

# The Glory of God

# The Glory of God

ISBN:

The Glory of God

**The Glory of God**  
**The Glory of The Father**  
**The Glory of Jesus The Son**  
**The Glory of The Holy Spirit**

**By**

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## Forward

It is difficult for my finite mind even with the glorious guiding of The Holy Spirit – The Eternal Third Person of the Holy Trinity – to clearly define all the attributes of qualities of the Glory of God – The One True God of the Bible.

I enclose here and repeat later for emphasis the truth of God's Glory in Heaven.

### Revelation 4v,5v13

- 1 After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in heaven. And the voice I had first heard speaking to me like a trumpet said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this."
- 2 At once I was in the Spirit, and there before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it.
- 3 And the one who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian. A rainbow, resembling an emerald, encircled the throne.
- 4 Surrounding the throne were twenty-four other thrones, and seated on them were twenty-four elders. They were dressed in white and had crowns of gold on their heads.
- 5 From the throne came flashes of lightning, rumblings and peals of thunder. Before the throne, seven lamps were blazing. These are the seven spirits of God. 6 Also before the throne there was what looked like a sea of glass, clear as crystal. In the center, around the throne, were four living creatures, and they were covered with eyes, in front and in back.
- 7 The first living creature was like a lion, the second was like an ox, the third had a face like a man, the fourth was like a flying eagle.

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8 Each of the four living creatures had six wings and was covered with eyes all around, even under his wings. Day and night they never stop saying:

“Holy, holy, holy  
is the Lord God Almighty,  
who was, and is, and is to come.”

9 Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor and thanks to him who sits on the throne and who lives for ever and ever,

10 the twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne, and worship him who lives for ever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and say:

11 “You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being.”

### Revelation 5v13

“To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!”

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# The Glory of God

## Introduction

This study simply defines the truth of God's Glory, Definitions follow.

For myself, the wonder of God's Glory is seen in the truth about His Son, Our Lord Jesus at the transfiguration.

The following scriptures are taken from the NIV bible<sup>1</sup>.

### Mark 8:34-9:13

8v34 Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.

35 For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it.

36 What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul?

37 Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?

38 If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels."

9v1 And he said to them, "I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power."

## The Transfiguration

2 After six days Jesus took Peter, James and John with him and led them up a high mountain, where they were all alone. There he was transfigured before them.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.centralavecrc.org/editoruploads/files/NIV84.pdf> - Grateful thanks to Zondervan and centralavecrc.org for this NIV translation

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- 3 His clothes became dazzling white, whiter than anyone in the world could bleach them.
- 4 And there appeared before them Elijah and Moses, who were talking with Jesus.
- 5 Peter said to Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good for us to be here. Let us put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.”
- 6 (He did not know what to say, they were so frightened.)
- 7 Then a cloud appeared and enveloped them, and a voice came from the cloud: “This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!”
- 8 Suddenly, when they looked around, they no longer saw anyone with them except Jesus.
- 9 As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus gave them orders not to tell anyone what they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead.
- 10 They kept the matter to themselves, discussing what “rising from the dead” meant.
- 11 And they asked him, “Why do the teachers of the law say that Elijah must come first?”
- 12 Jesus replied, “To be sure, Elijah does come first, and restores all things. Why then is it written that the Son of Man must suffer much and be rejected?”
- 13 But I tell you, Elijah has come, and they have done to him everything they wished, just as it is written about him.”

The apostle John comments on this truth –

### **John 1v14**

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.



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Later in this truth of God's Glory in the truth of His attributes of infinity and limitless power the truth of the raising of Lazarus is quoted fully. Here we see the truth from Jesus about God's Glory.

### John 11v38-40

38 Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance.

39 "Take away the stone," he said. "But, Lord," said Martha, the sister of the dead man, "by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there four days."

40 Then Jesus said, "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?"

And so to the truth in Holy Scripture of GOD'S GLORY:

## **GOD'S GLORY**

### **THE EXCELLENCE OF HIS BEING HIS ATTRIBUTES AND QUALITIES**

What is God's Glory? God's Glory is the excellence of His Being. His attributes or qualities.

Before determining all God's attributes or qualities I need to state there is no other God – Only The One True God of the Holy Bible.

#### **Isaiah 45v5**

5 I am the LORD, and there is no other; apart from me there is no God. I will strengthen you, though you have not acknowledged me,

The holy Trinity is the God in Holy Scripture defined in:

#### **Genesis 1:1**

- 1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.
- 2 Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

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Here “God” (Elohim – Plural noun) “created” (bara – Singular Verb). This is the first reference to Father, Son and Holy Spirit as defined in Scripture.

See also

### **Exodus 3:14**

14 God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: ‘I AM has sent me to you.’”

Here God reveals His Name YAHWEH (LORD)

Again Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

All true born-again Bible believing Christians acknowledge our Triune God in the Creeds.

## THE THREE ECUMENICAL OR UNIVERSAL CREEDS

### 1. The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth; And in Jesus Christ, his only Son our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from there he shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

\* catholic means "universal" and is not a reference to the Roman Catholic Church.

Biblical references for the Apostles' Creed can be found online at the footnote below<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://bookofconcord.org/creeds-apostle.php>

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### 2. The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again

In accordance with the Scriptures;

He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son.

With the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified.

He has spoken through the Prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

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### 3. The Athanasian Creed

Whosoever will be saved: before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholick Faith.

Which Faith except everyone do keep whole and undefiled: without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.

And the Catholick Faith is this: That we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity;

Neither confounding the Persons: nor dividing the Substance.

For there is one Person of the Father, another of the Son: and another of the Holy Spirit.

But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, is all one: the Glory equal, the Majesty co-eternal.

Such as the Father is, such is the Son: and such is the Holy Spirit.

The Father uncreate, the Son uncreate: and the Holy Spirit uncreate.

The Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible: and the Holy Spirit incomprehensible.

The Father eternal, the Son eternal: and the Holy Spirit eternal.

And yet they are not three eternals: but one eternal.

As also there are not three incomprehensibles, nor three uncreated: but one uncreated, and one incomprehensible.

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So likewise the Father is Almighty, the Son Almighty: and the Holy Spirit Almighty.

And yet they are not three Almighties: but one Almighty.

So the Father is God, the Son is God: and the Holy Spirit is God.

And yet they are not three Gods: but one God.

So likewise the Father is Lord, the Son Lord: and the Holy Spirit Lord.

And yet not three Lords: but one Lord.

For like as we are compelled by the Christian verity: to acknowledge every Person by himself to be God and Lord;

So are we forbidden by the Catholick Religion: to say there be three Gods, or three Lords.

The Father is made of none: neither created, nor begotten.

The Son is of the Father alone: not made, nor created, but begotten.

The Holy Spirit is of the Father and of the Son: neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding.

So there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons: one Holy Spirit, not three Holy Spirits.

And in this Trinity none is afore, or after other: none is greater, or less than another;

But the whole three Persons are co-eternal together: and co-equal.

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So that in all things, as is aforesaid: the Unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped.

He therefore that will be saved: must thus think of the Trinity.

Furthermore it is necessary to everlasting salvation: that he also believe rightly the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ.

For the right Faith is that we believe and confess: that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man;

God, of the Substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds: and Man, of the Substance of his Mother, born in the world;

Perfect God, and Perfect Man: of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting;

Equal to the Father, as touching his Godhead: and inferior to the Father, as touching his Manhood.

Who although he be God and Man: yet he is not two, but one Christ;

One, not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh: but by taking of the Manhood into God;

One altogether, not by confusion of Substance: but by unity of Person.

For as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man: so God and Man is one Christ.

Who suffered for our salvation: descended into hell, rose again the third day from the dead.



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He ascended into heaven, he sitteth on the right hand of the Father, God Almighty: from whence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

At whose coming all men shall rise again with their bodies: and shall give account for their own works.

And they that have done good shall go into life everlasting: and they that have done evil into everlasting fire.

This is the Catholick Faith: which except a man believe faithfully, he cannot be saved.

So returning to the question and truth of God's Glory what are the classifications of His attributes?

## **CLASSIFICATIONS**

### **COMMUNICABLE and INCOMMUNICABLE**

When we think of communicable qualities we focus on His amazing love and grace which are infinite and clearly defined in Holy Scripture.

Incommunicable attributes or qualities basically is to do with the reality He is Omnipresent, that is, everywhere present.

### **IMMANENT and EMANENT**

When we think of immanent qualities, these are in God's own nature. They are inherent and pervade the universe.

Emanent qualities proceed from God, they go out from Him and operate outside His Nature such as His Mercy.

### **ABSOLUTE AND RELATIVE**

God's absolute qualities are in God alone such as His infinity.

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His relative qualities are seen as manifested through His relationship to people and also inanimate objects. This is to do with His omnipresence and control over eternity.

### **NATURAL and MORAL**

This classification concerns God's knowledge and power.

God's moral qualities relates to his relationship with humanity as taught in all scripture concerning rightness (not righteousness) as opposed to wrongness, also holiness, love, mercy and faithfulness (not saving faith) but faith of the elect to meet specific needs (e.g. love, mercy in ministry). Faith here is a Spiritual gift from God. The action of being Spiritual and guided by His Holy Spirit.

## ATTRIBUTES OF GREATNESS

### 1. Spirituality

God is Spirit, not physical except for Jesus in His second nature as Perfect Man (Athanasian Creed above).

#### John 4v24

24 God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.”

God the Father, Jesus’ Glory, His Divinity and the Holy Spirit is Invisible.

#### John 1v18

18 No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father’s side, has made him known.

#### 1 Timothy 1v17

17 Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

#### 1 Timothy 6v15-16

15 which God will bring about in his own time—God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords,

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16 who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen.

God is not limited by a physical body nor the limitations of the geographical location.

### **John 4v21**

21 Jesus declared, "Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem.

### **Acts 17v24**

24 "The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands.

God is not limited by flesh and bones (except Jesus second nature as above).

### **Luke 24v36-39**

36 While they were still talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you."

37 They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost.

38 He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds?"

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39 Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have.”

### 2. Personality

The One true God of the Holy Scripture is a personal God. A Triune God of three Persons in perfect unity – again see Creeds above. As a personal God He has self- conscienciousness and a will. (see Lord’s Prayer in Matthew 6). God has Names. In this passage-

#### Genesis 1v1

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

Here we see the Name – God

God (Hebrew is Elohim – a Plural noun)

Created (Hebrew is bara – a singular verb)

In Holy Scripture God has several Names – His important Name is taught:

#### Exodus 3v14

14 God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: ‘I AM has sent me to you.’”

Commentary on His Name follows under the sub-heading: Life.

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### **Exodus 20v7**

7 “You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.

God, emphasising The Person of the Father, is personal and warm in relationships of love and obedience.

### **3. Life**

Here we simple say – God is

### **Exodus 3v14**

14 God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: ‘I AM has sent me to you.’”

God says “I AM WHO I AM”. The Hebrew for this phrase is YAHWEH. This word is not printed in our Bibles and is translated for us as “LORD”. Throughout Holy Scripture this word means the Trinity – Father, Son and Holy Spirit acting in perfect unity.

**God is always living:**

### **Jeremiah 10v10-12**

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10 But the LORD is the true God; he is the living God, the eternal King. When he is angry, the earth trembles; the nations cannot endure his wrath.

11“Tell them this: ‘These gods, who did not make the heavens and the earth, will perish from the earth and from under the heavens.’”

12 But God made the earth by his power; he founded the world by his wisdom and stretched out the heavens by his understanding.

## **John 5v24-27**

24 “I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.

25 I tell you the truth, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live.

26 For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son to have life in himself.

27 And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man.

## **I Thessalonians 1v9-10**

9 for they themselves report what kind of reception you gave us. They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God,



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10 and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.

God needs nothing.

### Acts 17v25

25 And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else.

God chooses to use us. As elect we are part of **His Life**, for His perfect purposes. God first chooses and calls the elect and then chooses to use us.

### John 6v37-40

37 All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away.

38 For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me.

39 And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day.

40 For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day."

### John 6v44

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44 “No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day.

### **John 6v65**

65 He went on to say, “This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled him.”

### **Ephesians 1v3-6**

3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.

4 For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love

5 he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—

6 to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.

### **Ephesians 2v10**

10 For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

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### 4. Infinity

In our humanity with finite minds I find it totally beyond my powers of reason to think of this.

In this attribute or quality, God is:

- ✓ Unlimited
- ✓ Unlimitable
- ✓ Boundless
- ✓ Not subject to limitations of space
- ✓ Before space
- ✓ He who brought space and time into being

### Psalm 139v7-12

7 Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?

8 If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, *you* are there.

9 If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea,

10 even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.

11 If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me,"

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12 even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you.

### **Jerimiah 23v23-24**

23 “Am I only a God nearby,” declares the LORD, “and not a God far away?”

24 Can anyone hide in secret places so that I cannot see him?” declares the LORD. “Do not I fill heaven and earth?” declares the LORD.

### **Acts 17v24-25**

24 “The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands.

25 And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else.

In relation to the above qualities God is in charge of all time and all the ages.

### **Matthew 28v18-20**

18 Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

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- 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,  
20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

The One True God of the bible The Holy Trinity is infinite over **all false gods:**

### 1 Kings 18v20-39

- 20 So Ahab sent word throughout all Israel and assembled the prophets on Mount Carmel.
- 21 Elijah went before the people and said, “How long will you waver between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him.” But the people said nothing.
- 22 Then Elijah said to them, “I am the only one of the LORD’s prophets left, but Baal has four hundred and fifty prophets.
- 23 Get two bulls for us. Let them choose one for themselves, and let them cut it into pieces and put it on the wood but not set fire to it. I will prepare the other bull and put it on the wood but not set fire to it.
- 24 Then you call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the LORD. The god who answers by fire— he is God.” Then all the people said, “What you say is good.”

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25 Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, “Choose one of the bulls and prepare it first, since there are so many of you. Call on the name of your god, but do not light the fire.”

26 So they took the bull given them and prepared it.

Then they called on the name of Baal from morning till noon. “O Baal, answer us!” they shouted. But there was no response; no one answered. And they danced around the altar they had made.

27 At noon Elijah began to taunt them. “Shout louder!” he said. “Surely he is a god! Perhaps he is deep in thought, or busy, or traveling. Maybe he is sleeping and must be awakened.”

28 So they shouted louder and slashed themselves with swords and spears, as was their custom, until their blood flowed.

29 Midday passed, and they continued their frantic prophesying until the time for the evening sacrifice. But there was no response, no one answered, no one paid attention.

30 Then Elijah said to all the people, “Come here to me.” They came to him, and he repaired the altar of the LORD, which was in ruins.

31 Elijah took twelve stones, one for each of the tribes descended from Jacob, to whom the word of the LORD had come, saying, “Your name shall be Israel.”

32 With the stones he built an altar in the name of the LORD, and he dug a trench around it large enough to hold two seahs of seed.

33 He arranged the wood, cut the bull into pieces and laid it on the wood. Then he said to them, “Fill four large jars with water and pour it on the offering and on the wood.”

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34 “Do it again,” he said, and they did it again. “Do it a third time,” he ordered, and they did it the third time.

35 The water ran down around the altar and even filled the trench.

36 At the time of sacrifice, the prophet Elijah stepped forward and prayed: “O LORD, God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known today that you are God in Israel and that I am your servant and have done all these things at your command.

37 Answer me, O LORD, answer me, so these people will know that you, O LORD, are God, and that you are turning their hearts back again.”

38 Then the fire of the LORD fell and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones and the soil, and also licked up the water in the trench.

39 When all the people saw this, they fell prostrate and cried, “The LORD—he is God! The LORD—he is God!”

Confirming other attributes already mentioned, God of the Bible is **always being**. He is YAHWEH – I AM who I AM, I will be who I will be. God was, is and will be.

## Psalm 90v1-2

1 LORD, you have been our dwelling place throughout all generations.

2 Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

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### **Ephesians 3v21**

21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

### **Jude 25**

25 to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.

God is before all things and at the end of all things.

### **Isaiah 44v6**

6 “This is what the LORD says— Israel’s King and Redeemer, the LORD Almighty: I am the first and I am the last; apart from me there is no God.

### **Revelation 1v8**

8 “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Al- mighty.”

### **Revelation 21v5-7**

5 He who was seated on the throne said, “I am making everything new!” Then he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.”

6 He said to me: “It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To him who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life.



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7 He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son.

### **Revelation 22v13**

13 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.

A further dimension in God's quality of infinity is the truth that His understanding is immeasurable.

### **Psalm 147v4-5**

4 He determines the number of the stars and calls them each by name.

5 Great is our Lord and mighty in power; his understanding has no limit.

God is all-seeing, He sees everywhere.

### **Proverbs 15v3**

3 The eyes of the LORD are everywhere, keeping watch on the wicked and the good.

### **Matthew 10v29-33**

29 Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father.

30 And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

31 So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

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32 “Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven.

33 But whoever disowns me before men, I will disown him before my Father in heaven.

God sees our hearts.

### **Hebrews 4v12-13**

12 For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

13 Nothing in all creation is hidden from God’s sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

The reality is simply that God knows.

### **Psalms 104v24**

24 How many are your works, O LORD! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.

In the above verse – God knows, and wisdom is His actions of being totally successful in His knowledge and sustaining of His creation. Further this is expanded with His New Covenant Truth –

### **Romans 11v33-12v2**

11v33 Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God!

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How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out!

34 “Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?”

35 “Who has ever given to God, that God should repay him?”

36 For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.

12v1 Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.

2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

This truth is true wisdom in action – the action of being successful – not only now in this life, but through faith of Jesus the gift of God - faith in Jesus – successful for all eternity! (Romans 3v22).

In this study of the attributes of God’s Glory, there are further considerations concerning the infinite or unlimited power in God’s Name. The power in a Name –

### Genesis 17v1

1 When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to him and said, “I am God Almighty; walk before me and be blameless.

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Here God is called “God Almighty”. In Hebrew, this is “El Shaddai”, emphasizing God’s invincible power and requiring us to acknowledge our faith and obedience to Him as LORD. God is almighty and nothing is “too hard” for Him for He has **determined His will**.

### Genesis 18v10-14

10 Then the LORD said, “I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah your wife will have a son.”

Now Sarah was listening at the entrance to the tent, which was behind him.

11 Abraham and Sarah were already old and well advanced in years, and Sarah was past the age of childbearing.

12 So Sarah laughed to her- self as she thought, “After I am worn out and my master e is old, will I now have this pleasure?”

13 Then the LORD said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh and say, ‘Will I really have a child, now that I am old?’

14 Is anything too hard for the LORD? I will return to you at the appointed time next year and Sarah will have a son.”

This happened! Nothing is too hard for God’s limitless or infinite power. Nothing impossible.

### Jerimiah 32v15

15 For this is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: Houses, fields and vineyards will again be bought in this land.’

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### **Jerimiah 32v17**

17 “Ah, Sovereign LORD, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and out-stretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you.

### **Matthew 19v26**

26 Jesus looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”

Further concerning God’s attributes and qualities especially in limitless power –

### **2 Kings 6v1-7**

- 1 The company of the prophets said to Elisha, “Look, the place where we meet with you is too small for us.
- 2 Let us go to the Jordan, where each of us can get a pole; and let us build a place there for us to live.” And he said, “Go.”
- 3 Then one of them said, “Won’t you please come with your servants?” “I will,” Elisha replied.
- 4 And he went with them. They went to the Jordan and began to cut down trees.
- 5 As one of them was cutting down a tree, the iron axhead fell into the water. “Oh, my lord,” he cried out, “it was borrowed!”
- 6 The man of God asked, “Where did it fall?” When he showed him the place, Elisha cut a stick and threw it there, and made the iron float.

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7 “Lift it out,” he said. Then the man reached out his hand and took it.

### Matthew 14v22-33

22 Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd.

23 After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone,

24 but the boat was already a considerable distance *a* from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it.

25 During the fourth watch of the night Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake.

26 When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. “It’s a ghost,” they said, and cried out in fear.

27 But Jesus immediately said to them: “Take courage! It is I. Don’t be afraid.”

28 “Lord, if it’s you,” Peter replied, “tell me to come to you on the water.”

29 “Come,” he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus.

30 But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, “Lord, save me!”

31 Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. “You of little faith,” he said, “why did you doubt?”

32 And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down.

33 Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, “Truly you are the Son of God.”

### Mark 4v35-41

35 That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, “Let us go

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- over to the other side.”
- 36 Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him.
- 37 A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped.
- 38 Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, “Teacher, don’t you care if we drown?”
- 39 He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, “Quiet! Be still!” Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.
- 40 He said to his disciples, “Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?”
- 41 They were terrified and asked each other, “Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!”

When we read the truth of Lazarus we are amazed at the limitless power of God. There are over 300,000 sub-systems in the human body – and all were restored perfectly by a word from Jesus “come out”. Lazarus was dead for 4 days and this was a type-foretelling of Jesus teaching on His own resurrection. Awesome limitless power!!

### 5. Constancy

God’s constancy describes His endurance and eternal faithfulness and changelessness and awesome power to stand firm eternally.

### Psalm 33v10-12

- 10 The LORD foils the plans of the nations; he thwarts the purposes of the peoples.

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11 But the plans of the LORD stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations.

### **Psalm 102v12**

12 But you, O LORD, sit enthroned forever; your renown endures through all generations.

### **Psalm 102v26-28**

26 They will perish, but you remain, they will all wear out like a garment. Like clothing you will change them and they will be discarded.

27 But you remain the same, and your years will never end.

28 The children of your servants will live in your presence; their descendants will be established before you.”

And again, the LORD does not change for He keeps His promises unlike those who are disobedient.

### **Malachi 3v6-7**

6 “I the LORD do not change. So you, O descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed.

7 Ever since the time of your forefathers you have turned away from my decrees and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you,” says the LORD Almighty. “But you ask, ‘How are we to return?’



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### **James 1v16-18**

16 Don't be deceived, my dear brothers.

17 Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.

18 He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.

It is important to add to the above truth that where God seems to change, His final decision is not actually altered, but rather He is waiting for a change of heart by those needing to be obedient in the working of His commands and plan. This is seen clearly in the truth about Jonah when he went finally in obedience to God and saw the LORD's compassion on the city which repented.

### **Jonah 3**

1 Then the word of the LORD came to Jonah a second time:

2 "Go to the great city of Nineveh and proclaim to it the message I give you."

3 Jonah obeyed the word of the LORD and went to Nineveh. Now Nineveh was a very important city—a visit required three days.

4 On the first day, Jonah started into the city. He proclaimed: "Forty more days and Nineveh will be overturned."

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5 The Ninevites believed God. They declared a fast, and all of them, from the greatest to the least, put on sackcloth.

6 When the news reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, took off his royal robes, covered himself with sackcloth and sat down in the dust.

7 Then he issued a proclamation in Nineveh: “By the decree of the king and his nobles: Do not let any man or beast, herd or flock, taste anything; do not let them eat or drink.

8 But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth. Let everyone call urgently on God. Let them give up their evil ways and their violence.

