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PERSERVERANCE

Rev. Dr. Graham J Whelan OAM

CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1	5
GETTING TO KNOW YOU	5
CHAPTER 2	7
ATTRIBUTES OF GREATNESS	7
1. Spirituality	7
2. Personality	8
3. Life.....	9
4. Infinity	11
5. Constancy.....	19
CHAPTER 3	22
ATTRIBUTES OF GOODNESS	22
1. Moral Purity	22
2. Integrity.....	28
3. Love.....	33
CHAPTER 4	44
GLORY AND HONOUR TO GOD – FATHER, SON AND HOLY SPIRIT	44
SALVATION IN JESUS ALONE	52
CHAPTER 5	57
REFORMATION TRUTH.....	57
TOTAL INABILITY	57
UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION.....	62
LIMITED ATONEMENT	68
IRRESSISTABLE GRACE.....	71
CHAPTER 6	82
PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS	82
CHAPTER 7	94
ENCOURAGING OUR PERSEVERANCE	94
ASSURANCE AND ACCEPTANCE	94
THE TRUTH OF THE RESURRECTION	101

CHAPTER 1

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

Have you ever heard it said “I know who you are”? There is **one** Person who knows each one of us. He is the LORD of the Holy Bible – God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Psalm 139: 1-10, 13, 16, 23-24

1 O LORD, you have searched me and you know me. 2 You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. 3 You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. 4 Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O LORD. 5 You hem me in—behind and before; you have laid your hand upon me. 6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain. 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. 13 For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. 16 Your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. 23 Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. 24 See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

It is so wonderful how Holy Scripture teaches that the Father loves each one of us so much. The One True God of the Holy Bible is a Glorious God.

Psalm 66: 1-5

For the Director of music: A Song, A Psalm.

1 Shout with joy to God, all the earth! 2 Sing the glory of his name; make his praise glorious! 3 Say to God, “How awesome are your deeds! So great is your power that your enemies cringe before you. 4 All the earth bows down to you; they sing praise to you, they sing praise to your name.” Selah 5 Come and see what God has done, how awesome his works in man’s behalf!

God’s Glory is the excellence of His Being. This doctrine is called Ontology. I define now two classifications of His Glory – Attributes of Greatness and Attributed of Goodness from a previous book¹.

¹ The Glory of God – Abridged Edition by Dr Graham Whelan

CHAPTER 2

ATTRIBUTES OF GREATNESS

1. Spirituality

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

John 4:23-24

23 ...the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. 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 1:18

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

John 9:3

3 ... Said Jesus, "but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him.

1 Timothy 1:17

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

1 Timothy 6:15-16

15 which God will bring about in his own time—God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, 16 who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honour and might forever. Amen.

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

John 4:21

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

Acts 17:24

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 24:36-39

36 While they were still talking about this, Jesus him-self 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? 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 Lord 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-consciousness and a will. (See Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6). God has Names. In this passage:-

Genesis 1:1

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 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.'"

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

Exodus 20:7

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

3. Life

Here we simply say – God is.

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 10:10-12

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 5:24-27

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 1:9-10

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, 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 17:25

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 6:37-40

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 6:44

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 6:65

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 1:3-6

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 2:10

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

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 (the Firmaments) and time into being

Psalm 139:7-12

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

Jeremiah 23:23-24

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 17:24-25

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 him-self 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 28:18-20

18 Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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 18:20-39

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.” 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." 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 90:1-2

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.

Ephesians 3:21

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 Saviour 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 44:6

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 1:8

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

Revelation 21:5-7

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

Revelation 22:13

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 147:4-5

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 15:3

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

Matthew 10:29-33

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. 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 4:12-13

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.

Psalm 104:24

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 11:33-36 12:1-2

33 Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! 34 “Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counsellor?” 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.

1 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 3:22).

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 17:1

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.

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 18:10-14

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 herself as she thought, ‘After I am worn out and my master 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.

Jeremiah 32:15

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

Jeremiah 32:17

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 19:26

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 6:1-7

1 The company of the prophets said to Elisha, "Look, the place where we meet with you is too small for us. 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 axe head 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. 7 "Lift it out," he said. Then the man reached out his hand and took it.

Matthew 14:22-33

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 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 4:35-41

35 That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, “Let us go 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 33:10-11

10 The LORD foils the plans of the nations; he thwarts the purposes of the peoples. 11 But the plans of the LORD stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations.

Psalm 102:12

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

Psalm 102:26-28

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 3:6-7

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?’

James 1:16-18

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 first fruits 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.” 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.

CHAPTER 3

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 13:13

13 And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love”.

God's goodness as virtues is 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 15:11-13

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.

1 Samuel 2:2

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

Psalms 99:1-3

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 6:1-4

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 57:15

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 11:44-45

44 I am the LORD your God; consecrate yourselves and be holy, because 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 34:10-12

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 6:5

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 1

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 5:48

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

As we will see later in this book the only way to be perfect is to be perfect in all one says and; the only way to do that is through the power of the Holy Spirit.

James 3:2

2 We all stumble in many ways. Anyone who is never at fault in what they say is perfect, able to keep their whole body in check.

How important it is for his elect to walk in The Holy Spirit.

(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 purpose in Holy Scripture is salvation of His elect. So, God’s Righteousness is His commitment to do for His people, His chosen, and 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 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 8:1-5

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.

Genesis 18:25

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?”

Psalms 9:8

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

Psalm 19:7-9

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 9:23-24

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 23:6

6 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 7:9

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 2:15-17

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 7:7-12

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 58:11

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

Amos 5:24

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

Romans 6:23

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

Romans 12:19

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 18:20-39), is proven in this reference. Also the above shows God's integrity – definitely His genuineness, soundness, honesty and wholeness. True God.

Jeremiah 10:1-10

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 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 17:1-3

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 1:9

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 5:20

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

Revelation 3:7

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 6:10

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 15:29

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 17:17

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

Titus 1:1-2

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 6:13-19

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 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....

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 enabled by the Holy Spirit.

2 Corinthians 4:1-2

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.

1 Corinthians 1:9

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

2 Corinthians 1:17-22

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"? 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 5:23-24

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 2:13

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

1 Peter 4:17-19

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 3:15

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 5:4-5

4 When you make a vow to God, do not delay in fulfilling it. He has no pleasure in fools; fulfil your vow. 5 It is better not to vow than to make a vow and not fulfil it.

Matthew 5:37

37 All you need to say is simply 'Yes' or 'No';...

Hebrews 13:5

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 3:17

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

John 14:30-31

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 13:11

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 4:8, 16

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

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 persons who do not need to repent.

The Parable of the Lost Coin

8 “Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins 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.' 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 in 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 3:16

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.

John 6:37, 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 15:9-17

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 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 4:10

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.

Romans 5:6-10

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:

- 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, and 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 34:6

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 86:11-15

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.

Psalm 103:1-4

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 1:5-8

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.

Ephesians 2:4-10

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 2:11-13

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 Saviour, Jesus Christ,

Titus 3:3-7

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 Saviour 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 Saviour, 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 Holy faith is a gift. Through the faith **of** Jesus, we have Holy faith **in** Jesus (Romans 3v22 and Jude 20-21).

