way** you can make me doubt the Spirit!”

- *When I applied my heart to know wisdom and to see the business that is done on earth, even though one sees no sleep day or night, then I saw all the work of God, that **a man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun**. For though a man labors to discover it, yet he will not find it; moreover, though a wise man attempts to know it, he will not be able to find it. For I considered all this in my heart, so that I could declare it all: that **the righteous and the wise and their works are in the hand of God. People know neither love nor hatred by anything they see before them. All things come alike to all: One event happens to the righteous and the wicked; To the good, the clean, and the unclean; To him who sacrifices and him who does not sacrifice. As is the good, so is the sinner; He who takes an oath as he who fears an oath. This is an evil in all that is done under the sun: that one thing happens to all.** ... (Ecclesiastes 8:16-3)*
- “God does **not** reveal anything **new** to me or teach anything **contradictory**, but when He speaks to me, He **comforts** me in difficulties, **reminds** me of revealed truths, and **directs** me to make better decisions.”
 - **Burden of Proof:** *Where is the proof that God is speaking to them?*
 - **Assumption:** *The Bible and a good conscience are not sufficient for this task.*
 - **Assumption:** *No harm will come from ascribing to God what originates in man.*
 - *Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: “**Amend your ways and your doings**, and I will cause you to dwell in this place. **Do not trust in these lying words**, saying, ‘The temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD are these.’ For **if you thoroughly amend your ways and your doings**, if you thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbor, if you do not oppress the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and do not shed innocent blood in this place, or walk after other gods to your hurt, **then I will cause you to dwell in this place**, in the land that I gave to your fathers forever and ever. Behold, **you trust in lying words that cannot profit**. Will you steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, burn incense to Baal, and walk after other gods whom you do not know, and **then come and stand before Me in this house which is called by My name**, and say, ‘**We are delivered to do all these abominations**?’” (Jeremiah 7:3-10)*
 - *Now Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah had made horns of iron for himself; and he said, “Thus says the LORD: ‘With these you shall gore the Syrians until they are destroyed.’” And all the prophets prophesied so, saying, “**Go up to Ramoth Gilead and prosper, for the LORD will deliver it into the king’s hand.**” ... Now a certain man **drew a bow at random, and struck the king of Israel between the joints of his armor**. So he said to the driver of his chariot, “Turn around and take me out of the battle, for I am wounded.” The battle increased that day; and the king was propped up in his chariot, facing the Syrians, and **died at evening**. The blood ran out from the wound onto the floor of the chariot. (1 Kings 22:11-12, 34-35)*
- “Believe me! When the Holy Spirit speaks to you, **you will know!** The heavens will open; you will see the brightest light – brighter and purer than you can imagine; you will hear God’s voice through the Spirit, like a mighty rushing wind thundering through you; you will feel as if you can touch His face; you will feel His warm embrace; you will sense Him throughout your body. **When it happens to you, you will no longer doubt!**”
 - *For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: **Do not let your prophets and your diviners who are in your midst deceive you, nor listen to your dreams which you cause to be dreamed**. For they prophesy falsely to you in My name; I have not sent them, says the LORD. (Jeremiah 29:8-9)*
 - Properly prejudiced, a mind can see dreams and visions of their own creation (Deuteronomy 13:1-5; Galatians 1:8-9)!
 - Begins by rejecting established Word of God (Jeremiah 6:16-21; II Thessalonians 2:9-12).
 - See also: Jeremiah 14:14; 16:12; 18:15; 23:16-36; 27:14-28:17; 37:2, 19; Ezekiel 13:1-6; 14:4; Hosea 4:12-14

- Must be willing to “test spirits” (I John 4:1; Revelation 2:2)