9 Who knows? God may yet relent and with compassion turn from his fierce anger so that we will not perish.”

10 When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, he had compassion and did not bring upon them the destruction he had threatened.

# ATTRIBUTES OF GOODNESS

## 1. MORAL PURITY

God's Goodness we begin by understanding and knowing that His goodness is His virtues in action. When I think of the concept of virtue I am reminded of three basic virtues of faith, hope and love or charity. 1 Cor 13v13 says "13And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love". God's goodness as virtues are seen in His excellence in influencing or guiding people through the conviction of His Holy Spirit. As God works out His Purposes for humanity, His attributes of goodness are seen in His perfect moral qualities as follows.

### (i) Holiness

God is without evil or sin. As will be seen from the references below, His attributes of holiness is about uniqueness. He is unique and separate from all creation.

#### **Exodus 15v11-13**

11 "Who among the gods is like you, O LORD? Who is like you— majestic in holiness, awesome in glory, working wonders?

12 You stretched out your right hand and the earth swallowed them.

13 "In your unfailing love you will lead the people you have redeemed. In your strength you will guide them to your holy dwelling.

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### **1 Samuel 2v2**

2 “There is no one holy like the LORD; there is no one besides you; there is no Rock like our God.

### **Psalm 99v1-3**

1 The LORD reigns, let the nations tremble; he sits enthroned between the cherubim, let the earth shake.

2 Great is the LORD in Zion; he is exalted over all the nations.

3 Let them praise your great and awesome name— he is holy.

### **Isaiah 6v1-4**

1 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple.

2 Above him were seraphs, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying.

3 And they were calling to one another: “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory.”

4 At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke.

### **Isaiah 57v15**

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15 For this is what the high and exalted One says—  
he who lives forever, whose name is holy:  
“I live in a high and holy place, but also with the one who is  
contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly  
and to revive the heart of the contrite.

In the above references to “holy”, the Hebrew root is “qds” meaning  
“to cut”, “to separate” – “cut off” from all that is evil and sinful. It  
defines sacred. This equals God’s absolute purity, His goodness  
untouched by evil. God is Holy.

### **Leviticus 11v44-45**

44 I am the LORD your God; consecrate yourselves and be holy, be-  
cause I am holy. Do not make yourselves unclean by any creature  
that moves about on the ground.  
45 I am the LORD who brought you up out of Egypt to be your God;  
therefore be holy, because I am holy.

### **Job 34v10-12**

10 “So listen to me, you men of understanding. Far be it from God  
to do evil, from the Almighty to do wrong.  
11 He repays a man for what he has done; he brings upon him what  
his conduct deserves.  
12 It is unthinkable that God would do wrong, that the Almighty  
would pervert justice.

### **Isaiah 6v5**

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5 “Woe to me!” I cried. “I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty.”

### **Habakkuk 1v13**

13 Your eyes are too pure to look on evil; you cannot tolerate wrong. Why then do you tolerate the treacherous? Why are you silent while the wicked swallow up those more righteous than themselves?

### **Matthew 5v48**

48 Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

#### **(ii) Righteousness**

God’s Righteousness is the second quality of God’s moral purity. This is God’s Holiness applied to His relationships with people. In this truth of the subject of God’s Glory, His truth is not discussing man’s righteousness – righteousness credited to man from God through faith but – it concerns the subject of God’s Righteousness. God’s Righteous is all to do with His commitment to His purposes. His purposes in Holy Scripture is salvation of His elect. So, God’s Righteousness is His commitment to do for His people, His chosen, His elect whom He regenerates and saves, what they cannot do for themselves. We cannot save ourselves for eternity. It is to do with the side of God’s perfect justice which deals with our rescue and acquittal, through the death and resurrection of His Son, Jesus our Lord and Saviour and substitute. God’s righteous actions are always

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in line with His perfect law. It needs to be said here, but it is a different subject, the difference between law and its relation to sin in humanity.

### Romans 8v1-5

- 1 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,
- 2 because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.
- 3 For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man,
- 4 in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit.
- 5 Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.

In the above passage “the law of the Spirit of Life” refers to the controlling power of God’s Holy Spirit in the life of the elect. Also “The Law of sin” refers to the controlling power of sin. The Law only defines or points out a sin. It can condemn a sin but cannot remove sin. Only Jesus can do this – and this is a separate subject.

This subject in the attributes of God’s Glory and His Righteousness at this point focuses on God.

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### **Genesis 18v25**

25 Far be it from you to do such a thing—to kill the righteous with the wicked, treating the righteous and the wicked alike. Far be it from you! Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?”

### **Psalm 9v8**

8 He will judge the world in righteousness; he will govern the peoples with justice.

### **Psalm 19v7-9**

7 The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple.

8 The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to the eyes.

9 The fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever. The ordinances of the LORD are sure and altogether righteous.

### **Jeremiah 9v23-24**

23 This is what the LORD says: “Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom or the strong man boast of his strength or the rich man boast of his riches,

24 but let him who boasts boast about this: that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight,”

### **Jeremiah 23v6**



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6 In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety.  
This is the name by which he will be called:

The LORD Our Righteousness.

### **Micah 7v9**

9 Because I have sinned against him, I will bear the LORD's wrath, until he pleads my case and establishes my right. He will bring me out into the light; I will see his righteousness.

#### **(iii) Justice**

As defined in notes on God's Righteousness above, God's Justice acts in conformity with His law. He administers His rule with perfect Justice – Justice which deals with the rescue, redeeming and acquittal of the elect in Jesus His Saving Son.

### **Genesis 2v15-17**

15 The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.  
16 And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden;  
17 but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die."

### **Deuteronomy 7v7-12**

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- 7 The LORD did not set his affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples.
- 8 But it was because the LORD loved you and kept the oath he swore to your forefathers that he brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the land of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt.
- 9 Know therefore that the LORD your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commands.
- 10 But those who hate him he will repay to their face by destruction; he will not be slow to repay to their face those who hate him.
- 11 Therefore, take care to follow the commands, decrees and laws I give you today.
- 12 If you pay attention to these laws and are careful to follow them, then the LORD your God will keep his covenant of love with you, as he swore to your forefathers.

### Psalm 58v11

- 11 Then men will say, "Surely the righteous still are rewarded; surely there is a God who judges the earth."

### Amos 5v24

- 24 But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!

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### **Romans 6v23**

23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

### **Romans 12v19**

19 Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord.

## 2. INTEGRITY

### (i) Genuineness

The attribute or quality of God's Genuineness focuses on the fact He is a real God not a false god. The wonderful truth of Elijah on Mount Carmel and the fact that the God of Holy Scripture is the one and only true God (I Kings 18v20-39), is proven in this reference. Also the above shows God's integrity – definitely His genuineness, soundness, honesty and wholeness. True God.

### Jerimiah 10v1-10

- 1 Hear what the LORD says to you, O house of Israel.
- 2 This is what the LORD says: "Do not learn the ways of the nations or be terrified by signs in the sky, though the nations are terrified by them.
- 3 For the customs of the peoples are worthless; they cut a tree out of the forest, and a craftsman shapes it with his chisel.
- 4 They adorn it with silver and gold; they fasten it with hammer and nails so it will not totter.
- 5 Like a scarecrow in a melon patch, their idols cannot speak; they must be carried because they cannot walk. Do not fear them; they can do no harm nor can they do any good."
- 6 No one is like you, O LORD; you are great, and your name is mighty in power.
- 7 Who should not revere you, O King of the nations? This is your due. Among all the wise men of the nations and

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- in all their kingdoms, there is no one like you.
- 8 They are all senseless and foolish; they are taught by worthless wooden idols.
- 9 Hammered silver is brought from Tarshish and gold from Uphaz. What the craftsman and goldsmith have made is then dressed in blue and purple—all made by skilled workers.
- 10 But the LORD is the true God; he is the living God, the eternal King. When he is angry, the earth trembles; the nations cannot endure his wrath.

### **John 17v1-3**

- 1 After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed: “Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you.
- 2 For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him.
- 3 Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

### **I Thessalonians 1v9**

- 9 for they themselves report what kind of reception you gave us. They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God,

### **1 John 5v20**

- 20 We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And

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we are in him who is true—even in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.

### **Revelation 3v7**

7 “To the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: These are the words of him who is holy and true, who holds the key of David. What he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open.

### **Revelation 6v10**

10 They called out in a loud voice, “How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?”

#### **(ii) Veracity**

This quality refers to the fact that God is truth and thus represents things as they actually are.

### **1 Samuel 15v29**

29 He who is the Glory of Israel does not lie or change his mind; for he is not a man, that he should change his mind.”

### **John 17v17**

17 Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.

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### Titus 1v1-2

- 1 Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ for the faith of God's elect and the knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness—
- 2 a faith and knowledge resting on the hope of eternal life, which God, who does not lie, promised before the beginning of time,

### Hebrews 6v13-19

- 13 When God made his promise to Abraham, since there was no one greater for him to swear by, he swore by himself,
- 14 saying, "I will surely bless you and give you many descendants."
- 15 And so after waiting patiently, Abraham received what was promised.
- 16 Men swear by someone greater than themselves, and the oath confirms what is said and puts an end to all argument.
- 17 Because God wanted to make the un- changing nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised, he confirmed it with an oath.
- 18 God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope offered to us may be greatly encouraged.
- 19 We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure...

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The above last reference is a great encouragement to the elect in our ministry to continue to be true and honest in the teaching of Holy Scripture.

### **2 Corinthians 4v1-2**

1 Therefore, since through God's mercy we have this ministry, we do not lose heart.

2 Rather, we have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God. On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

### **(iii) Faithfulness**

God's faithfulness is true proof of His genuineness, that is being true, and His veracity, that is always telling the absolute truth.

### **I Corinthians 1v9**

9 God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful.

### **2 Corinthians 1v17-22**

17 When I planned this, did I do it lightly? Or do I make my plans in a worldly manner so that in the same breath I say, "Yes, yes" and "No, no"?



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18 But as surely as God is faithful, our message to you is not “Yes” and “No.”

19 For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by me and Silas and Timothy, was not “Yes” and “No,” but in him it has always been “Yes.”

20 For no matter how many promises God has made, they are “Yes” in Christ. And so through him the “Amen” is spoken by us to the glory of God.

21 Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us,

22 set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.

### **1 Thessalonians 5v23-24**

23 May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

24 The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it.

### **2 Timothy 2v13**

13 if we are faithless, he will remain faithful, for he cannot disown himself.

### **1 Peter 4 v 17-19**

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17 For it is time for judgment to begin with the family of God; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God?

18 And, “If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?”

19 So then, those who suffer according to God’s will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good.

Further in this attribute of the Faithfulness of God we know from Holy Scripture that God always fulfils His promises. So should we.

### **Genesis 3v15**

15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.”

### **Ecclesiastes 5v4-5**

4 When you make a vow to God, do not delay in fulfilling it. He has no pleasure in fools; fulfill your vow.

5 It is better not to vow than to make a vow and not fulfill it.

### **Hebrews 13v5**

5 ...God has said,

“Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.”

### 3. LOVE

To begin this section before looking at relevant attributes there are some important truths from scripture on God's Love.

#### **Matthew 3v17**

17 And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."

#### **John 14v30-31**

30 I will not speak with you much longer, for the prince of this world is coming. He has no hold on me,  
31 but the world must learn that I love the Father and that I do exactly what my Father has commanded me. "Come now; let us leave.

#### **1 Corinthians 13v11**

11 When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me.

#### **1 John 4v8 and v16**

8 Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.

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16 And so we know and rely on the love God has for us.  
God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.

### (i) Benevolence

God's Benevolence is His charitable qualities in action – His faithfulness in meeting the specific needs of His people – His elect – those born-again and in Him and His Son Jesus and filled with His Holy Spirit. Simply it is God's welfare for those He loves eternally. Concerning welfare of those mentioned above Holy Scripture gives a perfect example in three parables in Luke's Gospel. They are all printed for emphasis. God seeks us out.

### Luke 15

- 1 Now the tax collectors and "sinners" were all gathering around to hear him.
- 2 But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them."
- 3 Then Jesus told them this parable:
- 4 "Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Does he not leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it?
- 5 And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders
- 6 and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.'
- 7 I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous

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persons who do not need to repent.

### The Parable of the Lost Coin

- 8 “Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins *a* and loses one. Does she not light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it?
- 9 And when she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost coin.’
- 10 In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

### The Parable of the Lost Son

- 11 Jesus continued: “There was a man who had two sons.
- 12 The younger one said to his father, ‘Father, give me my share of the estate.’ So he divided his property between them.
- 13 “Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living.
- 14 After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need.
- 15 So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs.
- 16 He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.
- 17 “When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death!
- 18 I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you.
- 19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men.’
- 20 So he got up and went to his father. “But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.
- 21 “The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son. *b*’

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- 22 “But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet.  
23 Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate.
- 24 For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate.
- 25 “Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing.
- 26 So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on.
- 27 ‘Your brother has come,’ he replied, ‘and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.’
- 28 “The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him.
- 29 But he answered his father, ‘Look! All these years I’ve been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends.
- 30 But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!’
- 31 “‘My son,’ the father said, ‘you are always with me, and everything I have is yours.
- 32 But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ ”

## John 3v16

- 16 “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

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### John 6v37,39,40,44,65

37 All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away.

39 And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day.

40 For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day."

44 "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day.

65 He went on to say, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled him."

### John 15v9-17

9 "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love.

10 If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love.

11 I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

12 My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.

13 Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.

14 You are my friends if you do what I command.

15 I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his

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master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.

16 You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit—fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.

17 This is my command: Love each other.

### 1 John 4v10

10 This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

### Roman 5v6-10

6 You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.

7 Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die.

8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

9 Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him!

10 For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!

### (ii) Grace

When I was young – a long time ago – there were two definitions for God's Grace:



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- The free unmerited favour of God – The One True God of the Bible.
- G God's favour and  
R Righteousness  
A At  
C Christ's His Son's  
E Expense – The carrying out of His mission to save the elect.

Grace is the epitome of His outworking of His wonderful Love. Grace is God's love in action for His elect, His people, His chosen ones. It is nothing to do with our merit. It is all to do with why we worship Him – His Glory – it is His "Worth" – His "Worth Ship" – Our worship of a great, glorious true loving God who has redeemed us through the mission of His Glorious Son our Lords Jesus – our Saviour. God is so loving and gracious.

### Exodus 34v6

6 And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness,

### Psalm 86v11-15

11 Teach me your way, LORD, that I may rely on your faithfulness, give me an undivided heart, that I may fear your name.

12 I will praise you, Lord my God, with all my heart; I will glorify your name forever.

## **The Glory of God**

13 For great is your love toward me; you have delivered me from the depths, from the realm of the dead.

14 Arrogant foes are attacking me, O God; ruthless people are trying to kill me—they have no regard for you.

15 But you, Lord, are a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness.

### **Psalm 103v1-4**

1 Praise the LORD, O my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name.

2 Praise the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits—

3 who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases,

4 who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion,

### **Ephesians 1v5-8**

5 he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—

6 to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.

7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace

8 that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding.

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### Ephesians 2v4-10

- 4 But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy,  
5 made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.  
6 And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus,  
7 in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.  
8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith— and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—  
9 not by works, so that no one can boast.  
10 For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

### Titus 2v11-13

- 11 For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men.  
12 It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age,  
13 while we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ,

### Titus 3v3-7

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3 At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another.

4 But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared,

5 he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit,

6 whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior,

7 so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.

It is a joy to focus on the truth that our salvation – our faith is a gift. Through the faith **of** Jesus, we have faith **in** Jesus (Romans 3v22).

### (iii) Mercy

God's Mercy is His attribute of being eternally tender-hearted with loving compassion to those who are faithfully obedient to His perfect will and commands.

### Psalm 86v1-7

1 Hear, O LORD, and answer me, for I am poor and needy.

2 Guard my life, for I am devoted to you. You are my God; save your servant who trusts in you.

3 Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I call to you all day long.

4 Bring joy to your servant, for to you, O Lord, I lift up

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- my soul.
- 5 You are forgiving and good, O Lord, abounding in love to all who call to you.
- 6 Hear my prayer, O LORD; listen to my cry for mercy.
- 7 In the day of my trouble I will call to you, for you will answer me.

### Psalm 103v8-14

- 8 The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love.
- 9 He will not always accuse, nor will he harbor his anger forever;
- 10 he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities.
- 11 For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him;
- 12 as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.
- 13 As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him;
- 14 for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust.

### Matthew 9v35-36

- 35 Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness.
- 36 When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.

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### **Mark 1v40-41**

40 A man with leprosy came to him and begged him on his knees,  
“If you are willing, you can make me clean.”

41 Filled with compassion, Jesus reached out his hand and touched  
the man. “I am willing,” he said. “Be clean!”

### **Mark 6v30-34**

30 The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they  
had done and taught.

31 Then, because so many people were coming and going that they  
did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, “Come with  
me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.”

32 So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place.

33 But many who saw them leaving recognized them and ran on foot  
from all the towns and got there ahead of them.

34 When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on  
them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began  
teaching them many things.

### **(iv) Persistence**

This attribute of God’s Glory is to do with His eternal “keeping on –  
Keeping on” – continuing in His purposes.

### **Exodus 34v5-7**

5 Then the LORD came down in the cloud and stood there with him  
and proclaimed his name, the LORD.

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6 And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, “The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness,

7 maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation.”

### **Psalm 86v11-15**

11 Teach me your way, LORD, that I may rely on your faithfulness; give me an undivided heart, that I may fear your name.

12 I will praise you, Lord my God, with all my heart; I will glorify your name forever.

13 For great is your love toward me; you have delivered me from the depths, from the realm of the dead.

14 Arrogant foes are attacking me, O God, ruthless people are trying to kill me - they have no regard for you.

15 But you, Lord, are a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness.

### **Matthew 6v12**

12 Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

### **John 15v12**

12 My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.

### **1 Peter 3v18-20**

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18 For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit,

19 through whom also he went and preached to the spirits in prison

20 who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water,

### 2 Peter 3v9

9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

### 1 John 2v7-11

7 Dear friends, I am not writing you a new command but an old one, which you have had since the beginning. This old command is the message you have heard.

8 Yet I am writing you a new command; its truth is seen in him and you, because the darkness is passing and the true light is already shining.

9 Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates his brother is still in the darkness.

10 Whoever loves his brother lives in the light, and there is nothing in him to make him stumble.

11 But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks around in the darkness; he does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded him.



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### 1 John 3v11-18

- 11 Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.
- 12 No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.
- 13 We know that we live in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.
- 14 And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.
- 15 If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in him and he in God.
- 16 And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.
- 17 In this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment, because in this world we are like him.
- 18 There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

I am so thankful that this question was asked when I was commenting on the miracle of Our Lord Jesus raising His friend Lazarus from the dead. This was a type/foretelling of what Our Lord would do about His death and resurrection. What hope we have in Him!! What joy about our eternal future! May we all take strength in the power of His Holy Spirit in our lives as we strive in this evil world to please Our Lord Jesus.

Again, the question – What is God’s Glory?

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When we discussed the truth of the raising of Lazarus a wonderful friend – a senior army officer in our lunch group named Barnabas mentioned it was about the “Glory of God” and yes, it is!

## **GOD'S GLORY AND SOVERIGNITY IN HIS RESPONDENT MAJESTY**

In this chapter I need to add and expand the truths of God's Glory defined in the preceding study. I thank the additional work by authors referenced.

### **Revelation 4, 5v13**

- 1 After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in heaven. And the voice I had first heard speaking to me like a trumpet said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this."
- 2 At once I was in the Spirit, and there before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it.
- 3 And the one who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian. A rainbow, resembling an emerald, encircled the throne.
- 4 Surrounding the throne were twenty-four other thrones, and seated on them were twenty-four elders. They were dressed in white and had crowns of gold on their heads.
- 5 From the throne came flashes of lightning, rumblings and peals of thunder. Before the throne, seven lamps were blazing. These are the seven spirits of God.
- 6 Also before the throne there was what looked like a sea of glass, clear as crystal. In the center, around the throne, were four living creatures, and they were covered with eyes, in front and in back.
- 7 The first living creature was like a lion, the second was like an ox, the third had a face like a man, the fourth was like a flying eagle.
- 8 Each of the four living creatures had six wings and was covered with eyes all around, even under his wings. Day and night they never stop saying:

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“Holy, holy, holy  
is the Lord God Almighty,  
who was, and is, and is to come.”

- 9 Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor and thanks to him who sits on the throne and who lives for ever and ever,  
10 the twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne, and worship him who lives for ever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and say:  
11 “You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being.”

- 5v1 Then I saw in the right hand of him who sat on the throne a scroll with writing on both sides and sealed with seven seals.  
2 And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming in a loud voice, “Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?”  
3 But no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth could open the scroll or even look inside it.  
4 I wept and wept because no one was found who was worthy to open the scroll or look inside.  
5 Then one of the elders said to me, “Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals.”  
6 Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits *a* of God sent out into all the earth.  
7 He came and took the scroll from the right hand of him who sat on the throne.

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8 And when he had taken it, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

9 And they sang a new song: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation.

10 You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth."

11 Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. 12 In a loud voice they sang:

"Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain,  
to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength  
and honor and glory and praise!"

13 Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing:

**"To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb  
be praise and honor and glory and power,  
for ever and ever!"**

The above passage is God's Glory in Real reality now in His Eternity. It is the eternal reality of Heaven now.

Firstly in this chapter this author establishes the sovereignty of God which primarily includes the sovereignty of Jesus the eternal second Person of God.

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This chapter and the following chapter are included in this work in their entirety to revisit the truth that the One True God of the bible, Father, Son and Holy Spirit is the one only God – there is no other (Is 45:5). All other gods are of the devil. The following chapter tells the truth about Jesus the Son of God – the elect’s only and complete wisdom – righteousness, holiness and redemption. Analysis in most of the sub-headings is retained to totally support the truth that the God of the bible is sovereign.

This proves Jesus’ Lordship with appropriate references relating to essential doctrines which in the next chapter, The Deity of Jesus, compliment the truth that He is our righteousness and wisdom for all time. This author emphasises “all time” to include Old Covenant and New Covenant truth as taught by Luke 24:27. (Ge 3:15; Nu 21:9; Dt 18:15; Is 7:14; 9:6; 40:10; Is 53; Ezek 34:23; Da 9:24; Mic 7:20; Mal 3:1) already mentioned for emphasis. Also in this chapter this author links the Old Covenant to the New Covenant. This author focuses on key areas of God’s name, God’s sovereign will, God’s omnipotence, predestination of the elect and adoption. The Theological significance in the key area of the Sovereignty of God focusing on effectual calling and grace is examined centring on Lordship of Jesus.