(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 86:1-7

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 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 103:8-14

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 9:35-36

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.

Mark 1:40-41

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 6:30-34

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 34:5-7

5 Then the LORD came down in the cloud and stood there with him and proclaimed his name, the LORD. 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 86:11-15

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 6:12

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

John 15:12

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

1 Peter 3:18-20

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 3:9

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 2:7-11

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.

1 John 3:11-18

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 Saviour 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?

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!

CHAPTER 4

GLORY AND HONOUR TO GOD – FATHER, SON AND HOLY SPIRIT

In the two previous Chapters I have defined two classifications with their sub-sections defining further aspects of God's Glory. At this point it is important to know what is happening in Heaven as revealed in this truth:-

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 the truth of God's Glory in Heaven.

Revelation 4

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:

“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 5:13

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

To this point much of the truth of God’s Glory has been defined from Holy Scripture. From this point, the subject of this book – Perseverance, begins a long journey to be united with the amazing truth of Glory with God throughout life for now and into eternity with God as seen in Revelation 4. So, to begin we go to the beginning:

Genesis 1:1-27

The Beginning

1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.
2 Now the earth was a formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. 3 And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. 4 God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. 5 God called the light “day,” and the darkness he called “night.” And there was evening, and there was morning— the first day. 6 And God said, “Let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water.” 7 So God made the expanse and

separated the water under the expanse from the water above it. And it was so. 8 God called the expanse “sky.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the second day. 9 And God said, “Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear.” And it was so. 10 God called the dry ground “land,” and the gathered waters he called “seas.” And God saw that it was good. 11 Then God said, “Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds.” And it was so. 12 The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. 13 And there was evening, and there was morning—the third day. 14 And God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as sign to mark seasons and days and years, 15 and let them be lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth.” And it was so. 16 God made two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. 17 God set them in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth, 18 to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. 19 And there was evening, and there was morning—the fourth day. 20 And God said, “Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky.” 21 So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living and moving thing with which the water teems, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. 22 God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth.” 23 And there was evening, and there was morning—the fifth day. 24 And God said, “Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock,

creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind.” And it was so. 25 God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the live- stock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. 26 Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.” 27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

Genesis 2:8

8 Now the LORD God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed.

Genesis 2:15-17

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.”

Genesis 3:1-6

The Fall of Man

1 Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden’?” 2 The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, 3 but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’ ” 4 “You will not surely die,” the serpent said to the woman. 5 “For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” 6 When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to

the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.

Genesis 3:22-23

22 And the LORD God said, “The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever.” 23 So the LORD God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken.

From the truth of mankind’s beginnings the relationship with God became worse and worse as a result of The Fall. May I encourage you to read the Old Testament in the Bible. God had a chosen people as He explains:-

Exodus 19:1-8

At Mount Sinai

1 In the third month after the Israelites left Egypt— on the very day—they came to the Desert of Sinai. 2 After they set out from Rephidim, they entered the Desert of Sinai, and Israel camped there in the desert in front of the mountain. 3 Then Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain and said, “This is what you are to say to the house of Jacob and what you are to tell the people of Israel: 4 ‘You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself. 5 Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, 6 You will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites.” 7 So Moses went back and summoned the elders of the people and set before them all the words the LORD had commanded him to speak. 8 The people all responded together, “We will do everything the LORD has said.” So Moses brought their answer back to the LORD.

However from that moment the disobedience began. In this book I have given an exceptionally brief overview of the disobedience of the Hebrews. Please take time to read the truths of the Books of Kings and Chronicles. In the prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah we learn of the failure of the Northern Kingdom of Israel – sent into captivity in Assyria 722BC and the Southern Kingdom of Judah – sent into captivity in Babylon 586BC The Prophet Isaiah recorded:-

Isaiah 6:6-10

6 Then one of the seraphs flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. 7 With it he touched my mouth and said, “See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for.”
8 Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?” And I said, “Here am I. Send me!” 9 He said, “Go and tell this people: “ ‘Be ever hearing, but never understanding; be ever seeing, but never perceiving.’ 10 Make the heart of this people calloused; make their ears dull and close their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed.”

The above truth and revelation to Isaiah was the Lord’s effectual call to regenerate Isaiah and which was to be repeated by Jesus the Lord recorded by Mark in his gospel (Mark 4.12).

Similarly, the prophet Jeremiah was encouraged by the LORD:-

Jeremiah 29:11-13

11 For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. 12 Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. 13 You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

Captivity in Babylon ended in 538BC and from that time many returned to Judah. However, apart from a remnant who remained faithful to the LORD, many followed the new religion which was begun in Babylon with their own text the Babylonian Talmud. These unrepentant people began the Pharisees.

They returned to their sin and unrepentant ways which were the reason they were sent into captivity by the LORD. Jeremiah recorded:-

Jeremiah 8:5-6, 8

5 Why then have these people turned away? Why does Jerusalem always turn away? They cling to deceit; they refuse to return. 6 I have listened attentively, but they do not say what is right. No one repents of his wickedness, saying, "What have I done?" Each pursues his own course like a horse charging into battle. 8 " 'How can you say, "We are wise, for we have the law of the LORD," when actually the lying pen of the scribes has handled it falsely?

The LORD loved His treasured possession, the House of Israel, but their rebellion continued after captivity as it had before.

Jeremiah 18:12

12 But they will reply, 'It's no use. We will continue with our own plans; each of us will follow the stubbornness of his evil heart.' "

From the time of Ezra (c440BC), Nehemiah (c430BC) and Malachi (c430BC) there would be 400 silent years when prophecy would be sealed up until Jesus came into His world.

Malachi 3:1

1 "See, I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come," says the LORD Almighty.

The first Messenger to come mentioned is John the Baptist, the New Elijah; the second Messenger of the New Covenant is Jesus. The Prophet Malachi foretells what was to happen 400 years in his future. Before I move to explain the subject of Perseverance may I encourage you with the truth of the Apostle Paul's letter to the Hebrews.

Hebrews 1:1-3

The Son Superior to Angels

1 In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. 3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

Remembering this truth from Paul please read the truths of:-

- The genealogy of Jesus (Matthew 1:1-17)
- The Birth of Jesus (Matthew 1:18-25)
- John the Baptist prepares the way for Jesus (Matthew 3:1-12)
- The Baptism of Jesus (Matthew 3:13-17)

SALVATION IN JESUS ALONE

At the beginning of this truth I asked: “Have you ever heard it said “I know who you are”?” From Psalm 139 and truths from Holy Scripture up to this point I wish to emphasise that the Father – indeed Father, Son and Holy Spirit – the Holy Trinity, know each one of us completely.

The reality in each of our lives given to us is how we respond to the love the Father has for us. I explained the rebellion of His chosen people the House of Israel. Today, are we like them – rebellious and ignoring the Father’s love and salvation that is only in Jesus. Scripture is clear here. After the fall of mankind as referred to earlier in Genesis we are all sinners needing to be saved.