Modern Day Miracles and Charismatic Gifts from the Holy Spirit

- “You ask for proof of my power! Jesus rebuked the Pharisees, who sought to test Him, saying, ‘Why does this generation seek a sign? Assuredly, I say to you, no sign shall be given to this generation’ (Mark 8:11-12). Elsewhere, He said that only “an evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign” (Matthew 12:39)!”
 - “Signs” had **already** been given:
 1. **Mark 8:1-9** – Feeding of the 4000
 2. **Matthew 12:15** – Healing of Multitudes
 3. **Mat. 12:22-23** – Healing Deaf, Blind, Demon-Possessed
 - “Signs” **continued** to be given:
 1. **Mark 8:22-26** – Healing Blind Man of Bethsaida
 2. **Matthew 12:39-40** – “Sign of Jonah”, resurrection
 3. **Matthew 14:14-21** – Feeding of 5000, Healing Multitudes
 - Sought signs to be fed, not believe (John 6:1-14, 22-36).
 - *“If I bear witness of Myself, My witness is not true. There is another who bears witness of Me, and I know that the witness which He witnesses of Me is true. You have sent to ¹John, and he has borne witness to the truth. Yet I do not receive testimony from man, but I say these things that you may be saved. He was the burning and shining lamp, and you were willing for a time to rejoice in his light. But I have a greater witness than John’s; for ²the works which the Father has given Me to finish - the very works that I do - bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me. And ³the Father Himself, who sent Me, has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His form. But you do not have His word abiding in you, because whom He sent, Him you do not believe. You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are ⁴they which testify of Me. But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life. I do not receive honor from men. But I know you, that you do not have the love of God in you. I have come in My Father’s name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive. How can you believe, who receive honor from one another, and do not seek the honor that comes from the only God? Do not think that I shall accuse you to the Father; there is one who accuses you - Moses, in whom you trust. For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?” (John 5:31-47)*
 - “You want proof of my miraculous gifts? The proof you seek is right there in your Bible. Mark describes the signs that would follow those who believe (Mark 16:17-18). You hold the proof right in your own hand!” (Said while pointing to your Bible in your hand.)
 - ... And they went out and **preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs.** Amen. (Mark 16:19-20)
 - ... how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first **began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him, God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?** (Hebrews 2:1-4)
 - **Confirmation** of message was **primary** point of miracles (Matthew 15:22-28; John 5:36; 14:11; 20:30-31)!
 - Pentecostals use the **Word** to confirm their **miracles**.
 - NT Apostles used **miracles** to confirm their **word**.

- “Paul said Timothy was given the gift of “*prophecy **with** the laying on of the hands **of the eldership**” (1 Timothy 4:14). Why would any **truly** qualified eldership **not** have the same power today?”

 - Do not neglect **the gift that is in you**, which was **given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership**. (1 Timothy 4:14)
 - Gift received **along with** [Gr., *meta*] elders’ hands.
 - Therefore I remind you to stir up the **gift of God which is in you through** [Gr., *dia*] **the laying on of my hands**. (2 Timothy 1:6)*
- “The rules and regulations of **1 Corinthians 14:23-35** were limited to **special** assemblies, which were dedicated to prophetic revelation through speaking in tongues, translation, etc. (see verse **23**). It has no bearing on the impromptu ecstatic utterances occurring in regular worship.”
 - *And the spirits of the prophets are **subject to the prophets**. For **God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints**. Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but they are to be submissive, **as the law also says**. ... **Let all things be done decently and in order**. (1 Corinthians 14:32-40)*
- “**1 Corinthians 13:8-13** is **not** dealing with the cessation of gifts. Its primary point is about love, not condemning others. Yes, verses **8** and **10** **may** indicate that spiritual gifts will cease, when the “*perfect has come*”, but that refers to Jesus’s return, because only He is truly perfect!”
 - **Love never fails**. But whether there are **prophecies, they will fail**; whether there are **tongues, they will cease**; whether there is **knowledge, it will vanish away**. For we **know in part and we prophesy in part**. But when **that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away**. When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known. And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love. (1 Corinthians 13:8-13)
 - Next closest references to Jesus are **12:3 & 15:31**.
 - The “*perfect*” (whole) is contrasted with the “*part*”.
 - See also, **Zechariah 13:1-6**.
- “Paul said that Holy Spirit baptism is **the** way into the church (**1 Corinthians 12:13**). So, if you have **not** been baptized by the Holy Spirit, you are **not** saved!”
 - For **by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body**—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free – and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. (1 Corinthians 12:13)
 - ... Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might **sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word**, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. (Ephesians 5:25-27)
 - Were we baptized into the Bible too (direct) – or just by its command (indirect)?