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### God's Name

God is sovereign and this author focuses firstly on God's name. In revelation, Erickson explains that this is where God demonstrates His Sovereignty and he focuses on special revelation. Special revelation is personal where God reveals Himself in time and place. The personal relationship is emphasised by Erickson when God responded by "giving His name 'I am who I am (or I will be who I will be) (Ex 3:14.)"<sup>3</sup> This author highlights the Name of YAHWEH, for this name emphasises the concealed Name of the eternal Living Word, who is revealed in His New Covenant (Jn 1). As a personal God, He made a personal covenant with His people. In addition, He blessed them "The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face shine upon you, and be gracious to you; the Lord turn His face toward you and give you peace" (Num 6:24-26). Special revelation records where God has spoken and historical events have been recorded, notably the mighty deeds of the deliverance of His people from Egypt. This is expanded further in Erickson's discussion on divine speech and his comments on Paul (1 Cor 7:40; 11:23), but reaches the ultimate level of special revelation in the incarnation where the Lord Jesus, God as man, speaks face to face with His brothers and sisters. Here His words are written down as Scripture as revelation. Further, this author notes Jesus uses the words "I AM" on seven occasions (Jn 6:35; 8:12; 10:7, 11; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1) confirming in this author's Christian mind, through the Holy Spirit, the truth of Jesus' words as Living Word spoken to Moses, "I will be ..." (Ex 3:14). Jesus was and is.

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<sup>3</sup> Millard J Erickson, Christian Theology. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 1998), p 203.

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Concerning Ephesians 2:5-8 this author adds the comment that indeed Jesus gives the believer faith as in the reference quoted by Luke where he cites Peter's words as Peter heals the crippled beggar – "By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus' name and the faith that comes through Him that has given this complete healing to him..." (Acts 3:16). This confirms the truth in Ephesians 2:8-9.

Piper adds to Erickson and discusses God's will and its awesome complexities. He explains the deep compassion God has for those who have turned from Him to be independent and disobedient. He cites Lamentations 3:32 "though He causes grief, He will have compassion according to the abundance of His steadfast love; for He does not willingly inflict or grieve the sons of men." Here, this author, can appreciate the difficulty which Piper is explaining, in that to the human mind there is enormous conflict. But as Piper explains, "God is governed by the depth of His wisdom expressed through a plan that no ordinary human deliberation would ever conceive."<sup>4</sup> He cites Romans 11:33f.

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<sup>4</sup> John Piper, "Are There Two Wills in God?" in Still Sovereign eds. Thomas R. Schreiner, Bruce A. Ware (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000) p 129



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### God's Omnipotence

Also, on the subject of the sovereignty of God, Erickson discusses that God alone is omnipotent, having authority and power over everything including evil done by Satan and as a result the reality of the magnitude of sin. The universality of sin has already been clearly seen in God's resolution to destroy "everything (with the exception of Noah, his family and the animals ...)"<sup>5</sup> (Ge 6:5). Further emphasised by God's truth "every inclination of [man's] heart [as being] evil from childhood."<sup>6</sup> (Ge 8:21). Erickson further highlights a categorical statement about human sinfulness "found in 1 Kings 8:46 'for there is no one who does not sin.'" (cf Rom 3:23).<sup>7</sup> Psalm 30:3 also adds to this thought "if you, O LORD, kept a record of sins, O LORD, who could stand?"

Thus Erickson continues and explains "evil actions and words stem from the evil, that's evil thoughts of the heart: 'but the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart ... out of the heart come evil thoughts' ... (Mt 15:18f)"<sup>8</sup> Erickson goes further with reference to the inclination of a man's heart by commenting on what Paul had to say about the "Gentiles that they are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts ..." (Eph 4:18f). Erickson further explains that "we do not mean by total depravity that the unregenerate person is totally insensitive in matters of

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<sup>5</sup> Millard J. Erickson, Christian Theology. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1998), p 638

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 639

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 644

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conscience, of right and wrong,"<sup>9</sup> and he goes on to comment on what Paul wrote in Romans 2:15. This author acknowledges the truth here that no-one can stand before or come to God on their own (Rom 3:10-12).

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

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### Predestination and Election

This author turns attention to the way God in Jesus answers the problem of evil and this author focuses on election and the work of Erickson. Erickson discusses the key area of predestination and election under the major subject – Salvation in his chapter – The Antecedent of Salvation: Predestination. In that chapter he emphasises that the whole subject falls within the major key area of the Sovereignty of God, and thus, this author includes it here, along with discussions from other authors. Erickson further emphasises the sovereignty of God.

Erickson explains that predestination refers to God's choice of individuals for eternal life or eternal death. To assist understanding, election is selection of some for eternal life, the positive side of predestination.

Before examining what Erickson explains about predestination and election this author sees the need to discuss foreknowledge. In Erickson's chapter in Christian Theology – What God Does, he discusses God's plan, making the distinction between the broader term "foreordain" and the narrower term "predestinate" having to do with election. Erickson cites 1 Peter 1:2 "The elect are chosen according to the foreknowledge of God."<sup>10</sup> Westblade comments on this view. Westblade in Schreiner has some interesting comments concerning God's infallible foreknowledge. He poses the question – Can everyone choose freely "to exercise faith and so fulfil God's desire that all should be saved and come to a knowledge of the

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<sup>10</sup> Millard J Erickson, *Christian Technology*. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1998), p 383

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truth?”<sup>11</sup> Concentrating on that freedom, Westblade cites Jonathan Edwards who commented “infallible knowledge of an event presupposes the necessity of that event and therefore precludes its real freedom.” Westblade proceeds and cites Foster and Marston “insistence that the Bible nowhere uses the word ‘know or foreknow’ to mean ‘choose’ or ‘elect’ ...,<sup>12</sup> even though as Westblade comments that in Romans 8:29 there is “certainty of future events.”<sup>13</sup> This author observes that it is difficult for us in our time to really understand God’s omniscience in His eternity, given that the product of time that He has made for man cannot be reasoned by man’s finite mind to the awesome concept of God’s eternity. Thus, this author agrees with Schreiner’s footnote that “in Morris’ words, summarising his reading on this verse, ‘we are not to think that God can take action only when we graciously give Him permission. Paul is saying that God initiates the whole process.’”<sup>14</sup>

Now returning to predestination and election, Erickson begins by commenting that “of all the doctrines of Christian faith, certainly one of the most puzzling and least understood is the doctrine of predestination”<sup>15</sup>, and that it “exceeds the human capacity to understand.”<sup>16</sup> Further Erickson defines predestination, explaining that “although some use it interchangeably with ‘foreordination’ and ‘election’, for our purpose here ‘predestination’ is midway in specificity between

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<sup>11</sup> Donald J Westblade, “[Divine Election in the Pauline Literature.](#)” In [Still Sovereign](#) eds. Thomas R Schreiner, Bruce A Ware (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), p 71

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Thomas R Schreiner, Bruce A Ware, eds [Still Sovereign](#). (Grand Rapids, Mich, Baker Books, 200), p71

<sup>15</sup> Millard J Erickson, [Christian Theology](#). (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 1998) p 921

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

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‘foreordination’ and ‘election’. ... ‘Predestination’ refers to God’s choice of individuals for eternal life or eternal death. ‘Election’ is selection of some for eternal life, the positive side of predestination.”<sup>17</sup> The doctrine’s history is discussed (Pelagius and Augustine), and comments on as Adam has sinned so we have all sinned, thus Erickson comments that this means that all human beings “begin life in a seriously marred condition.”<sup>18</sup> (Rom 3:23). So questions arise. Does God choose as He pleases? Does His choice depend on advanced awareness? – for Augustine, suggests Erickson “for God by an unalterable decree has determined who is to be saved; being totally of God’s grace, salvation in no way depends on humans or what they do...”<sup>19</sup> Following these comments by Augustine, Erickson looks at differing views of predestination, firstly Calvin. He notes the “acronym TULIP: total depravity, unconditional predestination, limited atonement, irresistible grace and perseverance.”<sup>20</sup> Erickson notes that total depravity “means that every individual is so sinful as to be unable to respond to any offer of grace.”<sup>21</sup> He adds that sometimes “the phrase ‘total inability’ is used, meaning that sinners have lost the ability to do good and are unable to convert themselves.”<sup>22</sup>

The word “convert”, just mentioned, should be regenerate. Regeneration comes first as it entirely the work of God.

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 923

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 924

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 928

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid. This author notes Erickson’s choice of word “convert” here. In accordance with this author’s discussion and with reference to Chapters 1 and 2 above Erickson should be using the term “regenerate”, as conversion is the response of the elect after God’s initiative of regeneration.

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Conversion is the process by the born-again elect person in their life of obedience.

Commenting on the sovereignty of God and His freedom to do what He wills, unconditional predestination is seen in the parable of the labourers in the field (Mt 20:13f), thus election clearly is God's choice of certain people for His special favour. This author focuses and is comforted by the marvellous references quoted on more than one occasion (Eph 1:4-5; Jn 6:44). Further commenting on God's actions, Erickson notes the choice of the nation of Israel and comments "in Romans 9 Paul argues impressively that all of these choices are totally of God and in no way depend on the people chosen."<sup>23</sup> Quoted is Romans 9:15-16. Erickson also notes as does this author that election is "efficacious"<sup>24</sup>, in that those whom God chooses "will most certainly come to faith in Him and, for that matter, will persevere in that faith to the end."<sup>25</sup> Further, "election is from all eternity and out of God's infinite mercy..."<sup>26</sup> Erickson also comments on free will, noting that "Calvinists insist that election is not inconsistent with free will, that is, as they understand the term. They deny, however, that humans have free will in the Arminian sense. Sin has removed, if not freedom, at least the ability to exercise freedom properly."<sup>27</sup> Concerning the question of free will this author suggests that humankind always had a real will before and after the Fall. This author agrees that before the Fall Adam and Eve had freedom

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 930

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

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of will which was marred by the Fall as Erickson has stated. There was a problem to “exercise freedom properly.”<sup>28</sup>

I need to emphasise again that after regeneration the elect have free will (Jn 8:32, 36).

“Jesus said ‘If the son sets you free you will be free indeed.’” (Jn 8:36)

Erickson explains that we confidently understand God’s plan will be fulfilled and that the “elect will come to faith,”<sup>29</sup> also understanding that we must not criticise ourselves when in our witness some do not come to faith in Jesus for that occurred in His ministry also (Jn 6:37, 44), and we should be encouraged in our witness and evangelism as we do not know who is the elect and we must understand and acknowledge that it is all by grace – God’s unmerited favour.

Commenting on the above – the Grace of Jesus, and Jesus’ requirement also for our obedience, Carson – in his reflection on assurance – makes an interesting comment about election that as an “element in the Biblical portrayal of God’s sovereignty never functions so as to destroy human responsibility ...”<sup>30</sup> This author agrees with Carson and relates responsibility to obedience.

Also commenting on the point above, Schreiner explains that God is completely sovereign and “yet human choices and

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Millard J Erickson, Christian Theology. ( Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1998), p 940

<sup>30</sup> D A Carson, “Reflections on Assurance.” In Still Sovereign eds. Thomas R Schreiner, Bruce A Ware (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), p 272

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responsibility are not a charade. God ordains all that come to pass and is good; and yet evil exists, and it is really evil. God chooses only some to be saved, and yet there is also the true sense in which He desires the salvation of all. Those who are elect will never lose their salvation, and yet those who do not persevere to the end will not inherit the Kingdom of God.”<sup>31</sup>

Westblade in Schreiner comments on ability in his discussion on divine election. He notes “God Himself gives and withholds the ability to trust. God, not the sinner, should therefore be held responsible.”<sup>32</sup> This highlights how difficult this theological truth is to our finite minds as Westblade continues “that God gives, an ability to trust to have a will that is favourably disposed, is a moral ability, one that we commonly distinguish in practice from our natural or physical abilities.” Schreiner expands this comment by his comment on prevenient grace where he distinguishes between moral and physical ability. He notes that “God gives commands to unbelievers that they can physically obey; that is, they could observe His commandments if they desired to do so. Unbelievers are morally unable to keep God’s commands in the sense that they have no desire to obey all of His commandments.”<sup>33</sup> Thus he explains prevenient grace that before they repent as the scriptures teach “that they have no moral ability to believe, and the only way they will believe is if they are given by the Father to the Son. This revelation is not vouchsafed to all people but

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<sup>31</sup> Thomas R Schreiner, Bruce A. Ware, eds. Still Sovereign. (Grand Rapids, Mich, Baker Books, 2000), p 19

<sup>32</sup> Donald J Westblade, “Divine Election in the Pauline Literature.” In Still Sovereign eds. Thomas R. Schreiner, Bruce A Ware (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), p 79

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.



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only to the elect.”<sup>34</sup> He takes this thought one step further by commenting on Scripture where Jesus commands believers “to be perfect (Mt 5:48), but the need for forgiveness (Mt 6:14-15) demonstrates that perfection is impossible to attain.”<sup>35</sup> This author notes as Schreiner discusses that it is difficult for mankind to accept their responsibility for sin irrespective of the truth that “they are born with an inclination and that will inevitably lead them to sin.”<sup>36</sup> The reality discussed by Schreiner that it is “the kindness of God”<sup>37</sup> that should give people understanding and leading to repentance. As Schreiner had already stated that Adam was still responsible for their “failure to respond to God’s grace.”<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Thomas R Schreiner, “Does Scripture Teach Prevenient Grace in the Wesleyan Sense?” in Still Sovereign eds. Thomas R Schreiner, Bruce A Ware (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), p 243

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 244

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

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### Adoption

Concerning adoption, this author is interested in some comments by Grudem about sovereignty and the eternal grace of Jesus. Grudem also has some interesting thoughts on adoption which he discusses in Schreiner in his contribution “Perseverance of the Saints.” Grudem in an interesting way lists “regeneration, justification and adoption,”<sup>39</sup> as “entirely works of God,” as noted above<sup>40</sup> which correlates to Erickson’s comments on election as part of God’s work and thus part of the sovereignty of God. He suggests that conversion “which includes repentance from sins and faith in Christ...is entirely a work of man.”

This author is disagreeing with Grudem’s comments and focuses firstly on the truth that faith is not the work of man but rather given as a gift from God (Eph 2:5-8). Jesus is the faithful One who gives faith on regeneration (Rom 3:22, 26). This faithfulness of Jesus gives strength to each elect to “keep on believing – keep on trusting.” This is the work of Jesus, the Son of God. Obedience is the work of man and is part of the process is conversion which is man’s response (Jn 14:15; 15:9, 10). All the wisdom of the elect is in Jesus. In order to examine this truth this author needs to examine several key areas of doctrine – namely the sovereignty of God. It is about God’s sovereignty when calling and drawing the elect. This author has observed that there is confusion among authors when examining their subject in the definition of the word “conversion.” This can be seen when studying the Book of Acts, especially Chapter 9 dealing with the conversion of Paul which should commence initially not the

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<sup>39</sup> Wayne Grudem, “Perseverance of the Saints: A Case Study from the Warning Passages in Hebrews.” In Still Sovereign eds. Thomas R Schreiner, Bruce A Ware (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), p 135

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

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conversion of Paul but the regeneration of Paul after he had the vision of Jesus on the road to Damascus.

A person before regeneration “has no moral ability to believe, and the only way they will believe is if they are given by the Father to the Son....”<sup>41</sup> This author does view repentance in a sense of obedience to Jesus as noted. This author is also reminded of a truth, again, for example, that this author decided to believe in Jesus ... and chose to follow Jesus – then after regeneration realised through the Holy Spirit’s anointing that in eternity past Jesus decided for this author ... and Jesus chose this author (Eph 1:4; Jn 6:37, 44, 65; 10:29). These references are discussed and printed.

Having said this, this author also agrees with Schreiner - “however, most evangelicals, including this author, understand repentance from sin to be an essential part of true conversion and argue that no-one can genuinely trust Christ as a Saviour from his or her sins unless the person has repented of those sins. I need to add again – God’s sovereign regeneration including calling and drawing also includes conviction of the elect to repent and thus initiating the process of conversion, the process of knowing and growing.

Therefore, although justification is by faith alone, faith is always accompanied by repentance, and always results in a changed pattern of life. The Westminster Confession of Faith aptly says:

“Faith, thus receiving and resting on Christ and his righteousness, is alone the instrument of justification: yet is it not alone in the person justified, but ever accompanied with all

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<sup>41</sup> Thomas R Schreiner, “Does Scripture Teach Prevenient Grace in the Wesleyan Sense?” in Still Sovereign eds. Thomas R Schreiner, Bruce A Ware (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), p 243

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other saving graces, and is no dead faith, but worketh by love (11:2).”<sup>42</sup>

Schreiner, in his footnotes comments that “although many would argue that God enables us to repent and believe, all would agree that we repent and we believe; God does not repent and believe for us.”<sup>43</sup> This author agrees with Schreiner’s footnote, that we have a responsibility, but suggests that further comment is needed, for Ephesians 2:8 says “for it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this is not from yourselves, it is a gift from God.” In a sense Schreiner, in his footnote, is correct when dealing with the statement repentance and faith is a compound conditional statement. However, the reality is that God, through grace, gives us the gift of faith and no human effort can contribute to our salvation – it is God’s gift: however repentance, as this author suggests, is something we do, in the sense of obedience, but it also involves a component of God’s enabling, part of the “good works which God prepared in advance for us to do” (Eph 2:10).

This author still finds these truths of repentance and faith difficult to bend the finite mind around. Regeneration has to come first as discussed. Regeneration comes first as God’s initiative and work and it is instantaneous to the newly born-again member of God’s elect. This powerful, awesome mind renewing reality is a marvellous surprise. At this point each person knows nothing of the truths of God – their knowing and growing has just begun. The process of conversion which is now their response, begins along with their walk in obedience. And what a walk it is! A walk from sin and unrighteousness (Rom 3:10-12) to life and righteousness after

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<sup>42</sup> Thomas R Schreiner, Bruce A Ware, eds Still Sovereign. (Grand Rapids, Mich, Baker Books, 2000), p 135

<sup>43</sup> Thomas R Schreiner, Bruce A Ware, eds Still Sovereign. (Grand Rapids, Mich, Baker Books, 2000), p 136

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regeneration, in Jesus. After regeneration we are still imperfect and will sin. This author is not advocating a doctrine of sinless perfection. However, it is important to also emphasise here the truth of Romans 6:1-18:

1. What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? 2. By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? 3. Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4. We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. 5. If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. 6. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin – 7. Because anyone who has died has been freed from sin. 8. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. 9. For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. 10. The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. 11. In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. 12. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. 13. Do not offer parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness. 14. For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace. 15. What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! 16. Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey – whether you are slaves to sin, which

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leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? 17. But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching to which you were entrusted. 18. You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.”

This passage is critical to the newly elect’s walk in obedience. This author thus highlights verse 2 above that “we died to sin – how can we live in it any longer?” This emphasises that the newly elect person can be free from sin – he or she really does not have to sin anymore! Each has a faith relationship with Jesus. As a result of this union each can call on the Holy Spirit to give guidance and strength not to allow sin to entangle. Further in verse 6 as a result of the new life (v 4) the old self has been “done away with” and each does not have to sin – does not have to be led into temptation. Finally as verse 18 teaches each has “been set free from sin” and leads a righteous and obedient life – being declared righteous by Jesus. However, Jesus is the only One who has not sinned, did not sin, and never will sin. He only is perfection. Because the Christian has the Spirit of God within, any disobedient action will bring about conviction and hence repentance. It is the unbeliever who will not experience this conviction (John 16:7 ff).

Concerning Erickson’s analysis on God’s teaching of adoption, Tenney adds a contrast between the old and the new covenant, “the Old Covenant involved a revelation of the holiness of God in a righteous standard of law which those who reached it were solemnly enjoined to keep. The New Covenant embodies a revelation of the holiness of God in an utterly righteous Son, who empowers those who received the revelation to become sons of God by making them righteous (Jn 1:12).”<sup>44</sup> Tenney adds that “John defines the belief in

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<sup>44</sup> Merrill C Tenney, New Testament Survey. (Grand Rapids, Mich, Eerdmans, 1983), p 124

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Christ as receiving Him.”<sup>45</sup> This author sees this as confirming the believer’s adoption. An additional point made by Tenney to be stated that Jesus was the Son of God by nature; the disciples could become sons of God only by receiving Christ. This author notes this by comparing Tenney’s comments in John 1:12. This author considers this a great comfort especially when considering what Paul says in Colossians 1:20f that “through the blood of His cross they are reconciled to God.”<sup>46</sup> This author sees this as our great hope of glory.

This author also notes Young’s comment on righteousness that it has all to do with God and nothing to do with man concerning salvation – “salvation is by grace, that is, it is of God and not of man.”<sup>47</sup>

This author notes a clear parallel discussed by Young reflecting the word of Jesus in Mark 1:15 about “repent” – which this author views as “turn around”. Young emphasises “turn, O backsliding children ...” (Jer 3:14)

This author is encouraged by comments by Young concerning the relationship between faithfulness and righteousness, obedience and wisdom. This is clear in Young’s following explanation. God is going to use a less righteous people to punish Judah who are more righteous, yet unfaithful and disobedient (Hab 1:13). Young then discusses the need of Messianic work and he suggests “This Messianic work is described in both negative and positive terms; negative – restraining the transgression, completing sin, and covering iniquity; positive – bringing in everlasting righteousness, sealing

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid. 190

<sup>46</sup> Ibid. 322

<sup>47</sup> Edward J Young, *An Introduction to the Old Testament*. (London: The Tyndale Press, 1966), p 211

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vision and prophecy ...”<sup>48</sup> This author sees this as a clear reference to the 400 silent years before Jesus who is seen yet concealed in the Old Covenant is to come into His world.

This author reflects on the work of Grudem who also comments on the relationship of faithfulness and righteousness, obedience and wisdom. Grudem adds “When we as God’s people walk in His ways, we come to know more and more fully by experience that the Kingdom of God is indeed ‘righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit’ (Rom 14:17).<sup>49</sup> Grudem has made a wonderful comment here, as he has emphasised walking in God’s ways and in actually walking - experiencing the Kingdom – the rule of Jesus in the heart of a faithful and obedient servant. The reference to Romans 14:17 is important. This author goes one step further by mentioning 14:18 which focuses on the peace and joy from service and the reality that Jesus and others are pleased – “...because anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and approved by men.” (Rom 14:18)

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid. 375

<sup>49</sup> Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*. (Leicester: IVP, 1994), p 203



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## Scripture

In this key area of the sovereignty of God this author now focuses on the subject of Scripture and is thankful for the contributions of other authors. Apart from Scripture, which is God's special revelation. From this author's ministry it is clear that scholarly and non-scholarly liberals have a completely different view on the authority of Scripture as compared to Bible believing Christians. This author refers again to the section "Unbelieving Liberals Misconceptions" in Chapter 4 below. It is important to emphasise the danger of liberal error. This author was at a Ministry School where the question of homosexuality was discussed. This author mentioned the truths in Scripture (Rom 1:27; 1 Cor 6:9) but the response from liberal clergy was that the Letters of Paul, Peter and John were not Scripture. This author then mentioned the truths of Sodom and Gomorrah as one of my colleagues said that only the Old Testament was actually Scripture. On making this statement the reply to me was – "move with the times." It is clear to this author that liberals do not accept the authority of Scripture. This was further proven when the Gospels were not referred to as truth but as story. Hence the need to emphasise God's sovereignty and authority as recorded in Scripture.