Romans 3:9-20

No One Is Righteous

9 What shall we conclude then? Are we any better? Not at all! We have already made the charge that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under sin. 10 As it is written: “There is no one righteous, not even one; 11 there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. 12 All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one.” 13 “Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit.” “The poison of vipers is on their lips.” 14 “Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness.” 15 “Their feet are swift to shed blood; 16 ruin and misery mark their ways, 17 and the way of peace they do not know.” 18 “There is no fear of God before their eyes.” 19 Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God. 20 Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin.

Mark 1:1-5, 7-8, 14-15

John the Baptist Prepares the Way

1 The beginning of the gospel about Jesus Christ, the Son of God. 2 It is written in Isaiah the prophet: "I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way" 3 "a voice of one calling in the desert, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.'" 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.

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."

The Calling of the First Disciples

14 After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. 15 "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!"

John 1:1-7, 14-18

The Word Became Flesh

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was with God in the beginning. 3 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. 4 In him was life, and that life was the light of men. 5 The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it. 6 There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. 7 He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe.

14 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. 15 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.’ ” 16 From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another. 17 For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. 18 No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father’s side, has made him known.

John 3: 16-19

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. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. 18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son. 19 This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil.

Acts 4:12

12 Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.”

Romans 3:22-23

22 This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God

Romans 5:6-8

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.

2 Corinthians 5:17-21

17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! 18 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: 19 that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. 20 We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. 21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

1 Peter 3:18-22

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, 21 and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, 22 who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.

From the above truths in Holy Scripture it becomes clear that each one of us started out under the fall – separated from God through disobedience, unbelief and sin. Throughout history, which is His story, God loved us and wanted us to come back into a relationship with Him. But because of our sin there was no way on our own to get back into a relationship with Him. God is pure and holy and hates sin. We could not save ourselves. Indeed we cannot save ourselves. On our own we cannot get back to God. No way to reach up to God, no ladder to climb to heaven, no bridge to cross.

God made a way – not just a way but The Way:

John 14:1-9

Jesus Comforts His Disciples

1 “Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. 2 In my Father’s house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. 4 You know the way to the place where I am going.”

Jesus the Way to the Father

5 Thomas said to him, “Lord, we don’t know where you are going, so how can we know the way?” 6 Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. 7 If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.” 8 Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.” 9 Jesus answered: “Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?”

CHAPTER 5

REFORMATION TRUTH

For a person truly responding to the effectual call of the Father I believe there is only one fundamental doctrine revealed in Holy Scripture. Fundamental is defined as adhering to orthodox tenets where 'ortho' means right or straight, 'dox' means opinion and tenet is belief or doctrine.

The theologian John Calvin truly understood the doctrine of effectual calling and grace at the Synod of Dort where five points – the five points of Calvinism were discussed defining mankind's rebellious relationship to the LORD as a result of The Fall. These are:

- T**otal inability
- U**nconditional election
- L**imited atonement
- I**rrestiable grace
- P**erseverance of the Saints

TOTAL INABILITY

Again, Paul's letter to the Romans begins this reality –

Romans 3:10-12

10 As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one;
11 there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God.
12 All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one."

As can be seen mankind is in trouble. The above truth is the correct situation and shows the pathetic position of the person to be saved. Total sin, total inability to save him/herself. This does not mean that a person could not do good or be obedient to God's will – it means that The Fall has affected belief, emotions, attitudes and behaviours.

Romans 1:18-20

18 The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, 19 since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. 20 For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.

Romans 3:22

22 This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference,

Romans 5:12

Death Through Adam, Life Through Christ

12 Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned—

2 Timothy 2:25-26

25 Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, 26 and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will.

In the above truth notice that it is God who grants repentance. This is because through the Holy Spirit, the Father will effectually call those who will come to Him – those still blind, still not perceiving or understanding.

Mark 4:11-12

11 He told them, "The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you. But to those on the outside everything is said in parables 12 so that, " 'they may be ever seeing but never perceiving, and ever hearing but never understanding; otherwise they might turn and be forgiven!' "

The above is explained by the Apostle Paul:

1 Corinthians 2:14

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

From the truths above, men and women in terms of their relationships with God are as a result of The Fall – dead, blind and deaf. How then in this state can men and women have new life, see and perceive and hear and understand. As I said before we could not do it ourselves – get back into a relationship with a God who is holy and pure who hates sin. Who will help us? Help the helpless?

This reminds me of the Lord's truth about Lazarus who was physically and spiritually dead:

John 11:11-44

11 After he had said this, he went on to tell them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up." 12 His disciples replied, "Lord, if he sleeps, he will get better." 13 Jesus had been speaking of his death, but his disciples thought he meant natural sleep. 14 So then he told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead, 15 and for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him." 16 Then Thomas (called Didymus) said to the rest of the disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him."

Jesus Comforts the Sisters

17 On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. 18 Bethany was less than two miles from Jerusalem, 19 and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother. 20 When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home. 21 "Lord," Martha said to Jesus, "if you had been here, my brother would not have died. 22 But I know that even now God will give you whatever you

ask.” 23 Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.” 24 Martha answered, “I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.” 25 Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; 26 and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?” 27 “Yes, Lord,” she told him, “I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who was to come into the world.” 28 And after she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary aside. “The Teacher is here,” she said, “and is asking for you.” 29 When Mary heard this, she got up quickly and went to him. 30 Now Jesus had not yet entered the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. 31 When the Jews who had been with Mary in the house, comforting her, noticed how quickly she got up and went out, they followed her, supposing she was going to the tomb to mourn there. 32 When Mary reached the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” 33 When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled. 34 “Where have you laid him?” he asked. “Come and see, Lord,” they replied. 35 Jesus wept. 36 Then the Jews said, “See how he loved him!” 37 But some of them said, “Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?”

Jesus Raises Lazarus From the Dead

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?” 41 So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, “Father, I thank you that you have heard me. 42 I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing

here, that they may believe that you sent me.” 43 When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” 44 The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face. Jesus said to them, “Take off the grave clothes and let him go.”

We are now perceiving and understanding that God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – the Holy Trinity – the One True God of the Bible through His One and only Son, Jesus, can help us.

Ephesians 2:1-10

Made Alive in Christ

1 As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, 2 in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. 3 All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath. 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.

Eternal salvation thus is not of us – it is completely of the Father, through His Son Jesus and Holy Faith through His Holy Spirit guiding a regenerate heart.

UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION

Our acceptance or rejection of total inability as a true Biblical statement of man's and woman's condition by nature will largely determine our attitude towards the next heading that came under review at the Synod of Dort. Unconditional election is well set forth in the Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689, which I here quote as a convenient summary. It is also stated in almost identical terms in the Westminster Confession and the Thirty Nine Articles of the Church of England and all the major confessions.

'Those of mankind who are predestinated unto life,' says the Baptist Confession, 'God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to His eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of His will, hath chosen in Christ unto everlasting glory, out of His mere free grace and love, without any other thing in the creature as a condition or cause moving Him thereunto.' (Chapter 3, Article 5)

The doctrine of unconditional election follows naturally from the doctrine of total inability. If a man and woman are, indeed, dead and held captive, and blind, then the solution for all these conditions must lie outside man and woman themselves. It is with God. I asked in the last chapter: 'Can the dead raise themselves?' and the answer must inevitably be: 'Of course not.' If, however, some men and women are raised out of their spiritual death – 'born again' as John's Gospel puts it – and since they are unable to perform this work for themselves, then we must conclude that it was God who raised them. On the other hand, as many men and women are not 'made alive', we must likewise conclude that that is because God has not raised them. If man is unable to save himself on account of the Fall in Adam being a total fall, and if God alone can save, and if all are not Saved, then the conclusion must be that God has not chosen to save all.

This is supported by, and revealed in the Scriptures of God. The subject is one that is vast. We can do no more than quote just a few key verses of scripture.

The truth of the Bible is the truth of unconditional election. It is strange that those who oppose themselves to its doctrine fail to recognise this. Some believers have difficulty in believing that God could pass by some and choose others, and yet they have no apparent difficulty in believing that God called Abraham out of the heathens and left the others to their heathenism. Why should God choose the nation of Israel as His 'treasured possession'? There is no need to speculate, for God gives us the answer:

Exodus 19:5-6

5 Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, 6 you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites."

Deuteronomy 7:7-9

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.

God's purpose in election are beyond our finite minds – as Paul records:

Romans 9:8-13

8 In other words, it is not the natural children who are God's children, but it is the children of the promise who are regarded as Abraham's offspring. 9 For this was how the promise was stated: "At the appointed time I will return, and Sarah will have a son." 10 Not only that, but Rebekah's children had one and the same father, our father Isaac. 11 Yet, before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad—in order that God's purpose in election might stand: 12 not by works but by him who calls—she was told, "The older will serve the younger." 13 Just as it is written: "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated."

In the above truth God is not 'hating' but rather choosing Jacob instead of Esau.

The disciples saw Jesus preaching about unconditional election:

Luke 4:25-27

25 I assure you that there were many widows in Israel in Elijah's time, when the sky was shut for three and a half years and there was a severe famine throughout the land. 26 Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them, but to a widow in Zarephath in the region of Sidon. 27 And there were many in Israel with leprosy in the time of Elisha the prophet, yet not one of them was cleansed—only Naaman the Syrian."

John 3:16

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.

In this above verse "the world" refers to those chosen – the elect in all the nations of God's world. Those given faith, given by the Father to the Son, Jesus, for eternal salvation that is never lost. This is seen as follows:

John 5:24

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.

John 6:37, 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.”

The Apostle Paul also records about Jesus’ truth about unconditional election, guided in Holy Faith through the Third Person of the Holy Trinity – the Holy Spirit:

Romans 9:14-25

14 What then shall we say? Is God unjust? Not at all! 15 For he says to Moses, “I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.” 16 It does not, therefore, depend on man’s desire or effort, but on God’s mercy. 17 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.”

18 Therefore God has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy, and he hardens whom he wants to harden.

19 One of you will say to me: “Then why does God still blame us? For who resists his will?” 20 But who are you, O man, to talk back to God? “Shall what is formed say to him who formed it, ‘Why did you make me like this?’ ” 21 Does not the

potter have the right to make out of the same lump of clay some pottery for noble purposes and some for common use? 22 What if God, choosing to show his wrath and make his power known, bore with great patience the objects of his wrath—prepared for destruction? 23 What if he did this to make the riches of his glory known to the objects of his mercy, whom he prepared in advance for glory— 24 even us, whom he also called, not only from the Jews but also from the Gentiles? 25 As he says in Hosea: “I will call them ‘my people’ who are not my people; and I will call her ‘my loved one’ who is not my loved one,”

I need to mention that election is the positive side of predestination.

Ephesians 1:4-6

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.

There is a kind of election that is held by many believers today. This is based on Romans 8:29: ‘For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestined.’ This is like this: God foresaw those who were going to accept Christ, and therefore He ‘elected’ them to eternal life. Against this view:

God’s foreknowledge is spoken of in connection with a people and not in connection with any action which people performed. The Scripture reads: ‘Whom He did foreknow’... Again God speaks thus through Amos: ‘You only have I known of all nations of the earth.’ That is to say, irrespective of any action good or bad, performed by them, God ‘knew’ them in the sense that He loved and chose them to be His own. It is thus that He foreknew His elect.

It will not do to say that God elected us because He saw something that we would do – that is, accept His Son. We are not chosen because we perform such a holy work as ‘accepting’ Jesus, but we

are chosen so that we might be able to ‘accept’ Him. ‘For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.’

When given by the Father to the Son and given faith to keep on believing in Jesus then this is the reality of our position in Jesus. Regenerated, born again and given power through holy faith (Jude 20, 21) guided by the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 2:10

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

Neither will it do to say that God foresaw those who would believe. Acts 13:48 makes this abundantly clear: ‘And as many as were appointed to eternal life believed.’ Election is not on account of our believing, but our believing is on account of our being elected – ‘appointed to eternal life.’

Again, to say that we exercised faith in accepting Jesus and that God foresaw this faith, and, therefore, elected us, only drives us a step further back; for, where did we get the faith to exercise? The Scriptures provided the answer: ‘It is the gift of God, not of ourselves.’

Ephesians 2:4-9

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.

LIMITED ATONEMENT

This is the central fact of the gospel, that is, the purpose of Christ's death on the Cross. This is not accidental. The theologians who had set themselves the task of defending the truths of the Protestant Reformation against the attacks of the Arminian theology were following a Biblical line in their formulations and had now arrived at the very pivot of salvation. First of all, they had asked, 'Who is to be saved?' The answer was Man and Woman. But the Bible's teaching with regard to man and woman showed that man and woman, in their natural state, are totally unable to save themselves. Thus we have the teaching of the Bible on man and woman set under the general heading of total inability. Secondly, as some men and women are undoubtedly saved, then it must have been God Himself who had saved them in contra-distinction to the rest of mankind. Hence:

Romans 9:11

11 Yet, before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad—in order that God's purpose in election might stand:

This atonement was accomplished through Jesus' voluntary submission to the death on the Cross where He suffered under the justice of God, and procured the salvation that He as Saviour had ordained. On the Cross, Christ bore punishment, and procured salvation.

The question now arises: "Whose punishment did He bear, and whose salvation did He procure?"

- Christ died to save all men and women?
- Christ died to save no one in particular?
- Christ died to save some?

The first view is that held by Universalists, namely Christ died to save all men and women, and so, they assume, all men and women will be saved.

Concerning the above statement some well-intentioned people attending Church have said to me the world means all. They misunderstand -

John 3:16-17

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. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

1 John 2:1-2

1 My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defence—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. 2 He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

The truth of 1 John above is very relevant. The word atonement simply means at-one-ment between the elect and God. Jesus is the atoning sacrifice for our sins Jesus did this for the elect. This truth is further stated:

1 John 4:10

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.

God’s holiness requires punishment for man and woman’s sins. God because of His love (1John 4:10 above) sent His Son Jesus to make atonement as the substitute for each elect chosen. This is called propitiation meaning satisfied or appeasing. Where the word “world” is mentioned it means worldwide or saving the elect in each nation – it does not mean all people as some wrongly believe. It means those chosen – again:

Matthew 1:21

21 She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”

Ephesians 1:4

4 For He chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight. In love.

John 17:1-9

Jesus Prays for Himself

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. 4 I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do. 5 And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.