I mention some important comments about general revelation later below. Yarbrough in Schreiner explains the importance of Scripture in divine sovereignty still discussing election, commenting on the Gospel of John that it "lays great stress on divine initiative in salvation."<sup>50</sup> He goes further to ask the question about what is the role and importance of human faith? Yarbrough cites Osbourne who "argues that in John's Gospel 'sovereignty and responsibility exist

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<sup>50</sup> Robert W Yarbrough, "Divine Election in the Gospel of John." In Still Sovereign eds. Thomas R Schreiner, Bruce A Ware (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), p 56

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side by side.’ He suggests that divine election works ‘with one’s faith decision.’ Election does not produce faith ...”<sup>51</sup> Yarbrough explains that Osbourne’s understanding of John’s gospel is inadequate and controversial. However, divine sovereignty is stressed in human faith and that “John’s Gospel explicitly centres more on the sovereignty of God.”<sup>52</sup> Osbourne cites John 3:1-15, 5:21, 6:35-40, 15:16-9, and Chapters 9, 10, 17. In his conclusion, Yarbrough comments how complex the doctrine of divine election, foreknowledge and predestination are and encourages Christians to question not feud and to “cling to the sole sufficiency of grace in Christ.”<sup>53</sup> And he again notes Osbourne’s “recourse to the paradoxical coexistence of sovereign grace and human choice [that] at least attempts to leave God free to do His sovereign bidding.”<sup>54</sup>

Further concerning Scripture, Westblade gives more in-depth analysis to the sovereignty of God in his discussion on divine election in the Pauline literature. He notes Paul’s “overriding concern to ascribe sovereign glory to God forever by depending on all things from Him, apprehending all things through Him, and attributing all things to Him ...”<sup>55</sup> Westblade highlights Paul’s acknowledgment of God’s sovereignty by citing the Letter to the Ephesians “...electing the saints before the foundation of the world to be fellow heirs with Christ in God’s grander purpose...(1:6, 11, 14) ...all things that have been created (1:10) and all things that occur (1:11) accord with the good pleasure (1:5, 9) of God’s will a purpose that He set forth beforehand in Christ as a plan.”<sup>56</sup> This comment from Westblade makes it crystal clear “salvation is a gift of God and depends wholly

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid

<sup>52</sup> Ibid, 57

<sup>53</sup> Ibid, 61

<sup>54</sup> Ibid

<sup>55</sup> Donald J Westblade, “Divine Election in the Pauline Literature.” In Still Sovereign eds Thomas R Schreiner, Bruce A Ware (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), p72

<sup>56</sup> Ibid

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on God's call (1:18, 2:8)."<sup>57</sup> Further he comments on Paul's letter to the Romans that "without God we are dead (2:1, 5)."<sup>58</sup> He adds "moral corpses that we are, the only hope we have for a will that turns its passion toward God lies in the call of God ...clear evidence of Paul's own confidence in the sovereignty of God over the human heart and well may be found in the manner in which he prays."<sup>59</sup> Westblade highlights references to Paul's prayers, for example Philippians 1:9, 1 Thessalonians 3:12 and 2 Thessalonians 2:16, 3:16. Thus Westblade highlights Paul's defence of God's sovereignty in two ways; that God always receives glory for what He does including His choices, and secondly those chosen or elected should always recognise the unshakability "of their security in the unwavering resolve of God Himself to be glorified for His faithfulness to His own purposes."<sup>60</sup>

This author includes here some comments by Packer which show God's omnipotence – that everything – even our election is part of His plan. Packer in Schreiner also adds to the discussion of the sovereignty of God and begins with love – the love word 'agape' and defines it "in terms of the love shown forth in Christ ...love of a kind the world never dreamed of before."<sup>61</sup> God sending His Son fits into the Biblical witness of the whole sovereignty of God and Packer discusses God's being – His communicable and incommunicable attributes. This is important here as Packer notes that in the former "in our sanctification they begin to be reproduced in us ... as wisdom, truth, goodness, ... holiness and righteousness... the latter,

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid

<sup>58</sup> Ibid

<sup>59</sup> Ibid, 73

<sup>60</sup> Ibid, 75

<sup>61</sup> J I Packer, "The Love of God: Universal and Particular." In Still Sovereign eds Thomas R Schreiner, Bruce A Ware (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), p 279

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commonly listed as self-existence ... immutability, infinity, eternity and simplicity (meaning inner integration)."<sup>62</sup> Packer goes even further in analysing the sovereignty of God by explaining the trinity of the divine Lord ... and the unity of the divine character who is "unchangeably wise, just, pure, good and true."<sup>63</sup>

Commenting on God's sovereignty Ortlund quotes Jeremiah 20:7-9 concerning "His word is in my heart like a fire shut up in my bones ..." and Ortlund notes that Jeremiah's confession "sober both Calvinists and the Arminian, lest we trivialise the doctrine of God's sovereignty as a mere debating point."<sup>64</sup> This author comments that this is not an insignificant point made here, as sometimes for the right reason trying to compartmentalise thoughts into our finite minds we can actually lose track of the significance of the sovereignty of God. Correct doctrine keeps us on track in our true understanding of the sovereignty of God. This author is taking a Calvinist view, and acknowledges that an Arminian view would favour Erickson's order. As Christian our minds are in Christ (1 Cor 2:16). We must never leave the main focus of the sovereignty of God when trying to explain doctrine such as Erickson's logical order. The finiteness of man leads to an incomplete understanding of God's infinite plan for His creation. This leads to confusion of terms used to describe the processes God has put in place. Here the terms are 'conversion' and 'regeneration'. God is our all, our being – indeed our every breath we take; the author of our regeneration and thus the giver of our faith. I remain convinced Erickson has been very helpful in his work, but does not totally grasp the order regeneration then conversion, not conversion and then regeneration.

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid, 280

<sup>64</sup> Raymond C Ortlund, Jr, "The Sovereignty of God: Case Studies in the Old Testament." In Still Sovereign eds. Thomas R Schreiner, Bruce A Ware (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), p 39

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After all, all these efforts are to grow more in the knowledge of Him, with the main purpose to actually do those works which he has “prepared in advance for us to do” (Eph 2:10).

Further this author is encouraged by Ortlund’s reference (Jer 20:7-9) concerning “...His word”. This author is reminded here of Jesus the eternal Living Word, the Great “I AM”, the absolute Truth (Jn 14:6). Jesus is the Truth spoken by the sovereign God – indeed the second Person, the sovereign Son who declares God’s promises.

## Effectual Call

Ware discusses effectual calling and grace, which this author views as one of the most marvellous doctrines demonstrating the sovereignty of God and of the Son. Ware explains that the doctrine “refers more specifically to God’s inward and ultimately persuasive summons to repent of sin and turn to Christ for salvation.”<sup>65</sup> This author is humbled by this great comfort, yet sorrowful because of the fact that not all are given the call and are saved.

Clowney expands on these ideas on effectual call in his comments on preaching and the sovereignty of God, when he discusses the call of Saul, now Paul, who “came as a servant of the Lord preaching the Good News of God’s salvation (Acts 13:47).”<sup>66</sup> The sovereignty of God is clearly demonstrated in Paul proclaiming and preaching the salvation of God’s calling and only through God’s power. This author’s sorrow, mentioned above, is compared to the great sorrow of Paul when he himself express the grief of the Jews’ rejection of

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<sup>65</sup> Bruce A Ware, “Effectual Calling and Grace” in Still Sovereign eds. Thomas R Schreiner, Bruce A Ware (Grand Rapids: Baker Books,2000), p 211

<sup>66</sup> Edmund P Clowney, “Preaching and the Sovereignty of God” in Still Sovereign eds Thomas R Schreiner, Bruce A Ware (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), p 335

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our Lord Jesus Christ. Clowney notes a very important point concerning God's sovereignty that "God's word did not fail, for His purposes stand in those whom He has chosen ... God chose Isaac not Ishmael; Jacob not Esau ..."67

Further on election – Gospel of John, Yarbrough in Schreiner comments on divine election in the Gospel of John beginning with an interesting point that election is "implicit in John's opening words, 'in the beginning ...' (1:1), a clear echo of Genesis 1:1."68 Creation and redemption are spoken of here and explained clearly that "God is, and that He willed to create and to save ... God chose to send the light, not because but in spite of human desire and readiness for it."69

Whilst commenting on divine election in the Gospel of John, Yarbrough in Schreiner also comments on creation. He explains "creation, and accordingly also redemption, can have no other explanation than that God is, and that He willed to create and to save."70

Commenting further on Erickson's discussion on predestination and election, Tenney links the key idea of the sovereignty of God with the comments on predestination and election, explaining that the "sovereign purpose of God in establishing the church permeates the first half of the Epistle."71 He is referring to Paul's letter to the Ephesians (Eph 1:4, 5) where he notes "throughout the epistles runs

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Robert W Yarbrough, "Divine Election in the Gospel of John" in Still Sovereign eds Thomas R Schreiner, Bruce A Ware (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), p 48

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Merrill C Tenney, New Testament Survey (Grand Rapids, Mich, Eerdmans, 1983), p 318

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the one theme of the church. The epistle was not directed to novices in the Christian faith, but to those who having achieved some maturity in spiritual experience wished to go on to fuller knowledge and life.”<sup>72</sup>

Touching on predestination and election, in his discussion “Against the Pelagians” in his Chapter on Augustine, Placher interestingly notes “out of such reflections, Augustine forged his doctrine of predestination. Again, see the section “Unbelieving Liberal Misconceptions”, as many liberals are Universalists not believing in the doctrine of election.

Through grace, God saves some people in spite of their inability to help themselves. Nothing they have done merited that salvation. Yet Scripture insists that God’s grace does not extend to all. There are goats as well as sheep; some are consigned to eternal fire. God must simply therefore decide to save some and to leave others, no worse in their characters to the consequences of their sins. Is that unfair? Augustine argued that everyone sins, everyone deserves punishment. God gives some better than they deserve, but no one gets less. The whole theory may make God seem arbitrary but at least it keeps people from being proud. No one can claim to have earned salvation; it is an underserved gift for which one can only be grateful. The justice of God’s predestination depends on the claim that everyone is a sinner deserving punishment...”<sup>73</sup>

Further concerning predestination and election, Placher makes an important point concerning this doctrine in the early history of Christian theology as he discusses Gottschalk’s comments (800) who

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> William C Placher, *A History of Christian Theology*. (Philadelphia, Penn: Westminster Pres, 1983), p 115, 116

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argued these points with Hincmar “Gottschalk had said that God predestinates some people to damnation. Hincmar protested that God would never do that. He said that God predestinates the elect to salvation, but does not predestinate the condemned. Gottschalk thought this was simply silly: predestinating one group inevitably implied predestinating of the other ...on another issue, Gottschalk argued that people could do good only with grace...”<sup>74</sup> Then the argument centred around good “deeds” of non-Christians. However, what this author notes as interesting are comments made by Eriugena who “agreed with Hincmar, but for a reason distinctly his own: since sin and evil do not exist they cannot be predestinated by God.”<sup>75</sup> What further amazed this author is how Hincmar could have accepted Eriugena’s argument which stands so dramatically outside the truth of Scripture (Rom 3:10-12, 23; 6:1-18; 1 Pet 3:18; Rom 5:8 and 2 Cor 5:21). This author reasons that this is an important point since the Canon of New Testament Scripture was established since c 200.

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid, 127

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.



## THE GLORY OF THE DEITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

I now turn to “the truth of the deity of Jesus” and the fact that for eternity He is the believers’ righteousness and wisdom (cf again Lk 24:27 and associated Old Testament references as listed). This author begins the discussion on the deity of Jesus by looking at comments by Griffith Thomas concerning the atoning propitiation sacrifice of Jesus and His righteousness which is imputed to the believer. Griffith Thomas states “It is not enough that our Lord’s death occurred in history; it must also become part of our personal experience, in order that it may be a spiritual force in our life.”<sup>76</sup> He goes on to explain Article 11 in the Book of Common Prayer – “We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our own works ...”<sup>77</sup> Commenting on Article 11 Griffith Thomas suggest that it is the compliment of Article 2 – “The Son which is the Word of the Father, begotten from everlasting of the Father, the very and eternal God, and of one substance with the Father, took man’s nature...”<sup>78</sup> This author observes from Griffith Thomas’ comments the valuable truth that Jesus is the eternal second Person, the Son from everlasting, the eternal Living Word (Jn 1:1). Where I have said “observes above”, I need to expand this important truth noted by Griffith Thomas concerning “...imputed to the believer.” The phrase above “...imputed to the believer...” is wonderful for the analysis required for the original dissertation. For the review of Erickson’s logical order, this author needs to highlight this following truth. On regeneration the new believer knows almost

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<sup>76</sup> W H Griffith Thomas, The Catholic Faith. (London: Church Book Room Press Ltd, 1966), p 54

<sup>77</sup> Ibid, 55

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

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nothing of the truths of faith God has just given but knows he/she has been born again – born anew – born from above (Jn 3:7). Being filled with the Holy Spirit and knowing this glorious anointing (1 Jn 2:20ff) this imputation is amazing. On regeneration, on being saved, salvation is not lost (Lk 19:10; Heb 13:5). Each new believer now begins to know and grow in obedience. Of course there is a warning in relation to sin as already noted above (Rom 6:1-18). This warning is highlighted in the following passage.

1. Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God, 2. instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. 3. And God permitting, we will do so. 4. It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, 5. who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age, 6. if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance, because to their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace. 7. Land that drinks in the rain often falling on it and that produces a crop useful to those for whom it is farmed receives the blessing of God. 8. But land that produces thorns and thistles is worthless and is in danger of being cursed. In the end it will be burned. 9. Even though we speak like this, dear friends, we are confident of better things in your case – things that accompany salvation. 10. God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them. 11. We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, in order to make your hope sure. 12. We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised. 13. When God made his promise to Abraham,

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since there was no one greater for him to swear by, he swore by himself, 14. saying, “I will surely bless you and give you many descendants.” 15. And so after waiting patiently, Abraham received what was promised. 16. Men swear by someone greater than themselves, and the oath confirms what is said and puts an end to all argument. 17. Because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised, he confirmed it with an oath. 18. God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope offered to us may be greatly encouraged. 19. We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, 20. where Jesus, who went before us, has entered on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek. (Hebrews 6)

This author has emphasised that after regeneration the new believer will want to know and grow. Thus you will note that the passage starts with the word “therefore” which refers back to a previous warning about falling away. This author asks the question, “Can a Christian fall away?” In the passage quoted the writer suggests that we “leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go onto maturity.” The passage raises the question about falling from grace or losing salvation. This author suggests that the passage does not teach that one of the elect can ever lose salvation as suggested in verses 4-6. This author suggests that this is a “hypothetical argument” which warns Christians from a Jewish background that being born in the Spirit will result in encouragement from the Holy Spirit to want to know more about Jesus and to grow to maturity in Him. This author also suggests these verses are a warning against backsliding. This author does not consider that this passage is suggesting that the believer can “lose their salvation” for the truth is that this cannot happen. What can be the case is that the person

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had never been regenerated in the first place. This author has included the whole passage (Heb 6) to emphasise that even though this Scripture “speaks like this” (v9) there is confidence that God is at work in their hearts and that they are regenerated and that these words in Scripture here are a great encouragement to those who are regenerated but who need emphasis by God of His promises and that they need to constantly look to Him whilst waiting patiently for His continual blessings. If there is any doubt on the part of the believer, this should not be seen as a sign that the believer is not a regenerated person. Doubt should send the believer back to God’s word in order to reconcile any differences or address any doubts. For example, if prayer is unanswered, a believer would not turn their back on God and His promises, but would go back to God’s word to confirm that God’s ways are far better than ours (cf Jn 6:39-40; 10:27-30; Phil 1:9-10; 3:12-17). This author includes the whole of Hebrews 6 passage for context purposes. It is dangerous in some cases to take a verse of Scripture by itself to prove a particular point.

Concerning the fact of Christ’s deity, this author is reminded of how all God’s righteousness and wisdom dwells in His Son – the sovereign Lord Jesus. Several thoughts from the key area Sovereignty of God are therefore re-emphasised in the context of the truth of the Deity of Jesus. The truths of Scripture need to be printed here for encouragement.

“Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but for those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God...it is because of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God

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– that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.” (1 Cor 1:22-24, 30).

There is also Jesus’ truth about His salvation—rest and that believers can find comfort through faith in Him.

Jesus said: “All things have been committed to me by my Father. No-one knows the Son except the Father, and no-one knows the Son except the Father, and no-one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal Him. ‘Come to me, all who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest...’” (Mt 11:27, 28). We can completely trust Jesus for He also said: “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.” (Mt 28:18)

This is a very important point for it confirms the truth of Jesus’ authority as the apostle John explains:

“The Father loves the Son and has placed everything in His hands. Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God’s wrath remains on them.” (Jn 3:35-36)

This is also supported by the following truths about the authority of Jesus and His election of those chosen before the foundation of the world as explained in the references (Jn 5:24; 6:37, 44, 65; 10:12; 17:1-8, 24-26; Eph 1:4-5).

This reality is clearly seen in the Old Testament record when God speaks to Moses out of the burning bush, and Moses asks about God’s name, and God says to Moses:

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“I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: ‘I AM has sent me to you.’” (Ex 3:14)

Clearly it was Jesus speaking out of the burning bush as God, the Living Word, who was in the Old Testament concealed, who is in the New Testament revealed and who is to come. Jesus is the eternal second Person of YAHWEH. In John 6:35; 8:12; 10:7; 10:11; 11:25; 14:6 and 15:1, Jesus as God, in His glorious deity, speaks again as God using His name “I AM.” Jesus’ deity is also seen with references firstly to John 4:26:

“Then Jesus declared ‘I who speak to you am He.’”

This author comments on the words ‘am He’ with the truth that in Greek Jesus is actually saying “I am....I am God” which reflects His Name (Ex 3:14), and His revelation of Himself as the eternal Lord in reality in His Old Covenant.

This is an eternal truth to His deity even before He came into His world. Secondly this is further confirmed by the apostle John – John 8:58:

Jesus said: “I tell you the truth, before Abraham was born, I am!”

Erickson importantly comments and notes “that rather than saying, ‘I was,’ He says, ‘I am.’ Erickson notes that Leon Morris suggests there is an implied contrast here between ‘a mode of being which has a definite beginning’ ... ‘one of which is eternal’. It is also quite possible that Jesus is alluding to the ‘I AM formula’ which the LORD identified Himself in Exodus 3:14-15.<sup>79</sup> Further, Tenney adds to Erickson with a

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<sup>79</sup> Millard J Erickson, Christian Theology. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1998), p 702

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very succinct comment concerning the deity of Christ, providing ample references explaining that before His enemies He used language that predicted both pre-existence and deity (Jn 8:42, 58; 10:30-33, 36; Mt 22:41-45). Also concerning Erickson's discussion on the deity of Christ, Tenney notes that in Christ God is perfectly pictured (Col 1:15), and "that in Him all the fullness of deity resides (1:19), and that in Him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (2:3)."<sup>80</sup> This author includes again here for the purpose of context comments made earlier by Milne about the deity of Jesus. Concerning the deity of Christ, the Lordship of Jesus, Milne explains that we need no longer "wait further revelation which might supersede His self-disclosure in Jesus Christ. As the eternal Son of God, the reality of the eternal God Himself, Jesus is the ultimate revelation, the truth in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Jn 14:6; Col 2:3)."<sup>81</sup>

### Wisdom of God's Choosing in Christ

Concerning the wisdom of Christ and being mindful of His divinity, one area this author is very interested in, is the authority given to Jesus by the Father concerning the truth again in John 10:29:

"My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no-one can snatch out of my Father's hand."

Jesus follows this with the wonderful truth, "I and the Father are one" (Jn 10:30).

Does God choose as He pleases? Does His choice depend on advanced awareness? For Augustine, suggests Erickson, "for God by

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<sup>80</sup> Merrill C Tenney, New Testament Survey. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), p 323

<sup>81</sup> Bruce Milne, Know the Truth. (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1982), p 67

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an unalterable decree has determined who is to be saved; being totally of God's grace, salvation in no way depends on humans or what they do..."<sup>82</sup>

Following these comments by Augustine, Erickson looks at differing views of predestination, firstly Calvin. He notes the "acronym TULIP: total depravity, unconditional predestination, limited atonement, irresistible grace and perseverance."<sup>83</sup> This author has touched on these truths already, however the focus and context now concerns Jesus and His deity as God – the Son of God. Erickson notes that total depravity "means that every individual is so sinful as to be unable to respond to any offer of grace."<sup>84</sup> This author sees this in many instances where Jesus speaks to the Pharisees. He adds that sometimes "the phrase 'total inability' is used, meaning that sinners have lost the ability to do good and are unable to convert themselves." This author adds the last two words "convert themselves" should actually be "regenerate themselves" as conversion is the process of growth and knowledge as the elect's response.

This is why this author has already acknowledged Romans 3:10-12 and Jesus' words:

"The Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost." (Lk 19:10).

Thus here this author observes and sees the need to look to Jesus completely in the right action or behaviour with the aim of being successful for eternity through faith in Jesus – being declared righteous, and the comfort only He gives, mindful that even our faith

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<sup>82</sup> Millard J Erickson, Christian Theology. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1998), p 924

<sup>83</sup> Ibid, 928

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.



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is His gift (Eph 2:5-8). Jesus is Saviour and has God's full authority. Further commenting on God's actions, Erickson notes the choice of the nation of Israel and comments "in Romans 9 Paul argues impressively that all of these choices are totally of God and in no way depend on the people chosen."<sup>85</sup> Romans 9:15-16 is cited here. Erickson also notes that election is "Efficacious",<sup>86</sup> in that those whom God chooses will most certainly come to faith in Jesus and, for that matter, will persevere in that faith to the end."<sup>87</sup> A comment on "chooses." Erickson comments here that election is efficacious and the elect will certainly come to faith in Jesus and will persevere to the end could be more accurately stated. This author has already revisited and discussed the sovereignty of God. What this author is emphasising here is that Erickson's comments in this context limit the sovereignty of God. This author asks the question, who is doing the "coming to faith"? Who is doing the "persevering to the end"? This author emphasises here that God gives the faith in Jesus, through the grace of Jesus (Rom 3:22, 26); where the Greek teaches faith "of" Jesus (again, Rom 3:22; Eph 2:5-8), and God preserves His elect (Heb 13:5). Erickson explains that we confidently understand God's plan will be fulfilled and that the "elect will come to faith,"<sup>88</sup> also understanding that we must not criticise ourselves when in our witness some do not come to faith in Jesus for that occurred in His ministry also (Jn 6:37, 44), and we should be encouraged in our witness and evangelism as we do not know who is the elect and we must understand and acknowledge that it is all by grace – God's unmerited favour through the authority given through Jesus. What a comfort this is and an

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<sup>85</sup> Ibid, 930

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Millard J Erickson, Christian Theology. (Grand Rapids, Mich: Baker Books, 1998), p 930

<sup>88</sup> Ibid, 940

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encouragement to press on towards the goal God has given to believers – to be successful, that is to be faithful to Jesus.

Commenting on the above – the Grace of Jesus, and Jesus' requirement also for our obedience, Carson in his reflections on assurance makes an interesting comment about election that as an "element in the Biblical portrayal of God's sovereignty never functions so as to destroy human responsibility..."<sup>89</sup>This author adds that here "sovereignty" points directly to the deity of Jesus. This is a very important truth. Jesus taught the wisdom of this truth the day before Good Friday.

"Jesus said: 'I am the Way the Truth and the Life.

Jesus said: "If you love me you will obey what I command.""

(Jn14:15)

Jesus then explained that he had authority to say these words – authority

"As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in His love." (Jn 15:9-10)

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<sup>89</sup> D A Carson, "Reflections on Assurance" Still Sovereign, eds Thomas R Schreiner, Bruce A Ware (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), p 272

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### Given by God the Father to God the Son

It's wonderful to focus again on the truth of the selfless love of Jesus – His dedication to “save His people from their sins” (Mt 1:21) – His obligatory love, His mission and duty in obedience to His Father to complete the Father's purposes – the redemption of the elect. Also commenting on the point above, Schreiner explains that God – YAHWEH (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) – is completely sovereign and “yet human choices and responsibility are not a charade. God ordains all that comes to pass and is good; and yet evil exists, and it is really evil. God chooses only some to be saved, and yet there is also the true sense in which He desires the salvation of all. Those who are elect will never lose their salvation, and yet those who do not persevere to the end will not inherit the Kingdom of God.”<sup>90</sup> The above statement is of a human mind – a Christian brother or sister with the mind of Christ. However, none can judge, and this author thus focuses on the truth of the parable of the sower and the wheat and the tares here.

Westblade in Schreiner comments on ability in his discussion on divine election. He notes “God Himself gives and withholds the ability to trust. God, not the sinner, should therefore be held responsible.”<sup>91</sup> This highlights how difficult this theological truth is to our finite minds as Westblade continues “that God gives, an ability to trust to have a will that is favourably disposed, is a moral ability, one that we commonly distinguish in practice from our natural or physical abilities.”<sup>92</sup> Schreiner expands this comment by his comment

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<sup>90</sup> Thomas R Schreiner, Bruce A Ware, eds Still Sovereign. (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), p 19

<sup>91</sup> Donald Westblade, “Divine Election in the Pauline Literature.” Still Sovereign eds. Thomas R Schreiner, Bruce A Ware (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), p 79

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

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on prevenient grace where he distinguishes between moral and physical ability. He notes that “God gives commands to unbelievers that they can physically obey; that is, they could observe His commandments if they desired to do so. Unbelievers are morally unable to keep God’s commands in the sense that they have no desire to obey all of His commandments.”<sup>93</sup> Thus he explains prevenient grace that before they repent as the scriptures teach “that they have no moral ability to believe, and the only way they will believe is if they are given by the Father to the Son. This revelation is not vouchsafed to all people but only to the elect.”<sup>94</sup> He takes this thought one step further by commenting on Scripture where Jesus commands believers “to be perfect (Mt 5:48), but the need for forgiveness (Mt 6:14-15) demonstrates that perfection is impossible to attain.”<sup>95</sup> This author notes as Schreiner discusses that it is difficult for humankind to accept their responsibility for sin irrespective of the truth that “they are born with an inclination and that will inevitably lead them to sin.”<sup>96</sup> The reality discussed by Schreiner that it is “the kindness of God”<sup>97</sup> that should give people understanding and leading to repentance. As Schreiner had already stated that Adam was still responsible for their “failure to respond to God’s grace.”<sup>98</sup> These are awesome thoughts as we stand in awe of the righteousness and wisdom of Jesus in the care of our loving and merciful Father who patiently waits for those to change – to turn to Him in repentance and faith answering the call in actions that are successful – wise actions for now and eternity. This author notes here that this discussion seems to override election. This author’s

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<sup>93</sup> Thomas R Schreiner, “Does Scripture Teach Prevenient Grace in the Wesleyan Sense?” in Still Sovereign eds. Thomas R Schreiner, Bruce A Ware (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), p 243

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid, 244

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

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finite mind has great difficulty in the theology of election as, although having the mind of Christ (1 Cor 2:16), Schreiner seems to be ignoring God's predestination. This author reasons that the Holy Spirit through the conviction of those to be regenerated will always be successful through Jesus' irresistible grace. This author cannot judge as stated but can only be a faithful teacher of Scripture to all. This author is not a judge but a fruit inspector. Those who are elect will come to Jesus. Only Jesus knows who the elect are. The elect will respond to the Holy Spirit's, the Spirit of Jesus' effectual calling.

“And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” (Acts 2:21)

This author mentions again that the elect will know their calling after regeneration.

In the verse above Peter is addressing the crowd and referring to Jesus, and the deity of Jesus whom God raised from the dead to pay the price of sin of those who trust Jesus (also Rom 5:8; 6:23; 2 Cor 5:21; 1 Pe 3:18). This author further clarifies the truth “...God raised...” that the sovereignty of Jesus is clearly seen here in that the Father gave Jesus authority (Jn 15:9-10) to raise Himself (Jn 10:18). This author notes here Peter is acknowledging Jesus as “Lord” but the reference cited is from the Old Testament as follows:

“And everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved. (Joel 2:32)

This author acknowledges that this reference refers to YAHWEH and Peter is actually acknowledging Jesus the “Lord” the eternal second Person of YAHWEH.

### 6. Effectual Call – The True Wisdom of God in Jesus

Thus this author views the need to discuss effectual call. In thinking about this amazing subject this author focuses on the most positive mindset possible – that concerning a further analysis of Jesus' authority.

“The Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost”  
(Lk 19:10)

This is the epitome of God's wisdom in Jesus.

Ware discusses effectual calling and grace. Here this author emphasises the grace of Jesus:

“John testifies concerning Him. He cries out, saying ‘This was He of whom I said, He who comes after me has surpassed me because He was before me. From the fullness of His grace we have all received one blessing after another. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No-one has ever seen God but only God the One and only begotten Son who is at the Father's side, has made Him known.’” (Jn 1:15-18)

This author views as one of the most marvellous doctrines demonstrating the righteousness and wisdom and sovereignty of God in Jesus. It is Jesus' righteousness and wisdom – mainly His success to His people in His love. Ware's comments add to Erickson. I have mentioned before I disagree with Erickson in that I believe the order is regeneration and conversion – the calling, a “persuasive summons”, as Ware explains below.

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Ware explains that the doctrine “refers more specifically to God’s inward and ultimately persuasive summons to repent of sin and turn to Christ for salvation.”<sup>99</sup> This author is humbled by this great comfort. Again this author is reminded of the truths:

“God presented Him (Jesus) as a sacrifice of atonement (propitiation) through faith in His blood. He did this to demonstrate His justice, because in His forbearance He had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished – He did it to demonstrate His justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus. Where then is boasting? It is excluded. On what principle? On that of observing the law? No, but on that of faith. For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law.”  
(Rom 3:25-28)

This author emphasises here that ‘justify’ refers to the believer being declared righteous by God through faith in Jesus. The reality is that no-one is perfect, good or holy by their own self-righteousness (Rom 3:10-12). This author also focuses on the reality of:

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For He chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight. In love He predestined us to be adopted as His sons and daughters through Jesus Christ...in Him we were also chosen having been predestined according to the plan of Him who works out everything in conformity with His purpose and will, in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the

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<sup>99</sup> Bruce A Ware, “Effectual Calling and Grace,” in Still Sovereign eds. Thomas R Schreiner, Bruce A Ware (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), p 211

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praise of His glory. And you were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in Him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance ...” (Eph 1:3, 4; 11-14)

This author acknowledges that this is a very important truth especially concerning purity where believers are to be “holy and blameless in the Father’s sight” (again Eph 1:4), and this is discussed later when examining the problem of scholarly and non-scholarly liberal error which condones, for example, homosexuality. This author discusses this in the comments on sanctification.



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### God's Righteousness and Wisdom Complete in Jesus – Our Adoption

In addition to the truths about adoption discussed in Chapter “Sovereignty of God”, this author also completes these truths by visiting the key area again emphasising the believers’ adoption is complete – indeed completely in Jesus.

Each believer’s salvation in Jesus is real now, yet not complete. This author is encouraged by Wayne Grudem’s wise and interesting thoughts on adoption which he discusses with Schreiner in his contribution – Perseverance of the Saints. Grudem in an interesting way lists “regeneration, justification and adoption”,<sup>100</sup> as “entirely works of God”, as part of God’s work and thus part of the righteousness, wisdom and sovereignty of God or more accurately the sovereignty of Jesus, the Son of God. In his comments on perseverance of the saints, Grudem in Schreiner discusses the elements at the beginning of the Christian life, discussing regeneration, conversion, justification, adoption and sanctification. He suggests that regeneration, justification and adoption “are entirely works of God.”<sup>101</sup> However, he suggest that conversion, “which includes repentance from sins and faith in Christ ... is entirely a work of man.”<sup>102</sup> This author agrees with Grudem’s comment that conversion “includes repentance from sin and a faith in Christ,”<sup>103</sup> but this author would go one step further in that argument by saying that the new believer is growing in faith, a faith which has not really reached the point of regeneration – a time of “seeking Jesus” – then

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<sup>100</sup> Wayne Grudem, “Perseverance of Saints: A Case from the Warning Passages in Hebrews.” In Still Sovereign eds. Thomas R Schreiner, Bruce A Ware (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), p 135

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

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if truly chosen then there is regeneration which is instantaneous, and is in the order regeneration and then conversion.

This author makes a point about faith below, discussed also in the section where this author has discussed the truth that God gives faith. Humankind is responsible for being obedient.

Thus God has given the elect faith. Thus this author focuses on the marvellous compound conditional truth concerning the gift of faith given by the grace of Jesus our Saviour who came to save His people:

“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not from yourselves, it is a gift of God – not by works so that no-one can boast.” (Eph 2:8-9)

There is no way that humankind as a result of the Fall could come to Jesus using their own strength (again Rom 3:10-12). This author also acknowledges the hymn:

“All my hope on God is founded,  
All my trust He shall renew;  
He, my guide through changing order,  
Only good and only true.  
God unknown  
He alone  
Calls my heart to be His own.

Still from man to God eternal  
Sacrifice of praise be done,  
High above all praised praising  
For the gift of Christ His Son.

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Hear Christ's call

One and all:

We who follow shall not fall.”<sup>104</sup>

This author is also reminded that Calvin teaches the truth of unconditional election which supports the above reference and words of the hymn, with the following Scriptures:

“Jesus said ‘All that the father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away.’” (Jn 6:37)

“No-one can come to me unless the father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day.” (Jn 6:44)

This is why I told you that no-one can come to me unless the Father has enabled him.” (Jn 6:65)

“The Jews gathered around Him, saying ‘How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ (Messiah), tell us plainly’. Jesus answered, ‘I did tell you but you did not believe. The miracles I do in my Father's name speak for me, but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; No-one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no-one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and the father are one.’”(Jn 10:24-30)

“Yet, before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad – in order that God's purpose in election might stand: not

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<sup>104</sup> Robert Bridges, in Mission Praise. Hymn number 16

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by works but by Him who calls – she was told ‘the older will serve the younger.’ Just as it is written: Jacob I loved but Esau I hated. What then shall we say? Is God unjust? Not at all! For He says to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I have mercy and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion. It does not, therefore, depend on man’s desire or effort, but on God’s mercy. For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, “I raised you up for this very purpose, that I might display my power in you and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth. Therefore, God has mercy on who He wants to have mercy, and He hardens whom He wants to harden.” (Rom 9:11-18)

In God’s love and care those who are elect are more than conquerors:

“And we know that in all things God works for the good for those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose.” (Rom 8:28)

This author adds here on this teaching on election that through the Holy Spirit God’s effectual calling results in a positive response for those whom He loves and saves.

With regard to the calling and faith given, the elect are to do those things He has prepared in advance for believers to do (Eph 2:10; also 2 Tim 1:9). Our successful actions completed in Christ through His strength. Walking with Jesus in the now and not yet, waiting for our adoption as sons and daughters to be complete. This is our certain hope – our known hope. As a result of faith and our justification. Our adoption is such a positive state in our relationship with God – its ultimate success – it’s the wisdom of God and our “positive standing,”<sup>105</sup> as a child of God in His eternity. A child “restored to a

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<sup>105</sup> Millard J Erickson, *Christian Theology*. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1998), p 974

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position of favour with God.”<sup>106</sup> There is nothing more successful than this.

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

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### Calling and Regeneration

The historic fact of Jesus the Son of God coming into His world to save sinners (Mt 1:21) and the reality of God being with us (Mt 1:23) gives each believer new life with the joy of the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Scripture encourages us in our obedience to God's commands (Is 45:22; Eph 2:4-5). Davis highlights the truth that "the old sinful nature must be changed before man can stand in the presence of God."<sup>107</sup> (Jn 3:5-7)

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<sup>107</sup> John Jefferson Davis, *Basic Bible Texts*. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan 1984), p 86

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### Repentance and Faith - Faith of Jesus – Faith in Jesus

God's saving faith gives the believer a new beginning when the believer repents and turns from sin acknowledging Jesus as Lord and accepting His free offer of salvation. Davis notes that firstly John (Mt 3:1-2) preached repentance and Jesus (Mt 4:12, 17) "stressed repentance as an essential prerequisite for entering the Kingdom"<sup>108</sup> and salvation in Him through faith (Gal 2:20). This author adds the important comment in Scripture (Rom 3:25; Heb 9:15) that Jesus redeems those under the first covenant and the new covenant, as He is the once and for all time atoning sacrifice (Heb 9:12, 26). This author also says of the kingdom that God's reign was drawing near in the Person and ministry of Jesus (Mt 4:17).

As from the heading above, we may reason that our faith is given to us (Eph 2:5-8) is simply faith in Jesus.

But we must remember our faith is a gift as the faith of Jesus (Rom 3:22).

### Justification

This author has already made previous context comments about justification in the section "Definitions" and now adds some thoughts by Davis acknowledging Jesus' deity. Davis explains that God pardons all our sins and accepts us as righteous and that this is through faith. This author adds that righteousness is God's commitment to do (for those to whom He has given faith) for us what we cannot do for ourselves. Indeed it is the side of His justice that concerns our rescue and acquittal (Rom 4). Davis notes the

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<sup>108</sup> Ibid, 89



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Scripture (Rom 3:20, 23, 24, 28; 5:1). This author further adds from Davis' listing of Romans 3:23, that whilst we are still sinners, through faith God sees us as justified – “Just-if-I or just-as-if-I” had not sinned (this author's emphasis and comment).

Hunt discusses justification and the word justify, explaining that it means “to declare righteous or to treat as righteous.”<sup>109</sup> He continues “justify is the verdict of acquittal ...”<sup>110</sup>

Watson defines justification as “an act of God, God's free grace whereby He pardons all our sins, and accepts us as righteous in His sight, only for the righteousness of Christ, imputed to us, and received by faith alone.”<sup>111</sup> Watson highlights that Christ has made us to be righteous through faith (1 Cor 1:30; Rom 5:1). Watson also highlights that “justification is a fixed permanent thing, it can never be lost.”<sup>112</sup>

## Sanctification

This author makes some comments on sanctification with the help of Davis which have the background focus on Jesus' deity, and how Jesus' deity is compromised by liberal theology. This liberal theology, in this author's view, is in total opposition to true sanctification. These errors are discussed in this chapter under the sub-heading “Unbelieving Liberal Misconceptions” below. Davis explains the Christian growth in holiness is to be like Jesus by faith and obedience with the Holy Spirit's guidance through reading the

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<sup>109</sup> T W Hunt, The Mind of Christ. (Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1995), p 152

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> Thomas Watson, A Body of Divinity. (Edinburgh: the Banner of Truth Trust, 1978), p 226

<sup>112</sup> Ibid, 229

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Scriptures. Sanctification is being set apart for Jesus' purpose (Eph 2:10).

Emphasising Jesus our righteousness, Hunt also states that through faith "righteousness has already begun in those who are linked to Christ ... not by any work of theirs, but by the working of the Spirit of God."<sup>113</sup>

Hunt thus makes a clear comment on sanctification that "the justified and regenerated must press on after holiness of life."<sup>114</sup> Griffith Thomas also comments on sanctification "making righteous – this is sanctification."<sup>115</sup> Also concerning sanctification Griffith Thomas suggests that it is "the basis for our purity."<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> T W Hunt, The Mind of Christ. (Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishes, 1995), p 153

<sup>114</sup> Ibid, p 159

<sup>115</sup> W H Griffith Thomas, The Catholic Faith (London: Church Book Room Press Ltd, 1966), p 56

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

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### Unbelieving Liberal Misconceptions

Initially this author makes the statement again about – Whose righteousness? The person's or Jesus' righteousness? Thus the discussion on the righteousness of the elect is through the true righteousness of Jesus in the heart of the believer. Thus what place has self-righteousness or self-centredness? This subheading above contains comments by this author and other authors on the problem of liberal theology and its relationship to self-righteousness or self-centredness.

This author examines the New Testament revelation of Jesus further in the discussion of McDowell in his chapter, "The Deity of Christ." He discusses the misconception that Jesus of history is unknowable. He begins with the premise "if one were to study historically the life of Jesus of Nazareth, he would find a very remarkable man, not the Son of God."<sup>117</sup> McDowell extensively quotes Montgomery who, in turn, was commenting on Kant and his presuppositions – but Montgomery makes an interesting point "and general philosophical scepticism is a nice intellectual game, but one cannot live by it."<sup>118</sup> Montgomery adds that historical events are "unique, and the test of their factual character can be the only accepted documentary approach that we have followed here. No historian has a right to a closed system of causation ..." <sup>119</sup> and McDowell proceeds to conclude the argument by also quoting Schaff who comments "the purpose of the historian is not to construct a history from preconceived notions and to adjust it to his own liking, but to

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<sup>117</sup> Josh McDowell, The New Evidence that Demands a Verdict. Evidence 1 and 11. (Nashville, Tenn: Thomas Nelson, 1999), p xxxvii

<sup>118</sup> Ibid, xxxviii

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

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reproduce it from the best evidence and to let it speak for itself.<sup>120</sup> McDowell does this and looks at evidence in his section, “External Evidence Test For The Reliability of the New Testament,” and he overviews and quotes extensively the writings of Eusibius, Clement, Ignatius, Moyer, Polycarp and Tatian, in addition to non-Christian writers of history – Tacitus, Seutonius, Josephus, Thallus, Pliny the Younger, Trajan, Talmud, Lucian, Bar-Serapion, the Gospel of Truth (non-Christian, Gnostic) and the Acts of Pontius Pilate.<sup>121</sup> Concerning the historical work of Pliny the Younger, cited above, McDowell quotes a reference and then comments on Pliny’s historical evidence with the note “this reference provides solid evidence that Jesus Christ was worshiped as God from an early date by Christians who continued to follow the practice of breaking bread together, as reported in Acts 2:42, 46.”<sup>122</sup> This author further comments on the word “unknowable” above. Only the elect truly “know” Jesus. This is because the elect have the Holy Spirit (Jn 16:13-15; 1 Jn 2:20). The elect know and believe Jesus is God. God indeed in Jesus through the Holy Spirit convicts each believer of this true reality. Jesus is the centre of our history – the calendar is witness to this! The problem is that the liberals see the Gospel as “story” only. Some believe in a physical resurrection – not a spiritual one, and also vice versa. Rather than believe in both a physical and spiritual resurrection, some liberals limit their belief to a spiritual resurrection – they deny the empty grave. They deconstruct the Gospel. Another important area of misconception raised by McDowell is in his section “Loving Christians Should Accept Other Religious Views.” He comments on the word “tolerance ... (defining it) ... as to recognise and respect other’s beliefs and practices ...without sharing

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<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid, 55-60

<sup>122</sup> Ibid, 58

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them ... put up with something not especially liked ... This is an important point especially in this postmodern age, and with a view that today “the new definition of tolerance is systematically being foisted upon the minds of all people ... Helmbock ... states the definition of new tolerance is that every individual’s beliefs, lifestyle and perception of truth claims are equal ... your beliefs and my beliefs are equal, and all truth is relative.”

Are we to accept other views? Is black white and white black? With “neo-tolerance” are all views correct: Is there a real truth?

This section noted here by McDowell is very important. This author emphasises the danger of liberals in general and liberal Roman Catholicism and Anglo-Catholicism initiated. This author knows that no born-again, Holy Spirit filled Christian could have any interest in postmodernism and the evil philosophy that is represented. Holy Scripture has been very clear in warning against such error. Indeed, Paul’s letter to the Colossians clearly defines heresies such as ceremonialism, asceticism, angel worship, depreciation of Christ which limits the supremacy of Christ, Gnosticism and reliance on human wisdom and tradition. This author examines these errors in greater depth shortly. In addition to the Letter to the Colossians, this author notes that John’s first Letter also examines Gnosticism and the evil of that duality in detail. This author now compares the work of McDowell with the work of Gary E Gilley (footnoted below). One aspect of postmodernism thought relates to the idea that all are saved, no exceptions. As Gilley states “... unless one knows Jesus Christ and His Gospel to be true, one cannot be a Christian at all. One remains entrapped in the kingdom of darkness.” However, Gilley goes on to provide a quotation from the eminent evangelist, Billy Graham, which clearly illustrates the extent of postmodernism into today’s pews and pulpits. “Even Billy Graham seems to have

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embraced inclusivity. He stated in a television interview with Robert Schuller, whether they come from the Muslim world, or the Buddhist world or the non-believing world, they are members of the Body of Christ because they have been called out by God. They may not know the name of Jesus but they know in their hearts that they need something they do not have, and they turn to the only light they have and I think that they are saved and they are going to be with us in Heaven.” (Gary E Gilley, This Little Church Stayed Home (Webster, NY: Evangelical Press, 2006), p 41/42). This author encourages the reader to review the truth of Colossians 2:1-12. See further in Appendix.

This author needs to emphasise this incorrect postmodern liberal definition, as it is totally contrary to the truth of:

“For God so loved the world that He gave His One and Only Son that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life ... whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God’s wrath remains on Him.” (Jn 3:16, 36). Jesus said, “I am the Way, the truth and the Life. No-one comes to the Father except through me.”(Jn14:6).

“Salvation is found in no-one else, for there is no other name under Heaven given to men by which we must be saved.” (Act 4:12).

This postmodern liberal teaching discussed is unloving as it does not acknowledge the true love of God which He gives to the true believer:

“Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.” (1 Cor 13:6, 7)

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Anything less than true Biblical truth is evil.