Jesus Prays for His Disciples

6 "I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. 7 Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you. 8 For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me. 9 I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours.

IRRESISTABLE GRACE

I have mentioned verses above which clearly explain that God chooses those to be saved for eternity and that His perfect Son Jesus died to pay the price for the sins of those chosen.

Matthew 20:28

28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

Romans 3:23-26

23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. 25 God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished— 26 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.

The Bible is clear on the grace and truth that Jesus brought to this earth as the Eternal Second Person of YAHWEH (LORD).

John 1:14

14 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.

The doctrine of effectual calling and grace is a wonderful reality.

Romans 10:8-17

8 But what does it say? “The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart,” that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming: 9 That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. 11 As the Scripture says, “Anyone who

trusts in him will never be put to shame.” 12 For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, 13 for, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” 14 How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? 15 And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!” 16 But not all the Israelites accepted the good news. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed our message?” 17 Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.

My ministry of evangelism has to do with being faithful in being there and telling of the love of Jesus – so that as the above passage teaches – people hear. Grace is God’s unmerited favour – God’s Riches At Christ’s Expense – God’s unity in Trinity working perfectly teaching Righteousness in Jesus Accredited to the elect by Christ’s atoning sacrifice giving Effectual calling. Grace is the epitome of the outworking of God’s wonderful love for those chosen. Grace, as I have already mentioned earlier, is part of the excellence of God’s Being described in the attribute of His Goodness. Irresistible Grace is about the call – the effectual call seen above in Romans 10:8-17. It is about God’s enabling also mentioned earlier in John 5:24; 6:37; 39-40, 44 and 65. The call is outward as seen above and also inward. The inward call is irresistible when the Holy Spirit convicts a man or woman.

John 15:26; 16:11

15:26 “When the Counsellor 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.

16:11 and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.

Thus, through the inward call of the Holy Spirit the chosen heart will respond to irresistible grace. Jesus used parables which are illustrations of spiritual responsiveness where hard hearts are softened, allowing Jesus to heal sins and save for all eternity.

The following truths about 'hearing' the Shepherd's voice help us to understand that Jesus' words – words from the Eternal Living Word are awesome.

On the Thursday afternoon before Good Friday Jesus said to His disciples:

John 17:3

3 Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

Jesus words here are about 'knowing' – to 'know' is the perception of absolute certainty. It is all to do with the action inwardly of irresistible grace in a welcoming heart. Concerning this heading of Irresistible Grace, my comments begin with:

Psalm 23

A Psalm of David.

1 The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. 2 He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, 3 he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. 4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. 6 Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

Jesus was there with David as He was in Psalm 110:1. Psalm 23 is wonderful as it links the Old Testament grace of Jesus with the New Testament as we will see as we proceed in context.

In the Psalm, the Lord is the shepherd (my shepherd) and in John 10:11, Jesus is the Shepherd – the Good Shepherd.

In the Psalm, the Lord saves and restores souls (my soul), the Lord is with David, the Lord anoints David, the Lord gives David an eternal dwelling – forever in the House of the Lord. In the New Covenant, Jesus is the Good Shepherd who saves – John 10:11 lays down His life for the sheep. Jesus saves His people who answer His Call through irresistible grace - Mathew 1:21.

In the Psalm the Lord provides – I shall not want, you prepare a table, cup runs over, provide an eternal home. Also the Lord guides – guides me in paths of righteousness. In the New Testament Jesus provides and guides – John 6:35 Jesus said “I am the bread of Life” – He sustains us physically and spiritually – especially now through the conviction of His Holy Spirit. Jesus also guides – John 8:12 “I am the light of the world” – He guides our way when we follow him.

In the Psalm the Lord comforts – lie down in green pastures – restores my soul – walk through the valley of the shadow of death – no fear – you Lord are with me – your rod (symbolising the Lord’s strength) and staff (the Lord’s protection) are with me. The Lord’s goodness and mercy follows me and I will be forever with the Lord. In the New Covenant Jesus comforts:

Matthew 11:25-30

Rest for the Weary

25 At that time Jesus said, “I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. 26 Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure. 27 “All things have been committed to me by my Father. 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. 28 “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

In the Psalm we see a wonderful eternal future for all who respond to the irresistible grace – those who hear the Shepherd’s voice and know their salvation in Jesus – dwell in the House of the Lord forever. In the New Testament - revisit John 14:1-9.

Continuing these truths on irresistible grace our context now focuses on the truth that Jesus knows each one who is chosen - as explained earlier in Ephesians 1:4. These thoughts about hearing the Shepherd’s voice will conclude with Jesus’ teaching:

John 10:1-11

The Shepherd and His Flock

1 “I tell you the truth, the man who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. 2 The man who enters by the gate is the shepherd of his sheep. 3 The watchman opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4 When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. 5 But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger’s voice.” 6 Jesus used this figure of speech, but they did not understand what he was telling them. 7 Therefore Jesus said again, “I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep. 8 All who ever came before me were thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. 9 I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture. 10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. 11 “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

But where does this context begin? Well, I suggest:

Mark 1:15

15 “The time has come,” he said. “The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!”

Jesus knew all along His effectual calling and irresistible grace began with the call of Nathanael:

John 1:43-49

Jesus Calls Philip and Nathanael

43 The next day Jesus decided to leave for Galilee. Finding Philip, he said to him, "Follow me." 44 Philip, like Andrew and Peter, was from the town of Bethsaida. 45 Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote— Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." 46 "Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?" Nathanael asked. "Come and see," said Philip. 47 When Jesus saw Nathanael approaching, he said of him, "Here is a true Israelite, in whom there is nothing false." 48 "How do you know me?" Nathanael asked. Jesus answered, "I saw you while you were still under the fig tree before Philip called you." 49 Then Nathanael declared, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel."

The above truth for Jesus then and for us now was and is spiritually guided in theirs and our spiritual guidance in believing in, and knowing Jesus as saviour. In context I move to relevant truth recorded by John, a truth related to Mark 1:15, John 1:43 and all the truth of Psalm 23. This is concerning the work of God:

John 6:25-29

Jesus the Bread of Life

25 When they found him on the other side of the lake, they asked him, "Rabbi, when did you get here?" 26 Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, you are looking for me, not because you saw miraculous signs but because you ate the loaves and had your fill. 27 Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. On him God the Father has placed his seal of approval." 28 Then they asked him, "What must we do to do the works God requires?" 29 Jesus answered, "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent."

As can be seen it is all about believing in Jesus. All about 'understanding' Jesus' irresistible grace. All about:

1 John 1:9

9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

Many are not 'listening'. Why? Jesus teaches:

John 8:19

19 Then they asked him, "Where is your father?" "You do not know me or my Father," Jesus replied. "If you knew me, you would know my Father also."

Then:

John 8:27-30

27 They did not understand that he was telling them about his Father. 28 So Jesus said, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am the one I claim to be and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me. 29 The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him." 30 Even as he spoke, many put their faith in him.

Notice in Verse 30 many put their faith in Him. This is irresistible grace in action – they know Jesus is Lord and were saved for all eternity. They 'heard' and 'understood' and were effectually called to believe and know Jesus is Lord.

As we move further in understanding the context of this truth we see the Pharisees are not listening!