This author thus comments on liberal philosophy<sup>123</sup> concerning scholarly and non-scholarly liberalism – the reality that they fall into the same error that Greek philosophy made in that they doubt the possibility and the truth of Scripture by arguing cultural and social justice issues rather than simply trusting and yielding to the Word of God in faith through the Holy Spirit. This is evidenced from experiences that this author has occasioned when questioning, eg homosexual issues where scholarly and non-scholarly liberal comment is to refute Scripture (eg Rom 1:27; 1 Cor 6:9) by suggesting such Scripture is not relevant today. Further, this author has been confronted by the comment that this author needs to “move with the times” – a comment which is disturbing because this author reasons “these times” are not much different to the unbelieving times of the cultures of Greece and Rome and the philosophy of that time – a philosophy which the apostle Paul comments. (This author is reminded of 1 Cor 1:18-30). Again, this author reasons that the thoughts of non-scholarly and scholarly liberals in our age thus represent a “neo-gnostic” philosophy a dualism which revisits the second century Gnosticism where matter is evil and spirit is concerned to be good.

This author adds here great concern for the faith of “supposed liberal Christians.” Are they true born-again, Holy Spirit filled Christians? The reference 2 Tim 1:13, 14 mentioned below along with this author’s additional new reference of Romans 8:3-13 questions their true regeneration. An example of this author’s concern in relation to liberal error is a comment made at a meeting where it was said that “Allah equated to the God of the Bible” (here this means Allah =

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<sup>123</sup> William C Placher, *A History of Christian Theology*. (Philadelphia, Penn: Westminster Press, 1983), p 68

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YAHWEH). This comment was the subject of a whole Anglican Ministry School and was of great concern.

This author reasons and emphasises that non-scholarly and scholarly liberalism of today bears much resemblance to the unfaithfulness and error of the Gnostics who “concluded that Christ had not really been a human being – he only seemed to be. Historians call this view Docetism ... ‘to seem.’”<sup>124</sup> This author also agrees with Placher’s comments that “most Christians, however, eventually come to feel that Docetism would turn Jesus’ life into a sort of trick, an illusion ... Christians who believe Christ’s suffering and death on the cross save them from their sins feared that if Christ had only *seemed* to suffer and die, then they can only *seem* to be saved.”<sup>125</sup> Placher then examines the aspect that “perhaps Jesus was not divine.”<sup>126</sup> He answers this problem by emphasising that “only God never changes; only God is all powerful. For believers to be ultimately secure, trust in Christ needed to be trust in God.”<sup>127</sup> This author emphasises that God is the One True God of the Bible (Isa 45). This author also emphasises the truth of the Gospel of Jesus as God and His oneness with the Father (Jn 10:30; 14:9).

A further comment concerning liberal error is related to this author’s relationship with several liberal colleagues who have said that only the Old Testament is Scripture – but then in the same breath suggest that the Old Testament – the Law and the Prophets – is no longer relevant, especially within the area of the homosexual debate. This author is amazed at this statement when considered in relationship to the fact that the Letters of Peter, Paul and John are not recognised

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<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid, 69

<sup>127</sup> Ibid.



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by liberal scholars as Scripture and the Gospels are “story”. Thus this author is drawn to the question then – What is left of Scripture? Is traditionalism our saviour?

This author recognises the difference between following traditions as we are directed to in Scripture opposed to elevating traditions above all else whereby the tradition or ritual itself is seen as the saving act – which is traditionalism – which cannot save!

So in essence liberals are ignoring the whole Bible, especially when they also focus on universalism concerning the forgiveness and salvation offered through Jesus where they ignore God’s wrath (Jn 3:16 cf 3:36).

This author further discusses the relationship between righteousness in Jesus and self-righteousness or self-centredness. Glover, discussing humankind’s righteousness in Christ emphasises Jesus’ mission – “the ‘suffering’ of Christ, a scandal to the Gentiles as well as to the Jew, becomes the very thing that makes Him Christ, the proof of His Messiahship, the revelation of His nature, and His real and eternal glory. It is the pledge of love on God’s part that no-one could have dreamed, nor, without the cross, believed ... the whole difficult problem of righteousness, of sin and forgiveness, is solved. The cross is reconciliation, and ‘we have peace with God’” (Rom 5:1).<sup>128</sup> Glover follows these comments with his chapter “Not Having Mine Own Righteousness”<sup>129</sup> with a reflection about righteousness before the Lord Jesus came to complete His mission. He reflects on the Jewish casual attitude given to sin noting “the Jew was committed by the tradition of his people to the keeping of the

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<sup>128</sup> T R Glover, Paul of Tarsus. (London: Student Christian Movement Press, 1938), p 69

<sup>129</sup> Ibid, 72

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Law; its manifold duties ... its picture of a jealous God insistent on righteousness to the utmost..."<sup>130</sup> and he focuses on "acquisition of merit as the goal."<sup>131</sup> The whole endeavour of man intent upon merit was apt to become self-centred"<sup>132</sup> and he further notes Luther's comment concerning "opinions of righteousness" that "there was a danger of legalism ...associated religion with law, and the latter will gain ground with the swiftness of an infectious disease."<sup>133</sup> Glover then quotes R T Herford in his work on the Pharisees where he notes "Judaism in general, the Pharisaism in particular, was a religion which put the doing of God's will in the first place, and faith in the second place; ..." <sup>134</sup> This distortion is further emphasised by "fixing their eyes on God's Law they lose sight of God."<sup>135</sup> This author uses these thoughts to further highlight that there is a parallel here with liberalism. The focus is on tradition, ritual and rubric and not fully on Jesus – on form rather than substance.

Also, Dodd makes a comment on righteousness quoting Amos when he went to Bethel that he astonished the priests with the words from YAHWEH "Seek me and live." (Am 5:4) This author reflects at this point on Amos' truth (Am 5:24). Further Dodd speaks of "artificial righteousness"<sup>136</sup> and is in reality ungodly self-centredness.

Following this theme, Dodd discusses God's command concerning "rightful service, His kindness, justice, chivalry towards the weak and suffering, integrity in business in social relations, incorruptibility in

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<sup>130</sup> Ibid, 75

<sup>131</sup> Ibid, 76

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid, 76, 77

<sup>134</sup> Ibid 77

<sup>135</sup> Ibid.

<sup>136</sup> C H Dodd, The Authority of The Bible. (London: Fontana Books, 1960), p 95

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the administration of the law, honour in politics ... and practical virtues as are a basis of a sound society.”<sup>137</sup>

This author agrees that these functions are important, however, the liberal church focuses more on these issues than evangelism which calls people – those chosen – to faith in Jesus who is our Saviour. Morals are important but they come after faith in Jesus. Morals and moral rules are part of obedience or wise actions (Jn 14:15). It is unity with Jesus as discussed below that is paramount.

Erickson comments on the believer’s righteousness in Jesus “Christ and the believer have been brought into such a unity that Christ’s spiritual assets, as it were, and the spiritual liabilities and assets of the believer are merged. Thus, when looking at the believer God the Father does not see him or her alone. He sees the believer together with Christ...as if God says, ‘They are righteous!’”<sup>138</sup> Erickson quotes a number of passages (eg Rom 6:23; Eph 2:8-9). Faith in Jesus comes first, then works (Jas 2:18).

Baillie gives a good example of self-righteousness as he states Fichte who said, “I have no time for penitence ... no-one can atone for my misdeeds except myself, and I can only do it by leaving them behind”.<sup>139</sup> Hunter emphasises that Jesus gives salvation – “which is redemption ... deliverance ... emancipation.”<sup>140</sup> Hunter adds the references (Rom 3:24; Eph 1:7; Col 1:14; Gal 3:13; Rom 6:22).<sup>141</sup> This emphasis is that righteousness is only found in Jesus. Thus Hunter discusses other authors and emphasises that to be declared

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<sup>137</sup> Ibid, 98

<sup>138</sup> Millard J Erickson, Christian Theology. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1998), p 971, 2

<sup>139</sup> D M Baillie, God Was In Christ (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1961), p 161

<sup>140</sup> A M Hunter, The Gospel According to St Paul (London: SCM Press Ltd, 1966), p 19

<sup>141</sup> Ibid, 20

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righteous simply means “forgiveness”.<sup>142</sup> He also adds that righteousness is not of man but a “saving activity of God.”<sup>143</sup> This author adds here that this relates to faith – a faith given by God (Eph 2:5-8). Moreover, it is Jesus reconciling the elect to Himself – Jesus the righteousness of the elect.

Elmslie highlights that righteousness is from God and that anything else is self-centredness and self-centred righteousness and he states that men “if they be content to ‘cleanse the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess’”.<sup>144</sup> Elmslie explains that “righteousness is to do completely with Jesus and His forgiveness, quoting Scripture “... Father forgive them for they know not what they do.”<sup>145</sup> Further Elmslie brilliantly comments about self-centred righteousness – “the horrible hypocrisy of worship smugly offered by men whose hearts are stones ...”<sup>146</sup> Again this author emphasises the futility of liberal ritual.

Milne builds a case which emphasises that as men and women there is no way that they can be righteous through their own merit. He notes that “sin is universal”<sup>147</sup> and he cites Romans 3:10-12, 23; Psalm 14:1ff. He suggests Jesus was “without sin (Heb 4:15).”<sup>148</sup> Commenting on Calvin’s thoughts on humankind’s sinfulness, Milne adds that “the Bible also teaches our total depravity by saying that sin has affected the very core of the person.”<sup>149</sup> Further as a result he explains “We have no claim to moral self-justification.”<sup>150</sup> He

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<sup>142</sup> Ibid, 21

<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

<sup>144</sup> W A L Elmslie, How Came Our Faith. (Great Britain: Collins Clear-type Press, 1962), p 82

<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid, 345

<sup>147</sup> Bruce Milne, Know the Truth. (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1982), p 104

<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

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emphasises that it is only Jesus and the result of His mission of salvation ... Christ's righteousness ... - the "perfect righteousness of Christ."<sup>151</sup> Milne cites the reference (Gal 3:13).

Concerning self-centred righteousness the Jews of the Old Covenant, and at the time of Jesus, thought that because they had the Scriptures of the Law they were saved. This author focuses on an important statement by Theissen who comments on "the demonstrative pride of the Law with an inability to perceive his own violation of the Law."<sup>152</sup> (Jn 5:39)

Theissen summarises his points on self-righteousness or self-centredness by concluding with comments about Paul. He notes "... only as a Pharisee could he claim that he was 'blameless' in righteousness of the law (Phil 3:6). As a Christian such a statement was for him impossible (cf Gal 3:11; Rom 3:23)."<sup>153</sup>

Concerning the above about Paul it is obvious that he knew the Law and followed the Law exactly, "Once knowing the Law he realised it condemned him. When the veil fell from his heart through his encounter with Christ, he recognised the shadow side of his zeal for the Law."<sup>154</sup> Thus knowing Christ Paul adds:

"What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the Law, but that

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<sup>151</sup> Ibid, 188

<sup>152</sup> Gerd Theissen, Psychological Aspects of Pauline Theology. (Phil: Fortress Press, 1987), p 241

<sup>153</sup> Ibid, 242

<sup>154</sup> Ibid.

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which is through faith in Christ – the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith. I want to know Christ and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in His suffering, becoming like Him in His death, and so, somehow, to attain the resurrection from the dead.” (Phil 3:7-11).

This author notes some very important points made by Murray. It concerns the question of righteousness. Firstly in his comment (Rom 2:13) he comments “This verse confirms or supports the proposition that the law will be the instrument of the condemnation announced upon those who have sinned under it. The emphasis in verse 13 dwells upon the difference between ‘hearers of the Law’ and ‘doers of the law’. The mere possession of the Law does not ensure favourable judgment on God’s part ... the Apostle is undoubtedly guarding against that perversion so characteristic of the Jew that the possession of God’s special revelation and of the corresponding privileges would afford immunity from the rigor of judgement applied to others not thus favoured.”<sup>155</sup> This author makes comments about the Pharisees believing this, and refers to John 5:39.

This author is also encouraged by Murray’s comment about the reference (2 Cor 3:14) and the wonderful truth of our declared righteousness through faith and forgiveness and that it is found only in Jesus.

Similarly Anderson discusses self-righteousness and self-centredness which demonstrates “a worthless self-righteousness – indeed” ... he

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<sup>155</sup> John Murray, The Epistle to the Romans. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co, 1975), p 71

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further states “The outwardly religious nation had failed to hear and obey YAHWEH’s demand for righteousness and justice (Am 5:24).”<sup>156</sup>

This author is interested in the work of Seaton concerning Arminianism and how it limits the work of the person of Jesus. For reference the five points of Arminianism are:

1. Free will or human ability ...
2. Conditional election ...
3. Universal redemption or general atonement ...
4. The work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration limited by the human will
5. ... falling from grace ...<sup>157</sup>

This author refers to Seaton’s comments on Arminianism as they demonstrate a level of self-righteousness. They limit Jesus’ sovereignty giving humankind the ability to decide their own election or salvation.

This author emphasises again the truth of regeneration and conversion, and makes a further comment agreeing with Seaton’s work. Simply, the first breath taken the instant a person is born. Likewise, it is the same spiritually – when someone has been born-again they are then filled with the breath of God’s Holy Spirit. This is their regeneration. Conversion is the process of knowing and growing in obedience to Jesus.

Only Jesus, the eternal second Person of YAHWEH, the eternal Living Word, can do this (Jn 3:16).

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<sup>156</sup> G W Anderson, The History and Religion of Israel. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), p 114

<sup>157</sup> W J Seaton, The Five Points of Calvinism. (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1979), p 3

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Archer comments on liberal theologians' attitudes to the Old Testament and how in the development hypothesis Liberal theologians have watered down YAHWEH to "sweetness and light".<sup>158</sup> Further to the above Archer discusses Jeremiah 7:22ff and the amazement that Liberal scholars got it so wrong is surely a "masterpiece of misstatement and misrepresentation, shot through with fallacies from beginning to end, but it illustrates the perverted notion of Hebrew religion taught in many quarters today as a populization of the Wellhausen hypothesis. Suffice it to say that there is no parallel to this to be found anywhere else in human history ..."<sup>159</sup> In Archer's discussion legalism had resulted in a self-centredness, which in this author's mind reflects some word of Lewis:

"They seem to me to lack literary judgement, to be imperceptive about the very quality of the texts they are reading. To Bultmann's claim that the personality of Jesus was unimportant to Paul and John, Lewis replies, 'through what strange process has this learned German gone in order to make himself blind to what all men except him see.' And then he declares: these men ask me to believe they can read between the lines of the old texts; the evidence is their obvious inability to read ... the lines themselves. They claim to see fern-seed and can't see an elephant 10 yards away in broad daylight."<sup>160</sup>

Further Archer emphasises that not only in the Old Covenant in the book of Amos should the people there have had "a true and living faith" as opposed to "a mere empty profession"<sup>161</sup> but it also applies

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<sup>158</sup> Gleason L Archer, A Survey of Old Testament Introduction. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994), p 157

<sup>159</sup> Ibid.

<sup>160</sup> John M Frame, Apologetics to the Glory of God. (Phillipsburg, New Jersey: R & R Publishing, 1994), p 133

<sup>161</sup> Gleason L Archer, A Survey of Old Testament Introduction. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994), p 351



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to the scholarship of liberal theologians in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This author concludes this section with the truth from Paul:

“What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching, with faith and love in Christ Jesus. Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you – guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.” (2 Tim 1:13, 14).

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### The Truth of the Resurrection

This author now examines the deity of Jesus and the truth of the resurrection acknowledging the work of other authors.

Davis reminds this author of Jesus' true deity with comments on the resurrection and final judgement with the wonderful truth (Job 19:25-27) "I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end He will stand upon the earth ..." He also quotes wonderful references (Mt 22:29-32; Jn 6:39-40; Rom 6:5) along with the truth of 1 Corinthians 15 and 1 Thessalonians 4. He concludes with references on judgment (eg Mt 13:39-42; 25:32-33, 46). This author is marvelled at the truth of this last reference (Jn 12:47-48) which confirms the truth that Jesus (Jn 3:17) that He did not come to condemn but to save. Those who do not accept Him condemn themselves (Jn 3:36). This author concludes with the simple comment on Davis' discussion about the eternal state – the joy of being "with Christ" (Phil 1:23). When mentioning the word "joy" this author is also reminded of the awesome truth that only believers have true "joy" as joy is a fruit of the Spirit – a condition of true belief in Jesus now and for all eternity. This author also adds that the believers' election and adoption, that state of belonging to Jesus is a great comfort and success for eternity.

This author is also encouraged by Davis here as he discusses Jesus' obedience which this author suggests gives practical understanding about wisdom. In addition to faithfulness and therefore righteousness, one of the most important characteristics of Jesus as mentioned by Davis is that of obedience. He always obeyed God's will (Jn 6:38), indeed He did exactly what His Father had commanded (Jn 14:30-31). Already mentioned is Jesus' authority to lay His life down and take it up again (Jn 10:18). Davis mentions God's command authorizing the Lord to do this (Jn 15:10). Jesus saves us

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from our sins by being our substitute and being obedient to death “even death on a cross” (Phil 2:8).

Referring to “our substitute” above I know some Liberal scholars have urged all Christians to be tolerant of differences in basic beliefs. However, this would be compromising the ultimate sacrifice of Jesus. One would be acknowledging all belief systems must be correct. This is compromise at its worst for scripture teaches “salvation is found in no-one else...” (Acts 4:12). If one person’s “truth” is diametrically opposed to another person’s “truth” how can both be correct?

Following on from this truth, this author notes Davis comments on the resurrection and ascension. He explains that “the resurrection was God’s vindication of Christ’s teaching and earthly ministry ...”<sup>162</sup> and that by His death and resurrection, death and sin were defeated. This is the wonderful evidence that Jesus is King of kings and Lord of lords deserving of our worship (Mt 28:9; Lk 24:36-39). Of great importance is the reality as Davis explains that Jesus’ body was a “real body that could be seen and touched.”<sup>163</sup> (Again Lk 24:36-39). Davis also highlights the wonderful truth that Jesus continues in His ministry that the “ascended Christ is now actively continuing His work through the ministry and mission of the church”<sup>164</sup> (Acts 1:1-2). This author also adds the wonderful joy for Christians of the guidance of His Holy Spirit (Rom 8:9). Further it is marvellous how the Holy Spirit guided Paul when he wrote the wonderful words concerning Jesus (Phil 2:9-11) and Davis notes the Hymn “Of Obedience and Humble Service”<sup>165</sup> which in this author’s mind exemplifies the humility of Jesus (Mt 20:28) and also his exaltation as

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<sup>162</sup> John Jefferson Davis, Basic Bible Texts. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), p 81

<sup>163</sup> Ibid, 82

<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid, 83

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King of kings and Lord of lords with the Father now. Thus Jesus is the only Saviour (Acts 4:12) and thus the author of the believers' calling and salvation.

Frame begins briefly outlining miracles that “throughout the Scriptures God does wonderful works so that people will know that He is the Lord (Ex 6:7; 7:5, 17; 8:22; 9:14; 10:2; 11:7; 14:4, 18; 16:12; 29:46)”<sup>166</sup> to mention the beginning of God’s works. He explains that during the ministry of Jesus that Jesus Himself made many miraculous signs but that they rarely allowed people to soften their hearts and believe. Even the enemies of Jesus admitted to the miraculous but did not believe. Frame further explains that even the resurrection itself failed to “convince many”.<sup>167</sup> He continues with comments of Jesus’ rebuke to those who only wanted signs (Mt 12:39; Jn 4:48). This author is aware of the many New Testament references concerning miraculous signs and their “epistemological function” and, with respect to apologists many will say – well there are strange happenings. However, concerning the resurrection, already noted above with the appropriate references, this author is greatly encouraged by Frame’s words, except for the use of the word “story” in the passage which follows:

“The story of the Resurrection was related too soon after the fact to be the product of legendary development. The ornamentation and elaboration characteristic of legends is not there. The story of the women discovering the empty tomb bears remarkable marks of authenticity. No-one inventing such a story would have placed women in this role, because they were not acceptable witnesses in Jewish courts of law.

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<sup>166</sup> John M Frame, [Apologetics to the Glory of God](#). (Phillipsburg, New Jersey: R & R Publishing, 1994), p 143

<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

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Attempts to explain the Resurrection as something other than a supernatural event have always fallen flat. Some have said that Jesus did not actually die on the cross, but only fell into a coma, from which he was roused in the tomb. But in such a weakened condition, Jesus could not have rolled away the heavy stone and appeared to the disciples as the triumphant Lord of heaven and earth. Some have said that the disciples engaged in a conspiracy, but that has been dealt with above. Some have explained the post-Resurrection appearances as hallucinations or 'visions'. But hallucinations do not work that way. They do not produce the same images in many persons, who then report that they have all seen the same thing.

The fact is, then that the Resurrection is as well established as any fact in history – indeed better than most, for it is attested by the Word of God itself.”<sup>168</sup>

This author is further encouraged by Frame’s comments that the resurrection was credibly absolutely certain and that it is the word of God Himself and deserves “the highest standard of credibility.”<sup>169</sup>

McDowell, in his discussion on Jesus as Lord, comments on the resurrection in his Chapter “Support of Deity: The Resurrection – Hoax or History?” He begins by stating “the Resurrection of Jesus Christ is one of the most wicked, vicious, heartless hoaxes ever foisted upon the minds of men, OR it is the most fantastic fact of history.”<sup>170</sup> He continues about Jesus’ credentials and explains “(1) The impact of His life, through His miracles and teachings, upon

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<sup>168</sup> Ibid, 146

<sup>169</sup> Ibid, 147

<sup>170</sup> Josh McDowell, The New Evidence that Demands a Verdict. Evidence I and II. (Nashville, Tenn: Thomas Nelson, 1999), p 203

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history; (2) fulfilled prophecy in His life; and (3) His resurrection.”<sup>171</sup> McDowell highlights the record of the resurrection (Mt 28:1-11; Mk 16; Lk 24; Jn 20, 21), and cites W L Craig concerning the importance of the physical resurrection of Christ – “Without the belief in the resurrection the Christian faith could not have come into being. The disciples would have remained crushed and defeated men. Even had they continued to remember Jesus as their beloved teacher, His crucifixion would have forever silenced any hopes of His being the Messiah. The cross would have remained forever the sad and shameful end of His career. The origin of Christianity therefore hinges on the belief of the early disciples that God had raised Jesus from the dead.”<sup>172</sup>

McDowell continues with the significance of the resurrection and that of the four world religions based on personalities that “only Christianity claimed an empty tomb for its founder.”<sup>173</sup> He continues further with the true comment that “the resurrection is propounded as being (1) the explanation of Jesus’ death; (2) prophetically anticipated as the messianic experience; (3) apostolically witnessed; (4) the cause of the outpouring of the Spirit, and thus accounting for religious phenomena otherwise inexplicable; and (5) certifying the Messianic and Kingly position of Jesus of Nazareth... without the resurrection the Messianic and Kingly position of Jesus could not be convincingly established.”<sup>174</sup> Concerning historic fact McDowell cites W J Sparrow-Simpson who wrote “If the resurrection is not historic fact, then the power of death remains unbroken, and with it the effect of sin; and the significance of Christ’s death remains uncertified, and accordingly believers are yet in their sins, precisely

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<sup>171</sup> Ibid.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid, 204

<sup>173</sup> Ibid, 205

<sup>174</sup> Ibid, 206

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where they were before they heard of Jesus' name."<sup>175</sup> McDowell explains that the "resurrection turned disaster into victory and without the resurrection Christianity would never have happened ... that without faith in the resurrection there would be no Christianity at all ... Christianity stands or falls with the truth of the resurrection."<sup>176</sup> McDowell highlights the reference (1 Cor 15:7).