John 8:37-58

37 I know you are Abraham's descendants. Yet you are ready to kill me, because you have no room for my word. 38 I am telling you what I have seen in the Father's presence, and you do what you have heard from your father." 39 "Abraham is our father," they answered. "If you were Abraham's children," said Jesus, "then you would do the things Abraham did. 40 As it is, you are determined to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham did not do such things. 41 You are

doing the things your own father does.” “We are not illegitimate children,” they protested. “The only Father we have is God himself.”

The Children of the Devil

42 Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and now am here. I have not come on my own; but he sent me. 43 Why is my language not clear to you? Because you are unable to hear what I say. 44 You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father’s desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies. 45 Yet because I tell the truth, you do not believe me! 46 Can any of you prove me guilty of sin? If I am telling the truth, why don’t you believe me? 47 He who belongs to God hears what God says. The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God.”

The Claims of Jesus About Himself

48 The Jews answered him, “Aren’t we right in saying that you are a Samaritan and demon-possessed?” 49 “I am not possessed by a demon,” said Jesus, “but I honor my Father and you dishonor me. 50 I am not seeking glory for myself; but there is one who seeks it, and he is the judge. 51 I tell you the truth, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death.” 52 At this the Jews exclaimed, “Now we know that you are demon-possessed! Abraham died and so did the prophets, yet you say that if anyone keeps your word, he will never taste death. 53 Are you greater than our father Abraham? He died, and so did the prophets. Who do you think you are?” 54 Jesus replied, “If I glorify myself, my glory means nothing. My Father, whom you claim as your God, is the one who glorifies me. 55 Though you do not know him, I know him. If I said I did not, I would be a liar like you, but I do know him and keep his word. 56 Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my

day; he saw it and was glad.” 57 “You are not yet fifty years old,” the Jews said to him, “and you have seen Abraham!” 58 “I tell you the truth,” Jesus answered, “before Abraham was born, I am!”

And now in further context in relation to ‘hearing’ the Shepherd’s voice - a blind man initially physically blind and now physically, spiritually and emotionally seeing. In context with the truth of the grace of Jesus this revelation is awesome and as far as grace is concerned – irresistible. In the account of this man, Jesus brings together all His truth about spiritual acceptance, spiritual growth and spiritual wastage in the life of the listener(s). Let us read very carefully:

John 9

Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind

1 As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. 2 His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” 3 “Neither this man nor his parents sinned,” said Jesus, “but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life. 4 As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. 5 While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” 6 Having said this, he spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man’s eyes. 7 “Go,” he told him, “wash in the Pool of Siloam” (this word means Sent). So the man went and washed, and came home seeing. 8 His neighbours and those who had formerly seen him begging asked, “Isn’t this the same man who used to sit and beg?” 9 Some claimed that he was. Others said, “No, he only looks like him.” But he himself insisted, “I am the man.” 10 “How then were your eyes opened?” they demanded. 11 He replied, “The man they call Jesus made some mud and put it on my eyes. He told me to go to Siloam and wash. So I went and washed, and then I could see.” 12 “Where is this man?” they asked him. “I don’t know,” he said.

The Pharisees Investigate the Healing

13 They brought to the Pharisees the man who had been blind. 14 Now the day on which Jesus had made the mud and opened the man's eyes was a Sabbath. 15 Therefore the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. "He put mud on my eyes," the man replied, "and I washed, and now I see." 16 Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath." But others asked, "How can a sinner do such miraculous signs?" So they were divided. 17 Finally they turned again to the blind man, "What have you to say about him? It was your eyes he opened." The man replied, "He is a prophet." 18 The Jews still did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they sent for the man's parents. 19 "Is this your son?" they asked. "Is this the one you say was born blind? How is it that now he can see?" 20 "We know he is our son," the parents answered, "and we know he was born blind. 21 But how he can see now, or who opened his eyes, we don't know. Ask him. He is of age; he will speak for himself." 22 His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews, for already the Jews had decided that anyone who acknowledged that Jesus was the Christ would be put out of the synagogue. 23 That was why his parents said, "He is of age; ask him." 24 A second time they summoned the man who had been blind. "Give glory to God, b" they said. "We know this man is a sinner." 25 He replied, "Whether he is a sinner or not, I don't know. One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!" 26 Then they asked him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" 27 He answered, "I have told you already and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples, too?" 28 Then they hurled insults at him and said, "You are this fellow's disciple! We are disciples of Moses! 29 We know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this fellow, we don't even know where he comes from." 30 The man answered, "Now that is remarkable! You don't know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. 31 We know that God

does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly man who does his will. 32 Nobody has ever heard of opening the eyes of a man born blind. 33 If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.” 34 To this they replied, “You were steeped in sin at birth; how dare you lecture us!” And they threw him out.

Spiritual Blindness

35 Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and when he found him, he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” 36 “Who is he, sir?” the man asked. “Tell me so that I may believe in him.” 37 Jesus said, “You have now seen him; in fact, he is the one speaking with you.” 38 Then the man said, “Lord, I believe,” and he worshiped him. 39 Jesus said, “For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind.” 40 Some Pharisees who were with him heard him say this and asked, “What? Are we blind too?” 41 Jesus said, “If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains.

As we see the above truth is simply about listening. Hearing and truly understanding. Not resisting the still small voice of Jesus through His Holy Spirit – His calling – spiritually asking for a response. The blind man listened and we see in V5 he saw the light – Jesus is the light. He saw the way to eternal life in Jesus.

CHAPTER 6

PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS

We have come to the final heading in this teaching which is the main thrust of this book. Once born-again, regenerated, salvation is never lost.

The Calvinist position is both clear and forthright on this matter: “They whom God hath accepted in His Beloved, effectually called and sanctified by His Spirit, can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace; but shall certainly persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved.”

Through the continual strength and guidance of God’s Holy Spirit, the elect person walking each moment in holy faith – God Himself provides perseverance.

1 Peter 1:3-5

Praise to God for a Living Hope

3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade—kept in heaven for you, 5 who through faith are shielded by God’s power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.

Our salvation is incapable of being destroyed.

Romans 8:31-39

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, 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.

Also with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, Jesus Himself constantly makes intercessions for us and He said the Father always listens to His prayers.

Some of the following verses have been repeated for emphasis.

Hebrews 7:25

25 Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.

John 11:42

42 I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me."

Romans 8:26

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.

John 10:27-30

27 My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. . 28 I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. 30 I and the Father are one."

There is a hymn I love which I print below:

Hymn 279²

DW Whittle (1840-1901)

1 I know not why God's wondrous grace

to me has been made know:
nor why – unworthy as I am –
He claimed me for His own.

*But 'I know whom I have believed;
and am persuaded that He is able
to keep that which I've committed
unto Him against that day.'*

2 I know not how this saving faith

to me He did impart;
or how believing in His word
wrought peace upon my heart.

*But 'I know whom I have believed;
and am persuaded that He is able
to keep that which I've committed
unto Him against that day.'*

3 I know not how the spirit moves,

Convincing men of sin;
revealing Jesus through the word,
creating faith in Him.

*But 'I know whom I have believed;
and am persuaded that He is able
to keep that which I've committed
unto Him against that day.'*

4 I know not what of good or ill

May be reserved for me –
Of weary ways or golden days
Before His face I see.

*But 'I know whom I have believed;
and am persuaded that He is able
to keep that which I've committed
unto Him against that day.'*

² Mission Praise – Words Edition

It was inspired by verses in 2 Timothy which are also listed below.

2 Timothy 1:12

12 That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day.

I have already touched on several of these verses below and they all teach clearly the doctrine that those in Jesus are never lost or fall from His grace.

John 5:24

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.

Here, above, faith, life and eternal life are connected and are the permanent state of the true believer.

John 6:37

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

Above, the words “never drive away” promise the unfailing love and mercy to each elect saved eternally.

John 6:39

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.

Above, Jesus tells the truth and states that none of those given by the Father to the Son will be lost.

John 6:44

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.

Again, above, effectual calling and grace where each one called and truly believes in Jesus is not lost – never falls from grace.

John 10:27-30

27 My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. 28 I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. 30 I and the Father are one."

An awesome truth which is self-explanatory. Please read this truth above again.

Romans 5:9-11

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! 11 Not only is this so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

In verse 10 above, eternal salvation is assured.

Romans 8:1, 28-29

Life Through the Spirit

1 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,

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.

In the verses above there is a positive result to the effectual calling – the elect, each one, no longer under “the law” which eternally condemns.

Philippians 1:4-6

4 In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy

5 because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day

until now, 6 being confident of this, that he who began a good

work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

In verse 6 above Paul is confident that these saints will have eternal salvation – that being the day of Jesus in glory.

2 Timothy 1:8-14

8 So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, or ashamed of me his prisoner. But join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God, 9 who has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, 10 but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. 11 And of this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher. 12 That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day. 13 What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching, with faith and love in Christ Jesus. 14 Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you— guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.

A wonderful truth of hope – real hope, not like earthly hope where we may say “I hope it does rain tomorrow.” This is eternal reality. In verse 12 “... to Him (Jesus) for that day” states the joy of the elect who have passed through judgement to eternal life (see comments Roman 8.1 above).

Hebrews 6:1-20

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.

The Certainty of God's Promise

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.

In this wonderful truth above I begin by saying I believe the Apostle Paul wrote the letter. Many other scholars would disagree. I say this because of Paul's comments in the following reference:

Romans 11:11-14

Ingrafted Branches

11 Again I ask: Did they stumble so as to fall beyond recovery? Not at all! Rather, because of their transgression, salvation has come to the Gentiles to make Israel envious. 12 But if their transgression means riches for the world, and their loss means riches for the Gentiles, how much greater riches will their fullness bring! 13 I am talking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch as I am the apostle to the Gentiles, I make much of my ministry 14 in the hope that I may somehow arouse my own people to envy and save some of them.

Paul loved his people – after all, the faithful Jews were God's treasured possession – the House of Israel. But salvation is only in Jesus.

Acts 4:12

12 Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must save."

It was difficult at that time for Jews who believed in Jesus. So, I believe Paul wrote the letter to the Hebrews for a specific purpose. You can imagine the stress and pressure these Jews, faithful and believing in Jesus, would be under. The above reference of Hebrews 6:1-20 has to do with a warning to Jews who have been called to true faith in Jesus – but see the wonderful journey that has been given them – eternal life – salvation in Jesus the Eternal Second Person of YAHWEH the LORD of their Old Testament Scripture – but more than that all Scripture as recorded from Genesis to Revelation!

I have emphasised that after regeneration then 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. I ask the question, "Can a Christian fall away?" In the passage quoted Paul suggests that we "leave the elementary

teaching about Christ and go onto maturity.” The passage raises the question about falling from grace or losing salvation. I suggest that the passage does not teach that one of the elect can ever lose salvation as suggested in verses 4-6. I suggest 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. I also suggest these verses are a warning against backsliding. I do 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. I have included the whole passage (Hebrews 6) to emphasise that even though this Scripture “speaks like this” (verse 9) 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 John 6:39-40; 10:27-30; Philippians 1:9-10; 3:12-17). I include 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.

This study was written to focus on Calvin’s heading – perseverance of the saints. In our daily walk it is becoming more and more evident that the devil is prowling around like a roaring lion – but to those who trust in Jesus and are born-again, he is a paper tiger. It is all about perseverance. We know that in the last days when tribulation becomes more insidious and severe we need to trust and persevere. Remember:

Romans 5:1-5

Peace and Joy

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. 3 Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; 4 perseverance, character; and character, hope. 5 And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.

With the above in mind, the Apostle Paul helps and encourages.

Ephesians 3:16-21

16 I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, 18 may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, 19 and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. 20 Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

Paul was always thankful to God and a great encourager – encouraging perseverance with rejoicing.

Philippians 1:3-11

3 I thank my God every time I remember you. 4 In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy 5 because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, 6 being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. 7 It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in

my heart; for whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of you share in God's grace with me. 8 God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus. 9 And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, 10 so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, 11 filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.

I feel very sorry for those who do not know the love of Jesus. When I reflect on end times and the fear that faces the ungodly, I remember what Holy Scripture taught:

2 Timothy 3:1-5

Godlessness in the Last Days

1 But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days.
2 People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, 3 without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, 4 treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God— 5 having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them.

2 Peter 2:1-3, 10-12

1 Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ have received a faith as precious as ours: 2 Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. Making One's Calling and Election Sure. 3 His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. 10 Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall, 11 and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Prophecy of Scripture. 12 So I will always remind you of these things, even though you know them and are firmly established in the truth you now have.

2 Peter 3: 2-3

2 I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command given by our Lord and Saviour through your apostles. 3 First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires.

How important it is to have perseverance and to have and give Godly, self-sacrificing, selfless love:

Matthew 22:37-40

37 Jesus replied: “ ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ 38 This is the first and greatest commandment. 39 And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’ 40 All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

In conclusion and for great encouragement I am reminded again of:

1 Peter 1:3-9

Praise to God for a Living Hope. 3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade—kept in heaven for you, 5 who through faith are shielded by God’s power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. 6 In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. 7 These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. 8 Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, 9 for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

CHAPTER 7

ENCOURAGING OUR PERSEVERANCE

Our Lord God through His Holy Spirit and faith given to us, does this for us, as seen so clearly in all preceding scriptures. In this last Chapter I need to list some wonderful truths on assurance and acceptance. Please look up these scriptures.

ASSURANCE AND ACCEPTANCE

Please look up and study these blessings below:

ASSURANCE

As the elect we are:

- God's children (John 1:12)
- Friends of Jesus (John 15:15)
- Justified – declared righteous in Jesus (Romans 8:1-2)
- Free from all condemnation for now and eternity (Romans 8:1-2)
- Knowing all things work together for the good of elect (Romans 8:28)
- Free from all charges (Romans 8:33-34)
- Not ever separated from love of God (Romans 8:35)
- United with Jesus and one in the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:17)
- Brought with a price and belonging to Jesus (1 Corinthians 6:20)
- A member of Jesus' Body (1 Corinthians 12:27)
- Anointed and sealed by God (2 Corinthians 1:21)
- Declared a saint (Ephesians 1:5)
- Adopted as God's children (Ephesians 1:5)
- Having direct access to Father through Holy Spirit (Ephesians 2:15)
- Good work in Jesus perfected (Philippians 1:6)
- Citizens of Heaven (Philippians 3:20)
- Redeemed and forgiven (Colossians 1:14)

- Complete in Jesus (Colossians 2:10)
- Hidden with Jesus in God (Colossians 3:3)
- Having a Spirit of power, love and a sound mind (2 Timothy 1:7)
- Knowing we have grace and mercy in time of need (Hebrews 4:16)
- Born of God, Satan unable to touch us (1 John 5:18) and knowing the assurances that are taught in 1 John.