In addition to the New Testament witness above in the previous comments about the deity of Jesus. McDowell continues with the claims of Jesus that he would be raised from the dead – indeed His own predictions of His own resurrection (Mt 12:38-40; 16:21; 17:9; 17:22-23; 20:18-19; 26:32; 27:63; Mk 8:31-9:1; 9:10; 9:31; 10:32-34; 14:28, 58; Lk 9:22-27; Jn 2:18-22; 12:34; and also Chapters 14-16).

McDowell also spends considerable time in explaining the historical approach to the resurrection of Jesus as an event in history. He cites Wilbur Smith who commented "the meaning of the resurrection is a theological matter, but the fact of the resurrection is a historical matter; the nature of the resurrection body of Jesus may be a mystery, but the fact that the body disappeared from the tomb is a matter to be decided upon by historical evidence."<sup>177</sup> This author comments here concerning the word "mystery" cited by Smith and is reminded that the Greek equivalent "mysterion" as discussed in the section "Sovereignty of God – God's Responsibility and Ours" has to do with something that was concealed but is now explained and revealed – and this is exactly true when examining the predictions that Jesus made in Scripture concerning His own resurrection. McDowell continues looking at the legal ramifications of the

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<sup>175</sup> Ibid.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid, 208

<sup>177</sup> Ibid, 211

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resurrection as fact and comments on the forensic aspects of Scripture noting Bernard Ramm who said “In Acts 1, Luke tells us that Jesus showed Himself alive by many infallible proofs (en pollois tekmeriois), an expression indicating the strongest type of legal evidence.”<sup>178</sup> McDowell further cites Ernest Kevan concerning eyewitnesses which have been discussed by La Haye. However, Kevan also adds concerning the Epistles of the New Testament that they “constitute historical evidence of the highest kind ...”<sup>179</sup> In addition to the above authors McDowell cites J N D Anderson who discussed Moule who explained “from the very first the conviction that Jesus had been raised from death has been that by which their very existence has stood or fallen. There was no other motive to account for them, to explain them ... at no point within the New Testament is there any evidence that the Christians stood for an original philosophy of life or an original ethic. Their sole function is to bear witness to what they claimed as an event – the raising of Jesus from among the dead ... the one really distinctive thing for which the Christian stood was their declaration that Jesus had been raised from the dead according to God’s design ...”<sup>180</sup> Thus as Sparrow-Simpson adds to his previous citation, “the resurrection of Christ is the foundation of apostolic Christianity ...”<sup>181</sup> This author adds (and this can also apply to the unbelief of liberal scholars who reject Paul and Peter’s letters, and also John’s Revelation as Scripture) that “those who deny His resurrection consistently deny as a rule His divinity and His redemptive work in any sense that St Paul would have acknowledged.”<sup>182</sup> This author has noted that McDowell has much more to say on this marvellous foundational truth and

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<sup>178</sup> Ibid, 213

<sup>179</sup> Ibid, 214

<sup>180</sup> Ibid, 215

<sup>181</sup> Ibid.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid.



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concludes this section on the resurrection with McDowell's comment that "it may be said that the historical evidence for the resurrection is stronger than for any other miracle anywhere ... as Paul said, if Christ is not risen from the dead then our preaching is in vain and your faith is also vain."<sup>183</sup> This author acknowledges that McDowell has presented evidence for the resurrection of Christ in such a manner that would be acceptable in a modern day courtroom setting. This is not to deny the role faith plays in accepting the historical fact as part of God working in the lives of humankind. May our One True Lord God of the Bible bless you in this study.

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<sup>183</sup> Ibid.

## THE GLORY OF GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT

Earlier in this study I included the truth of the creeds which we as Christians believe. I love the way our forefathers were so diligent in their modern evangelical definitions for us to simply understand the truth of Holy Scripture.

The Eternal Third Person of the Holy Trinity is the Person of the Holy Spirit. He is a Person. I have included again the definitions of the Holy Spirit from the Creeds.

### **Apostles Creed**

I believe in the Holy Spirit; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

### **Nicene Creed**

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son.

With the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified.

He has spoken through the Prophets.

### **Athanasian Creed**

Whosoever will be saved: before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholick Faith.

Which Faith except everyone do keep whole and undefiled: without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.

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And the Catholick Faith is this: That we worship one God in Trinity,  
and Trinity in Unity;

Neither confounding the Persons: nor dividing the Substance.

For there is one Person of the Father, another of the Son: and  
another of the **Holy Spirit**.

But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the **Holy Spirit**, is  
all one: the Glory equal, the Majesty co-eternal.

Such as the Father is, such is the Son: and such is the **Holy Spirit**.

The Father uncreate, the Son uncreate: and the **Holy Spirit** uncreate.

The Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible: and the  
**Holy Spirit** incomprehensible.

The Father eternal, the Son eternal: and the **Holy Spirit** eternal.

And yet they are not three eternals: but one eternal.

As also there are not three incomprehensibles, nor three uncreated:  
but one uncreated, and one incomprehensible.

So likewise the Father is Almighty, the Son Almighty: and the **Holy Spirit**  
Almighty.

And yet they are not three Almightyes: but one Almighty.

So the Father is God, the Son is God: and the **Holy Spirit** is God.

And yet they are not three Gods: but one God.

So likewise the Father is Lord, the Son Lord: and the **Holy Spirit** Lord.

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And yet not three Lords: but one Lord.

For like as we are compelled by the Christian verity: to acknowledge every Person by himself to be God and Lord;

So are we forbidden by the Catholick Religion: to say there be three Gods, or three Lords.

The Father is made of none: neither created, nor begotten.

The Son is of the Father alone: not made, nor created, but begotten.

The **Holy Spirit** is of the Father and of the Son: neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding.

So there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons: one **Holy Spirit**, not three **Holy Spirits**.

And in this Trinity none is afore, or after other: none is greater, or less than another;

But the whole three Persons are co-eternal together: and co-equal.

So that in all things, as is aforesaid: the Unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped.

He therefore that will be saved: must thus think of the Trinity.

Furthermore it is necessary to everlasting salvation: that he also believe rightly the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ.

For the right Faith is that we believe and confess: that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man;

God, of the Substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds: and Man, of the Substance of his Mother, born in the world;

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Perfect God, and Perfect Man: of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting;

Equal to the Father, as touching his Godhead: and inferior to the Father, as touching his Manhood.

Who although he be God and Man: yet he is not two, but one Christ;

One, not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh: but by taking of the Manhood into God;

One altogether, not by confusion of Substance: but by unity of Person.

For as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man: so God and Man is one Christ.

Who suffered for our salvation: descended into hell, rose again the third day from the dead.

He ascended into heaven, he sitteth on the right hand of the Father, God Almighty: from whence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

At whose coming all men shall rise again with their bodies: and shall give account for their own works.

And they that have done good shall go into life everlasting: and they that have done evil into everlasting fire.

This is the Catholick Faith: which except a man believe faithfully, he cannot be saved.

\* catholic means "universal" and is not a reference to the Roman Catholic Church.

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From the creeds we simply see the Glory of **The Holy Spirit** and we know He was there at creation.

### Genesis 1v1

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

I have already mentioned confirming the above

“God” (Elohim – Plural noun)

“created” (bara – Singular Verb).

The Holy Trinity is clearly seen as in the creeds.

### Genesis 1v2

- 2 Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

Here the completeness of the initial creation is seen – awaiting for God to give light, create order and give life. Then God’s glorious statement of His Spirit actively working in creation.

The Holy Spirit was the active Person who empowered God’s servants to achieve His purposes. Some truths:

### Judges 3v7-10

- 7 The Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD; they forgot the LORD their God and served the Baals and the Asherahs.
- 8 The anger of the LORD burned against Israel so that he sold them into the hands of CushanRishathaim king of Aram Naharaim, to whom the Israelites were subject for eight years.

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9 But when they cried out to the LORD, he raised up for them a deliverer, Othniel son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother, who saved them.

10 The Spirit of the LORD came upon him, so that he became Israel's judge and went to war. The LORD gave Cushan-Rishathaim king of Aram into the hands of Othniel, who overpowered him.

### **Judges 6v34-37**

34 Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon Gideon, and he blew a trumpet, summoning the Abiezrites to follow him.

35 He sent messengers throughout Manasseh, calling them to arms, and also into Asher, Zebulun and Naphtali, so that they too went up to meet them.

36 Gideon said to God, "If you will save Israel by my hand as you have promised—

37 look, I will place a wool fleece on the threshing floor. If there is dew only on the fleece and all the ground is dry, then I will know that you will save Israel by my hand, as you said."

### **Judges 11v29-31**

29 Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jephthah. He crossed Gilead and Manasseh, passed through Mizpah of Gilead, and from there he advanced against the Ammonites.

30 And Jephthah made a vow to the LORD: "If you give the Ammonites into my hands,

31 whatever comes out of the door of my house to meet me when I return in triumph from the Ammonites will be the LORD's, and I will sacrifice it as a burnt offering."

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### **1 Samuel 10v10**

10 When they arrived at Gibeah, a procession of prophets met him; the Spirit of God came upon him in power, and he joined in their prophesying.

Elisha knew in his spirit that Elijah was sealed with the Holy Spirit of the LORD and requested an even greater infilling of the Holy Spirit, so he could be increasingly guided to fulfil God's purposes. The verse below demonstrates.

### **2 Kings 2v9**

9 When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, "Tell me, what can I do for you before I am taken from you?" "Let me inherit a double portion of your spirit," Elisha replied.

### **Elihu speaking to Job**

#### **Job 33v1-4**

1 "But now, Job, listen to my words; pay attention to everything I say.

2 I am about to open my mouth; my words are on the tip of my tongue.

3 My words come from an upright heart; my lips sincerely speak what I know.

4 The Spirit of God has made me; the breath of the Almighty gives me life.

In the Psalms we are reminded that in the Old Covenant, the Holy Spirit could be taken away from a person once God's



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servant. Not so in the New Covenant when the elect is regenerated.

### **Psalm 51v10-12**

10 Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

11 Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me.

12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.

### **Psalm 104v30-31**

30 When you send your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the earth.

31 May the glory of the LORD endure forever; may the LORD rejoice in his works—

### **Isaiah 11v1-2**

1 A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.

2 The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him—the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.

### **Isaiah 28v8-12**

8 All the tables are covered with vomit and there is not a spot without filth.

9 “Who is it he is trying to teach? To whom is he explaining his message? To children weaned from their milk, to those just taken from the breast?

10 For it is: Do and do, do and do, rule on rule, rule on rule; a little here, a little there.”

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- 11 Very well then, with foreign lips and strange tongues God will speak to this people,  
12 to whom he said, “This is the resting place, let the weary rest”; and, “This is the place of repose” — but they would not listen.

In the above reference we see in verse eight the disgusting symbolism of the way in which the people ignored God’s law, and thus as Isaiah prophesied Israel would be taken into captivity. From the History the King of Assyria, Tiglath-Pileser defeated Israel and 43 of the 46 cities in Judah in 722BC and took most people into captivity in Assyria. Isaiah was speaking of this awful reality of their failure by ignoring God’s Holy Spirit. In their history we know that the Godly King Hezekiah prayed that the Lord would not allow the Babylonians to defeat Jerusalem in Judah.

Because of the spiritual failure of the God’s people and not listening to Isaiah’s prophecy unless they repented they also would go into captivity. We know they failed in their obedience to God and went into captivity in Babylon in 586BC. But there is more. In verse eleven Isaiah says “foreign lips and strange tongues”. At that point in history the foreign tongue was to be the Assyrian language but if they had have been obedient to God it would His Holy Spirit Speaking to them but they did not listen. How dangerous it is not listen to the Holy Spirit of God- it is disastrous.

So today, this is a type/foretelling of not listening to the Holy Spirit’s guidance and when we are disobedient to Jesus today. Look at the condition of God’s world today when we ignore the Holy Spirit’s leading. The symbolism of filth and vomit in Isaiah 28 is the reality of impurity everywhere today, when we don’t accept the Holy Spirit’s indwelling and thus leading of praying in “tongues”. Today this is the

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reality of being faithful to scripture of Jude 20-21. The last comment concerning Isaiah 28v12 “but they would not listen” was a clear reference to God’s Holy Spirit. Again, it is dangerous not to listen to God’s Holy Spirit. In fact it is the sin that is not forgiven. As recorded in (Mark 3v29)“But whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven, he is guilty of an eternal sin.”

Again in the refence below Isaiah prophesied that today people who are not educated (i.e. rash) would become educated by the Holy Spirit and they would know and understand The Trinity and the outward physical sign in a persons life of having the Holy Spirit would be they would have a stammering tongue that would be a fluent and clear language to speak to God in and even used to spread the gospel. See next chapter on Glorious aspects of the Holy Spirit.

### **Isaiah 32v4**

4 The mind of the rash will know and understand, and the stammering tongue will be fluent and clear.

### **Isaiah 61v1**

1 The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners,

### **Isaiah 63v10**

10 Yet they rebelled and grieved his Holy Spirit. So he turned and became their enemy and he himself fought against them.

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In the New Covenant we see the glory of the Holy Spirit in the unity of Our Lord Jesus.

### **Matthew 1v18**

18 This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit.

John the Baptist's truth;

### **Matthew 3v11**

11 "I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

### **Matthew 3v16-17**

16 As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him.

17 And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."

The Holy Spirit guides Jesus – Jesus in His second nature as perfect man.

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### Matthew 4v1

1 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil.

John the Baptist speaks of Jesus:

### Mark 1v4-8

4 And so John came, baptizing in the desert region and preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

5 The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River.

6 John wore clothing made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey.

7 And this was his message: "After me will come one more powerful than I, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie.

8 I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

In the Apostle John's Gospel John recorded the words of Jesus about His Holy Spirit whom He will send:

### John 14v15-21

15 "If you love me, you will obey what I command.

16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—

17 the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.

18 I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.

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19 Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live.

20 On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.

21 Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him.”

### **John 14v25-29**

25 “All this I have spoken while still with you.

26 But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

28 “You heard me say, ‘I am going away and I am coming back to you.’ If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I.

29 I have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe.

### **John 15v26-16v16**

26 “When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me.

27 And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning.

16v1 “All this I have told you so that you will not go astray.

2 They will put you out of the synagogue; in fact, a time is coming

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- when anyone who kills you will think he is offering a service to God.
- 3 They will do such things because they have not known the Father or me.
- 4 I have told you this, so that when the time comes you will remember that I warned you. I did not tell you this at first because I was with you.
- 5 “Now I am going to him who sent me, yet none of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’
- 6 Because I have said these things, you are filled with grief.
- 7 But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. 8 When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt *d* in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment:
- 9 in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me;
- 10 in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer;
- 11 and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.
- 12 “I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear.
- 13 But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.
- 14 He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you.
- 15 All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you.
- 16 “In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me.”

### Acts 1v5-8

- 5 For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”

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- 6 So when they met together, they asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?”
- 7 He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority.
- 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

### Acts 2v4,38-39

- 4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.
- 38 Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- 39 The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

The Epistle, the letter, of the Apostle Paul to the people in Rome is a wonderful truth and encouragement to us concerning the truth of the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

When studying the glorious guiding of the Holy Spirit we need to keep in mind as the elect that in everything we are to “be spiritual” (1 Cor 12v1).

Before examining the **hard reality** of our need to be **truly obedient**, I wish to re-visit the truths discussed in the chapter The Glory of The Deity of Our Lord Jesus Christ.



## The Glory of God

Truly Born Again Holy Spirit filled elect are **able not to sin**. Salvation can never be lost (Heb 13v5). We need to “get real” and **be obedient**. We are eternally justified through Jesus sacrifice.

Davis explains that God pardons all our sins and accepts us as righteous and that this is through faith. This author adds that righteousness is God’s commitment to do (for those to whom He has given faith) for us what we cannot do for ourselves. Indeed it is the side of His justice that concerns our rescue and acquittal (Rom 4). Davis notes the Scripture (Rom 3:20, 23, 24, 28; 5:1). This author further adds from Davis’ listing of Romans 3:23, that whilst we are still sinners, through faith God sees us as justified – “Just-if-I or just-as-if-I” had not sinned (this author’s emphasis and comment).

Hunt discusses justification and the word justify, explaining that it means “to declare righteous or to treat as righteous.”<sup>184</sup> He continues “justify is the verdict of acquittal ...”<sup>185</sup>

Watson defines justification as “an act of God, God’s free grace whereby He pardons all our sins, and accepts us as righteous in His sight, only for the righteousness of Christ, imputed to us, and received by faith alone.”<sup>186</sup> Watson highlights that Christ has made us to be righteous through faith (1 Cor 1:30; Rom 5:1). Watson also highlights that “justification is a fixed permanent thing, it can never be lost.”<sup>187</sup>

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<sup>184</sup> T W Hunt, The Mind of Christ. (Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1995), p 152

<sup>185</sup> Ibid.

<sup>186</sup> Thomas Watson, A Body of Divinity. (Edinburgh: the Banner of Truth Trust, 1978), p 226

<sup>187</sup> Ibid, 229

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Thus the need to re-visit how the Father chose His elect in His saving Son Jesus. Also in this chapter the focus is on always “being spiritual” – being guided by the Holy Spirit 24/7.

Concerning the wisdom of Christ and being mindful of His divinity, one area this author is very interested in, is the authority given to Jesus by the Father concerning the truth again in John 10:29:

“My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no-one can snatch out of my Father’s hand.”

Jesus follows this with the wonderful truth, “I and the Father are one” (Jn 10:30).

Does God choose as He pleases? Does His choice depend on advanced awareness? For Augustine, suggests Erickson, “for God by an unalterable decree has determined who is to be saved; being totally of God’s grace, salvation in no way depends on humans or what they do...”<sup>188</sup>

Following these comments by Augustine, Erickson looks at differing views of predestination, firstly Calvin. He notes the “acronym TULIP: total depravity, unconditional predestination, limited atonement, irresistible grace and perseverance.”<sup>189</sup> This author has touched on these truths already, however the focus and context now concerns Jesus and His deity as God – the Son of God. Erickson notes that total depravity “means that every individual is so sinful as to be unable to respond to any offer of grace.”<sup>190</sup> This author sees this in many

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<sup>188</sup> Millard J Erickson, Christian Theology. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1998), p 924

<sup>189</sup> Ibid, 928

<sup>190</sup> Ibid.

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instances where Jesus speaks to the Pharisees. He adds that sometimes “the phrase ‘total inability’ is used, meaning that sinners have lost the ability to do good and are unable to convert themselves.” This author adds the last two words “convert themselves” should actually be “regenerate themselves” as conversion is the process of growth and knowledge as the elect’s response. This is why this author has already acknowledged Romans 3:10-12 and Jesus’ words:

“The Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.” (Lk 19:10).

Thus here this author observes and sees the need to look to Jesus completely in the right action or behaviour with the aim of being successful for eternity through faith in Jesus – being declared righteous, and the comfort only He gives, mindful that even our faith is His gift (Eph 2:5-8). Jesus is Saviour and has God’s full authority. Further commenting on God’s actions, Erickson notes the choice of the nation of Israel and comments “in Romans 9 Paul argues impressively that all of these choices are totally of God and in no way depend on the people chosen.”<sup>191</sup> Romans 9:15-16 is cited here. Erickson also notes that election is “Efficacious”,<sup>192</sup> in that those whom God chooses will most certainly come to faith in Jesus and, for that matter, will persevere in that faith to the end.”<sup>193</sup> A comment on “chooses.” Erickson comments here that election is efficacious and the elect will certainly come to faith in Jesus and will persevere to the end could be more accurately stated. This author has already revisited and discussed the sovereignty of God. What this author is emphasising here is that Erickson’s comments in this context limit

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<sup>191</sup> Ibid, 930

<sup>192</sup> Ibid.

<sup>193</sup> Millard J Erickson, *Christian Theology*. (Grand Rapids, Mich: Baker Books, 1998), p 930

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the sovereignty of God. This author asks the question, who is doing the “coming to faith”? Who is doing the “persevering to the end”? This author emphasises here that God gives the faith in Jesus, through the grace of Jesus (Rom 3:22, 26); where the Greek teaches faith “of” Jesus (again, Rom 3:22; Eph 2:5-8), and God preserves His elect (Heb 13:5).

Erickson explains that we confidently understand God’s plan will be fulfilled and that the “elect will come to faith,”<sup>194</sup> also understanding that we must not criticise ourselves when in our witness some do not come to faith in Jesus for that occurred in His ministry also (Jn 6:37, 44), and we should be encouraged in our witness and evangelism as we do not know who is the elect and we must understand and acknowledge that it is all by grace – God’s unmerited favour through the authority given through Jesus. What a comfort this is and an encouragement to press on towards the goal God has given to believers – to be successful, that is to be faithful to Jesus.

Commenting on the above – the Grace of Jesus, and Jesus’ requirement also for our obedience, Carson in his reflections on assurance makes an interesting comment about election that as an “element in the Biblical portrayal of God’s sovereignty never functions so as to destroy human responsibility...”<sup>195</sup> This author adds that here “sovereignty” points directly to the deity of Jesus. This is a very important truth. Jesus taught the wisdom of this truth the day before Good Friday.

“Jesus said: ‘I am the Way the Truth and the Life.

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<sup>194</sup> Ibid, 940

<sup>195</sup> D A Carson, “Reflections on Assurance” Still Sovereign, eds Thomas R Schreiner, Bruce A Ware (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), p 272

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Jesus said: “If you love me you will obey what I command.”  
(Jn14:15)

Jesus then explained that he had authority to say these words –  
authority

“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain  
in my love. If you obey my commands, you will remain in my  
love, just as I have obeyed my Father’s commands and remain  
in His love.” (Jn 15:9-10)

Once truly regenerated we can never lose our salvation. I am not  
being universalist here. I have already mentioned John 10v29;5v24.

We have been given by the Father to the Son for all Eternity but we  
will still sin. This is an important through for our attitudes in “being  
spiritual” (1 Cor 12:1).

It’s wonderful to focus again on the truth of the selfless love of Jesus  
– His dedication to “save His people from their sins” (Mt 1:21) – His  
obligatory love, His mission and duty in obedience to His Father to  
complete the Father’s purposes – the redemption of the elect. Also  
commenting on the point above, Schreiner explains that God –  
YAHWEH (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) – is completely sovereign and  
“yet human choices and responsibility are not a charade. God  
ordains all that comes to pass and is good; and yet evil exists, and it  
is really evil. God chooses only some to be saved, and yet there is  
also the true sense in which He desires the salvation of all. Those  
who are elect will never lose their salvation, and yet those who do  
not persevere to the end will not inherit the Kingdom of God.”<sup>196</sup>  
The above statement is of a human mind – a Christian brother or

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<sup>196</sup> Thomas R Schreiner, Bruce A Ware, eds Still Sovereign. (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), p 19

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sister with the mind of Christ. However, none can judge, and this author thus focuses on the truth of the parable of the sower and the wheat and the tares here.