We are encouraged in our perseverance especially when we see what is real for our eternal future:

Revelation 21:1-4

1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. 2 I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 4 He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

Romans 10:9

9. If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

Luke 24

On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. 2. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, 3. but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. 4. While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. 5. In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them,

“Why do you look for the living among the dead? 6. He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: 7. ‘The Son of Man must be delivered over to the hands of sinners, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.’” 8. Then they remembered his words.

⁹When they came back from the tomb, they told all these things to the Eleven and to all the others. ¹⁰It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the others with them who told this to the apostles. ¹¹But they did not believe the women, because their words seemed to them like nonsense. ¹²Peter, however, got up and ran to the tomb. Bending over, he saw the strips of linen lying by themselves, and he went away, wondering to himself what had happened.

On the Road to Emmaus

¹³Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles^[a] from Jerusalem. ¹⁴They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. ¹⁵As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; ¹⁶but they were kept from recognizing him.

¹⁷He asked them, “What are you discussing together as you walk along?”

They stood still, their faces downcast. ¹⁸One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, “Are you the only one visiting Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?”

¹⁹“What things?” he asked.

“About Jesus of Nazareth,” they replied. “He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. ²⁰The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; ²¹but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place. ²²In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning ²³but didn’t find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. ²⁴Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see Jesus.”

²⁵He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?" ²⁷And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

²⁸As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus continued on as if he were going farther. ²⁹But they urged him strongly, "Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over." So he went in to stay with them.

³⁰When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. ³¹Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight. ³²They asked each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?"

³³They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those with them, assembled together ³⁴and saying, "It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon." ³⁵Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognized by them when he broke the bread.

Jesus Appears to the Disciples

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

³⁷They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost. ³⁸He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? ³⁹Look 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."

⁴⁰When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet. ⁴¹And while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, he asked them, "Do you have anything here to eat?" ⁴²They gave him a piece of broiled fish, ⁴³and he took it and ate it in their presence.

⁴⁴He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms."

⁴⁵Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures.⁴⁶He told them, "This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.⁴⁸You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."

The Ascension of Jesus

⁵⁰When he had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them. ⁵¹While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven. ⁵²Then they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. ⁵³And they stayed continually at the temple,praising God.

THE TRUTH OF THE RESURRECTION

I have included this awesome truth to encourage our perseverance.

Concerning the heading above – I want to tell you:

I know that Jesus is Lord; and

I know from and through the Holy Spirit Jesus raised Himself from the dead; and

I know I am saved

I know I will persevere and be with Jesus for eternity.

To this point, this study has referenced Holy Scripture. I have now included detailed examination of the deity of Jesus and the truth of the resurrection acknowledging the work of other authors.

Davis reminds me 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 (Matthew 22:29-32; John 6:39-40; Rom 6:5) along with the truth of 1 Corinthians 15 and 1 Thessalonians 4. He concludes with references on judgment (e.g. Matthew 13:39-42; 25:32-33, 46). I marvel at the truth of this last reference (John 12:47-48) which confirms the truth that Jesus (John 3:17) that He did not come to condemn but to save. Those who do not accept Him condemn themselves (John 3:36). I conclude 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" I am 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. I also add that the believers' election and adoption, that state of belonging to Jesus is a great comfort and success for eternity.

I am also encouraged by Davis here as he discusses Jesus' obedience which I suggest 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 (John 6:38), indeed He did exactly what His Father had commanded (John 14:30-31). Already mentioned is Jesus' authority to lay His life down and take it up again (John 10:18). Davis mentions God's command authorizing the Lord to do this (John 15:10). Jesus saves us 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, I note Davis comments on the resurrection and ascension. He explains that "the resurrection was God's vindication of Christ's teaching and earthly ministry ..." ³ 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 (Matthew 28:9; Luke 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." ⁴ (Again Luke 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" ⁵ (Acts 1:1-2). I also add the wonderful joy for Christians of the guidance of His Holy

³ John Jefferson Davis, Basic Bible Texts. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), p 81

⁴ Ibid, 82

⁵ Ibid.

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”⁶ which in my mind exemplifies the humility of Jesus (Matthew 20:28) and also his exaltation as 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)”⁷ 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”.⁸ He continues with comments of Jesus’ rebuke to those who only wanted signs (Matthew 12:39; John 4:48). I am 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, I am 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

⁶ Ibid, 83

⁷ John M Frame, *Apologetics to the Glory of God*. (Phillipsburg, New Jersey: R & R Publishing, 1994), p 143

⁸ Ibid.

women in this role, because they were not acceptable witnesses in Jewish courts of law.

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.”⁹

I am 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.”¹⁰

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.”¹¹ He continues about Jesus’ credentials and explains:

“(1) The impact of His life, through His miracles and teachings, upon history;
(2) Fulfilled prophecy in His life; and

⁹ Ibid, 146

¹⁰ Ibid, 147

¹¹ Josh McDowell, The New Evidence that Demands a Verdict. Evidence I and II. (Nashville, Tenn: Thomas Nelson, 1999), p 203

(3) His resurrection.”¹²

McDowell highlights the record of the resurrection (Matthew 28:1-11; Mark 16; Luke 24; John 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.”¹³

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.”¹⁴ 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.”¹⁵

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

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid, 204

¹⁴ Ibid, 205

¹⁵ Ibid, 206

significance of Christ's death remains uncertified, and accordingly believers are yet in their sins, precisely where they were before they heard of Jesus' name."¹⁶ 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."¹⁷ McDowell highlights the reference (1 Corinthians 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 (Matthew 12:38-40; 16:21; 17:9; 17:22-23; 20:18-19; 26:32; 27:63; Mark 8:31-9:1; 9:10; 9:31; 10:32-34; 14:28, 58; Luke 9:22-27; John 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."¹⁸ I comment 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 resurrection as fact and comments on the forensic aspects of Scripture noting Bernard

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid, 208

¹⁸ Ibid, 211

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.”¹⁹ 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 ...”²⁰ 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 ...”²¹ Thus as Sparrow-Simpson adds to his previous citation, “the resurrection of Christ is the foundation of apostolic Christianity ...”²² I add (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.”²³

I have noted that McDowell has much more to say on this marvellous foundational truth and 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

¹⁹ Ibid, 213

²⁰ Ibid, 214

²¹ Ibid, 215

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

anywhere ... as Paul said, if Christ is not risen from the dead then our preaching is in vain and your faith is also vain.”²⁴

I acknowledge 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 Almighty of the Bible bless you in this study.

²⁴ Ibid.