Westblade in Schreiner comments on ability in his discussion on divine election. He notes “God Himself gives and withholds the ability to trust. God, not the sinner, should therefore be held responsible.”<sup>197</sup> This highlights how difficult this theological truth is to our finite minds as Westblade continues “that God gives, an ability to trust to have a will that is favourably disposed, is a moral ability, one that we commonly distinguish in practice from our natural or physical abilities.”<sup>198</sup> Schreiner expands this comment by his comment on prevenient grace where he distinguishes between moral and physical ability. He notes that “God gives commands to unbelievers that they can physically obey; that is, they could observe His commandments if they desired to do so. Unbelievers are morally unable to keep God’s commands in the sense that they have no desire to obey all of His commandments.”<sup>199</sup> Thus he explains prevenient grace that before they repent as the scriptures teach “that they have no moral ability to believe, and the only way they will believe is if they are given by the Father to the Son. This revelation is not vouchsafed to all people but only to the elect.”<sup>200</sup> He takes this thought one step further by commenting on Scripture where Jesus commands believers “to be perfect (Mt 5:48), but the need for forgiveness (Mt 6:14-15) demonstrates that perfection is impossible to attain.”<sup>201</sup> This author notes as Schreiner discusses

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<sup>197</sup> Donald Westblade, “Divine Election in the Pauline Literature.” Still Sovereign eds. Thomas R Schreiner, Bruce A Ware (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), p 79

<sup>198</sup> Ibid.

<sup>199</sup> Thomas R Schreiner, “Does Scripture Teach Prevenient Grace in the Wesleyan Sense?” in Still Sovereign eds. Thomas R Schreiner, Bruce A Ware (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), p 243

<sup>200</sup> Ibid.

<sup>201</sup> Ibid.

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that it is difficult for humankind to accept their responsibility for sin irrespective of the truth that “they are born with an inclination and that will inevitably lead them to sin.”<sup>202</sup> The reality discussed by Schreiner that it is “the kindness of God”<sup>203</sup> that should give people understanding and leading to repentance. As Schreiner had already stated that Adam was still responsible for their “failure to respond to God’s grace.”<sup>204</sup> These are awesome thoughts as we stand in awe of the righteousness and wisdom of Jesus in the care of our loving and merciful Father who patiently waits for those to change – to turn to Him in repentance and faith answering the call in actions that are successful – wise actions for now and eternity. This author notes here that this discussion seems to override election. This author’s finite mind has great difficulty in the theology of election as, although having the mind of Christ (1 Cor 2:16), Schreiner seems to be ignoring God’s predestination. This author reasons that the Holy Spirit through the conviction of those to be regenerated will always be successful through Jesus’ irresistible grace. This author cannot judge as stated but can only be a faithful teacher of Scripture to all. This author is not a judge but a fruit inspector. Those who are elect will come to Jesus. Only Jesus knows who the elect are. The elect will respond to the Holy Spirit’s, the Spirit of Jesus’ effectual calling.

“And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” (Acts 2:21)

This author mentions again that the elect will know their calling after regeneration.

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<sup>202</sup> Ibid, 244

<sup>203</sup> Ibid.

<sup>204</sup> Ibid.

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In the verse above Peter is addressing the crowd and referring to Jesus, and the deity of Jesus whom God raised from the dead to pay the price of sin of those who trust Jesus (also Rom 5:8; 6:23; 2 Cor 5:21; 1 Pe 3:18). This author further clarifies the truth "...God raised..." that the sovereignty of Jesus is clearly seen here in that the Father gave Jesus authority (Jn 15:9-10) to raise Himself (Jn 10:18). This author notes here Peter is acknowledging Jesus as "Lord" but the reference cited is from the Old Testament as follows:

"And everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved. (Joel 2:32)

This author acknowledges that this reference refers to YAHWEH and Peter is actually acknowledging Jesus the "Lord" the eternal second Person of YAHWEH.

Following on from the above truths, I need to overview again the truth of the wisdom of Our Lord Jesus that His effectual call to those chosen is efficacious.

Thus this author views the need to discuss effectual call. In thinking about this amazing subject this author focuses on the most positive mindset possible – that concerning a further analysis of Jesus' authority.

"The Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost" (Lk 19:10)

This is the epitome of God's wisdom in Jesus.

Ware discusses effectual calling and grace. Here this author emphasises the grace of Jesus:



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“John testifies concerning Him. He cries out, saying ‘This was He of whom I said, He who comes after me has surpassed me because He was before me. From the fullness of His grace we have all received one blessing after another. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No-one has ever seen God but only God the One and only begotten Son who is at the Father’s side, has made Him known.’” (Jn 1:15-18)

This author views as one of the most marvellous doctrines demonstrating the righteousness and wisdom and sovereignty of God in Jesus. It is Jesus’ righteousness and wisdom – mainly His success to His people in His love. Ware’s comments add to Erickson. I have mentioned before I disagree with Erickson in that I believe the order is regeneration and conversion – the calling, a “persuasive summons”, as Ware explains below.

Ware explains that the doctrine “refers more specifically to God’s inward and ultimately persuasive summons to repent of sin and turn to Christ for salvation.”<sup>205</sup> This author is humbled by this great comfort. Again this author is reminded of the truths:

“God presented Him (Jesus) as a sacrifice of atonement (propitiation) through faith in His blood. He did this to demonstrate His justice, because in His forbearance He had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished – He did it to demonstrate His justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus. Where then is boasting? It is excluded. On what principle? On that of observing the law? No, but on that of faith. For we maintain

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<sup>205</sup> Bruce A Ware, “Effectual Calling and Grace,” in Still Sovereign eds. Thomas R Schreiner, Bruce A Ware (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), p 211

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that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law.”  
(Rom 3:25-28)

This author emphasises here that ‘justify’ refers to the believer being declared righteous by God through faith in Jesus. The reality is that no-one is perfect, good or holy by their own self-righteousness (Rom 3:10-12). This author also focuses on the reality of:

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For He chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight. In love He predestined us to be adopted as His sons and daughters through Jesus Christ...in Him we were also chosen having been predestined according to the plan of Him who works out everything in conformity with His purpose and will, in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of His glory. And you were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in Him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance ...”  
(Eph 1:3, 4; 11-14)

This author acknowledges that this is a very important truth especially concerning purity where believers are to be “holy and blameless in the Father’s sight” (again Eph 1:4), and this is discussed later when examining the problem of scholarly and non-scholarly liberal error which condones, for example, homosexuality. This author discusses this in the comments on sanctification.

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I stated above that the elect **are able not to sin**. With the above truths in mind we need to examine why **we do not have to sin because of the indwelling guidance of the Holy Spirit 24/7**.

### Romans 6v1-23

- 1 What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase?
- 2 By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?
- 3 Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?
- 4 We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.
- 5 If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection.
- 6 For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—
- 7 because anyone who has died has been freed from sin.
- 8 Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.
- 9 For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him.
- 10 The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God.
- 11 In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.
- 12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil de- sires.
- 13 Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have

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- been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness.
- 14 For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace.
- 15 What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means!
- 16 Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey - whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness?
- 17 But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching to which you were entrusted.
- 18 You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.
- 19 I put this in human terms because you are weak in your natural selves. Just as you used to offer the parts of your body in slavery to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer them in slavery to righteousness leading to holiness.
- 20 When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness.
- 21 What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death!
- 22 But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life.
- 23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

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In this wonderful truth above, the Holy Spirit guides us to understand that we really **do not want to sin** (v2). We “died to sin” and this is now past tense, past attitudes. God has given us His love as His Holy Spirit is in us and guiding us (Romans 5v5). **We need to get real and obedient!** We as elect are raised with Jesus and have a new life (v4-6). **We are free** (John 8v32,36). We do not have to sin anymore (v18) – we are free from sin. We are justified – “just-as-if-I” did not sin. Thank you, Jesus, and for your Holy Spirit’s guidance in my life.

However, Paul goes on to say that as the elect we are human. Paul teaches on the Law:

### Romans 7v7-10

- 7 What shall we say, then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! Indeed I would not have known what sin was except through the law. For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, “Do not covet.”
- 8 But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of covetous desire. For apart from law, sin is dead.
- 9 Once I was alive apart from law; but when the commandment came, sin sprang to life and I died.
- 10 I found that the very commandment that was intended to bring life actually brought death.

Paul continues with the constant human weakness which from time to time distracts all of us.

### Romans 7v22-25

- 22 For in my inner being I delight in God’s law;
- 23 but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the

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- law of sin at work within my members.
- 24 What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?
- 25 Thanks be to God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!  
So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God’s law, but in the sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.

Then, in this wonderful teaching by Paul concerning life through The Holy Spirit he begins with the word “Therefore,”.

### Romans 8

- 1 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,
- 2 because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.
- 3 For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man,
- 4 in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit.
- 5 Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.
- 6 The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace;
- 7 the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God’s law, nor can it do so.

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- 8 Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God.
- 9 You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ.
- 10 But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness.
- 11 And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you.
- 12 Therefore, brothers, we have an obligation—but it is not to the sinful nature, to live according to it.
- 13 For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live,
- 14 because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.
- 15 For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, “*Abba, Father.*”
- 16 The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children.
- 17 Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.
- 18 I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.

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- 19 The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed.
- 20 For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope
- 21 that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.
- 22 We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.
- 23 Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.
- 24 For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what he already has?
- 25 But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.
- 26 In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.
- 27 And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will.
- 28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.



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- 29 For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.
- 30 And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.
- 31 What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us?
- 32 He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?
- 33 Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies.
- 34 Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.
- 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?
- 36 As it is written: “For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.”
- 37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.
- 38 For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers,

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39 neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

In the above truth Paul teaches in Romans 8 that we as the elect are not controlled by the sinful nature but through the strength Jesus gives, we are controlled and guided – yes – and convicted to obedience, by His Holy Spirit. Remember in Romans 6, Paul teaches we do not have to sin any longer. In Romans 7 he teaches that in our humanity we may be weakened by the devil. In Romans' 8, above, Paul encourages us (v12) that we have “an obligation – but it is not to the sinful nature...” We are encouraged by Paul that through the Holy Spirits' guidance we will shine in Jesus' Glory - heirs with Jesus!

We know there will be difficulties. Jesus in His second nature as perfect man knew the difficulties – for example, temptation in the wilderness. We are helped in our weakness – the weakness Paul teaches in Romans 7. Through the guidance of the Holy Spirit we will overcome, again:

### Romans 8v22-30

- 22 We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.
- 23 Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.
- 24 For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what he already has?
- 25 But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.
- 26 In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness\*. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.
- 27 And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit,

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because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will.

28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

29 For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

30 And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

\*Weakness is sickness. It has been medically proven by Carl R Peterson MD, that when one prays in tongues The Holy Spirit activates two parts of the brain that otherwise are inactive and by doing so increases the persons immune system by 35-40%<sup>206</sup>.

True believers, true born again believers never lose their salvation. We are part of God's treasured possession – the House of Israel. I need to include here a truth already discussed in the chapter - The Glory of the Deity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, with comment in Hebrews 6.

I am reminded that Griffith Thomas comments on atoning propitiation sacrifice of Jesus and His righteousness which is imputed to the believer. Griffith Thomas states "It is not enough that our Lord's death occurred in history; it must also become part of our personal experience, in order that it may be a spiritual force in our life."<sup>207</sup> He goes on to explain Article 11 in the Book of Common Prayer – "We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our own works ..."<sup>208</sup>

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<sup>206</sup> <https://hischarisisenough.wordpress.com/2011/06/14/medical-facts-about-speaking-in-tongues-carl-r-peterson-m-d/>

<sup>207</sup> W H Griffith Thomas, The Catholic Faith. (London: Church Book Room Press Ltd, 1966), p 54

<sup>208</sup> Ibid, 55

## The Glory of God

Commenting on Article 11 Griffith Thomas suggest that it is the compliment of Article 2 – “The Son which is the Word of the Father, begotten from everlasting of the Father, the very and eternal God, and of one substance with the Father, took man’s nature....”<sup>209</sup> This author observes from Griffith Thomas’ comments the valuable truth that Jesus is the eternal second Person, the Son from everlasting, the eternal Living Word (Jn 1:1). Where I have said “observes above”, I need to expand this important truth noted by Griffith Thomas concerning “...imputed to the believer.” The phrase above “...imputed to the believer...” is wonderful for the analysis required for the original dissertation. For the review of Erickson’s logical order, this author needs to highlight this following truth. On regeneration the new believer knows almost nothing of the truths of faith God has just given but knows he/she has been born again – born anew – born from above (Jn 3:7). Being filled with the Holy Spirit and knowing this glorious anointing (1 Jn 2:20ff) this imputation is amazing. On regeneration, on being saved, salvation is not lost (Lk 19:10; Heb 13:5). Each new believer now begins to know and grow in obedience. Of course there is a warning in relation to sin as already noted above (Rom 6:1-18). This warning is highlighted in the following passage.

Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God, 2. instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. 3. And God permitting, we will do so. 4. It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, 5. who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age, 6. if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance, because to their loss they are crucifying the

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<sup>209</sup> Ibid.

## The Glory of God

Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace. 7. Land that drinks in the rain often falling on it and that produces a crop useful to those for whom it is farmed receives the blessing of God. 8. But land that produces thorns and thistles is worthless and is in danger of being cursed. In the end it will be burned. 9. Even though we speak like this, dear friends, we are confident of better things in your case – things that accompany salvation. 10. God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them. 11. We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, in order to make your hope sure. 12. We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised. 13. When God made his promise to Abraham, since there was no one greater for him to swear by, he swore by himself, 14. saying, “I will surely bless you and give you many descendants.” 15. And so after waiting patiently, Abraham received what was promised. 16. Men swear by someone greater than themselves, and the oath confirms what is said and puts an end to all argument. 17. Because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised, he confirmed it with an oath. 18. God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope offered to us may be greatly encouraged. 19. We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, 20. where Jesus, who went before us, has entered on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek. (Hebrews 6)

This author has emphasised that after regeneration the new believer will want to know and grow. Thus you will note that the passage starts with the word “therefore” which refers back to a previous

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warning about falling away. This author asks the question, “Can a Christian fall away?” In the passage quoted the writer suggests that we “leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go onto maturity.” The passage raises the question about falling from grace or losing salvation. This author suggests that the passage does not teach that one of the elect can ever lose salvation as suggested in verses 4-6. This author suggests that this is a “hypothetical argument” which warns Christians from a Jewish background that being born in the Spirit will result in encouragement from the Holy Spirit to want to know more about Jesus and to grow to maturity in Him. This author also suggests these verses are a warning against backsliding. This author does not consider that this passage is suggesting that the believer can “lose their salvation” for the truth is that this cannot happen. What can be the case is that the person had never been regenerated in the first place. This author has included the whole passage (Heb 6) to emphasise that even though this Scripture “speaks like this” (v9) there is confidence that God is at work in their hearts and that they are regenerated and that these words in Scripture here are a great encouragement to those who are regenerated but who need emphasis by God of His promises and that they need to constantly look to Him whilst waiting patiently for His continual blessings. If there is any doubt on the part of the believer, this should not be seen as a sign that the believer is not a regenerated person. Doubt should send the believer back to God’s word in order to reconcile any differences or address any doubts. For example, if prayer is unanswered, a believer would not turn their back on God and His promises, but would go back to God’s word to confirm that God’s ways are far better than ours (cf Jn 6:39-40; 10:27-30; Phil 1:9-10; 3:12-17). This author includes the whole of Hebrews 6 passage for context purposes. It is dangerous in some cases to take a verse of Scripture by itself to prove a particular point.

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Paul's letter to the Hebrews' 10v25-26 confirms the same truth of my comments for Hebrews 6.

Also in Paul's letter to the people in Corinth.

### 1 Corinthians 2v6-12

- 6 We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing.
- 7 No, we speak of God's secret wisdom, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began.
- 8 None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. <sup>9</sup>However, as it is written: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him" —
- 10 but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God.
- 11 For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.
- 12 We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us.

### 1 Corinthians 12v1

1 Now about spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be ignorant.

In the above passage (1 Cor 12v1) Paul is being very practical. The version NIV and RSV the Greek word pneumatikon is translated "Spiritual gifts". The actual Greek word is "spiritual matters". From my study of the Greek definition I suggest "being spiritual" —

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meaning actually “doing” – knowing and doing the work guided by the Person The Holy Spirit. We are saved and sealed by the Holy Spirit (Eph1v13) to Work:

### **Ephesians 1v13**

“13 And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit,”

### **Ephesians 2v10**

10 For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

### **Ephesians 6v17-20**

17 Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

18 And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.

19 Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel,

20 for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

## **2 Thessalonians 2v13**

3 But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be



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saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth.

### **Jude 20-21**

20 But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit.

21 Keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life.

## THE GLORY AND POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN REGENERATION AND BEING BORN AGAIN

A wonderful summary of the work of the Holy Spirit.

To be born again it must be by God, Jesus and The Holy Spirit. It is God's Glory to redeem the lost. We see Jesus explain this truth in John 3 how one becomes regenerated.

### John 3v1-8

- 1 Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council.
- 2 He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him."
- 3 In reply Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again."
- 4 "How can a man be born when he is old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born!"
- 5 Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit.
- 6 Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.
- 7 You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.'
- 8 The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."

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Here in verse 8 we see the truth that the Spirit - The Holy Spirit has a voice and that everyone that is born of the Holy Spirit will have a voice of the Holy Spirit - that is he/she will speak in stammering lips and another tongue. Another tongue being the language of the Holy Spirit.

Therefore if one speaks English only when he/she speaks in Tongues when The Holy Spirit loosens His/Her Tongue for the first time they will speak in tongues and will have that ability for the rest of their lives.

So How does one get saved? To be Born/regenerated by God's Glory The Holy Spirit?

It is a 3 step process.

1. Repent that is turn around from Sin or separation from God (Acts 2v38-39)
2. Be born of Water – that is be baptised by full immersion (John 3v5)
3. Be born of the Holy Spirit (John 3v5) – and when you are you will hear the sound of the Holy Spirit (John 3v8) – you will speak in tongues. (Mark 16v17)

\*Note points two and three can happen in any order.

Paul Rocchi made the best song ever made “Repent and be Baptised”<sup>210</sup> Why? Because it tells you how to get saved and you can find it on youtube here: <https://youtu.be/6bkm-BIDzxM>

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<sup>210</sup> Paul Rocchi Song “Repent and be Baptised” <https://youtu.be/6bkm-BIDzxM>

## THE GLORY OF GOD – GLORIOUS ASPECTS OF THE VOICE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

1. It is a language that God gives the individual to pray to Him directly. Jude 20
2. It is a pure language because it comes from a Pure source – God the Holy Spirit. Jude 20
3. It is the initial sign of the infilling of the Person by God the Holy Spirit – John 3v8 The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. **So it is with everyone** born of the Spirit.”
4. It is how God speaks to your Soul Body and Mind. (Isaiah 28v11-12)
5. It is how God educates you about Him – It is His way of your conversion to be more like Him – Be more like Jesus as you walk on in your Christian life. Isaiah 28v11-12, John 10v27
6. It is how you build yourself up – Putting on the armour of God for the Spiritual Battle. Ephesians 6v10-18, Jude 20
7. It is how you can speak to someone in their language about God. The First person to be documented<sup>211</sup> of receiving the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues was Agnes Ozman<sup>212</sup> and she could write the language as well. She said “it was like thinking English but it would come out Chinese. It is said by the time of death she had spoken to people in their language up to five different languages<sup>213</sup>. It was for this

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<sup>211</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agnes\\_Ozman](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agnes_Ozman)

<sup>212</sup> <https://youtu.be/IZTSh8K4YQI>

<sup>213</sup> <https://youtu.be/UxkkdYIZKxs>

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reason the Gospel went out to all nations so quickly. Acts 2v5-12.

8. And again when you pray in the Holy Spirit, The Holy Spirit activates two parts of your brain that would otherwise not be used for anything else and He increases your immune system by up to 35-40%. Romans 8 v 26. KJV “26 Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities:<sup>214</sup> for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.”
9. Speaking in Tongues is to be used when the Church comes together. Commonly known as the gift of tongues, and again as explained this is a mistranslation it is “concerning spiritual matters”, a time comes in the church meeting when it is time for God to speak. This is done in a certain manner.
  - The leader of the meeting says we are now going to operate the spiritual voice of the Holy Spirit.
    - Then one person speaks in tongues – as moved upon by the Holy Spirit to speak
    - Then one interprets that tongues – as moved upon by The Holy Spirit
    - This happens two and at the most three times each – in succession
    - Then three voices of prophesy are spoken – one at a time as The Holy Spirit moves a believing person in the church
  - In total there can be 6-9 Voice operations, minimum two Tongues, two interpretations of those tongues and two

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<sup>214</sup> <https://hischarisenough.wordpress.com/2011/06/14/medical-facts-about-speaking-in-tongues-carl-r-peterson-m-d/>

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prophesies and a maximum of three tongues, 3 interpretations and three prophesies.

10. Power – You receive Power when the Holy Spirit comes and manifest Himself in your body. Power to do what?
  - a. Cast out Demons – Nephilim Spirits – Mark 16v17;
  - b. Power to forgive sins – John 20v23;
  - c. Power to say to this mountain (problem) be cast into the sea and out of your or another's life. Matthew 21v21;
  - d. If consume poison by accident or someone poisons you have protection – Mark 16v17;
  - e. Lay hands on the sick, pray for the sick and the sick get better. Mark 16v18;
  - f. Jesus will do what we ask in His name. John 14v13
  - g. Bind or loose things on Earth to be bounded or loosed in Heaven Matthew 18v18.

Truly blessed (Matthew 5v1-12) are those that are filled with The HOLY SPIRIT – Speaking in Tongues and build themselves up daily. Jude 20.

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### Hebrews 10v26

26 If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, 27 but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God.

28 Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.

29 How much more severely do you think a man deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God under foot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified him, and who has **insulted the Spirit** of grace?

30 For we know him who said, “It is mine to avenge; I will repay,”<sup>c</sup> and again, “The Lord will judge his people.” 31 It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Also Graham review Romans 8v9-10..... The Spirit must be alive in a persons life. I.e. using/doing/being spiritual – otherwise he leaves and the person can still speak in tongues but probably never does or will until like the prodigal son returns to the Lord once again.

However the Holy Bible mentioned this in numerous places and twice in the book of Isaiah. The Bible says that there is no place clean (Isaiah 28v8). In my book “By the Grace of Jesus” “Regeneration and Conversion” I state The Holy Spirit regenerates us and as we go on our way through life we are converted. If we are converted as we go on our path which is lit by the Holy Spirit then God would want us to be converted by a pure source. The Trinity – The Holy Spirit is that pure source of education and conversion. Jesus said “my sheep hear my voice” direct reference that He God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit” is the educator – Pure Source. (John 10v27)

## The Glory of God