

# *Major Doctrines of Biblical Theology*

Know What You Believe

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## A Christian Theological Presentation

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This presentation includes Doctrines of God, Humanity and Sin, The Person of Jesus Christ, The Trinity, Salvation, The Nature and Work of The Holy Spirit, The Early Christian Church, The Nature of God, Inspiration of the Scriptures, and Sola Scriptura.

The Bible is a book respected and studied by all Christians alike. It is divided into the Old and New Testaments which in turn are divided into a number of additional books. These different books are sometimes further divided up into categories such as the Pentateuch, the Historical Books, the Poetical Books, the Major Prophets, the Minor Prophets, the Pauline Epistles and the Book of Revelation. First and foremost the Bible is a book of faith. Faith is defined as: a confident belief that something is true. The study of the Bible helps us to grow in that faith, especially the study of what we classify as the doctrines taught in the Bible. These doctrines are certain truths that have become standard beliefs in Christianity. The Bible is doctrinal through and through. So it needs to be understood that the Bible doesn't cater to doubtful and disbelieving notions. Contrary to any scepticism, the Bible grounds itself squarely on truth and the Christian; and the Christian life, according to the Bible, is a life that is founded upon doctrine.



It is very important to see that the Bible does not necessarily present isolated truths but these seemingly isolated points of interest represent a series of beliefs that are interwoven into a tapestry representing an incredible enlightening whole. One of the aims of this study is to take a few of these doctrines

and slowly reveal this tapestry in all its splendour, colour and greatness. These doctrines do not represent a system created by people but a system which God has graciously revealed in the Bible.

Christian doctrine provides Christians with an identity. It is an intellectual history of the Church. Doctrine comes from the prophets and great people of the Bible. It also comes from Christians and teachers of the church. Our knowledge of the Bible is spirit-driven. Learning Christian doctrine involves learning new words; becoming familiar with its context; writing and speaking it. Bible doctrine is the theory, and to complete the learning process, we must practise it, experience it actively, and try it out.

This presentation divides the study into a number of major doctrines. Under each doctrine, several points are explained to help understand the doctrine's purpose and its importance. The student must understand that the points presented may be doctrines themselves. A basic approach is used in this study. The over-all study is not meant to be an in-dept study by any means, but it teaches you what you need to know about your faith.

Please note that for copyright reasons, the Kings James Version of the Bible has been used, or a general paraphrase of the scriptures has been made in this study by me. The student is encouraged to study the verses in a modern day English translation.

This presentation references many different individual books and areas of theology, namely the King James Version of the Bible, The ESV, and other Bibles, Christian Theology, Conservative and Reformed Theology. I have sought to present a fundamental approach to understanding the Bible. What other approach can there be without compromising the Scriptures.

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## *Chapter One – The Doctrine of God (Theology)*

Does God exist? Who is He? How do we know He's real? Can we know God?  
What's His relationship to us?

### Objectives

- To understand what is meant by the 'Doctrine of God'.
- To identify several main key points associated with this belief.
- To understand its importance and relate it to the life of the believer.
- To use several Biblical references to illustrate the key points.
- To use meaningful theological terms associated with this doctrine.



To Understand the Doctrine of God, we must understand the existence of God, the ability to know Him and His Nature.

The Doctrine of God is a commonly held belief among Christians. Under Theology or the study of the Nature of God we have three elements: The Existence, Essence, and Nature of God were chosen to provide a persuasive argument, not only for the Doctrine of God but to help the student see who God, is. They link together to present an image of God as someone we can relate to and know personally; a living person and a father who cares for his children. The existence of God can be better understood by knowing that God has a purpose. His purpose is revealed through us and his creation. He's given that purpose to us. His characteristics flow over into all of his creation, especially humanity. God has essence; He is active, intelligent and an emotional being, and again He's given that to us. God has a Nature to help us understand him.

### *A. The Existence of God*

*Bible Verses* that support the doctrine of the Existence of God.

**ROMANS 1:18-21** - For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; <sup>19</sup>Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God has shown *it* unto them. <sup>20</sup>For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: <sup>21</sup>Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

**PSALMS 14:1** - The fool hath said in his heart, *there is* no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, *there is* none that doeth good.

**PSALMS 53:1** - The fool hath said in his heart, *there is* no God. Corrupt are they, and have done abominable iniquity: *there is* none that doeth good.

**PSALMS 10:3-4** - For the wicked boast of his heart's desire, and bless the covetous, *whom* the LORD abhors. <sup>4</sup>The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek *after God*: *God is* not in all his thoughts.

**ROMANS 8:16** - The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.

**PSALMS 19:1-2** - The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows his handy work. <sup>2</sup>Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night shows knowledge.

**ACTS 14:17** - Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.

**JOHN 14:23** - Jesus answered and said to him, If a man loves me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come to him, and live with him.



**HEBREWS 11:6** - But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that comes to God must believe that he is, and *that* he rewards them that diligently seek him.

It was mentioned that the Bible is a book of faith. This applies to God also; it's important to understand something about who God is, otherwise it's impossible to approach the Bible and understand God's part in the Bible. First, you must believe that God is real. This is taken in faith. In fact, it's impossible to approach Him or please Him without this. Coming to this realisation is the beginning of the 'Doctrine of God'.

God is greater than we can grasp (Deuteronomy 7:21; Nehemiah 4:14; Psalms 48:1; 86:10). Theology reveals this truth by describing Him as 'incomprehensible'. Scripture shows us that God not only dwells in the thick and impenetrable darkness, but also living in unapproachable light (Ps 97:2; 1 Tim 6:16). As creatures, we are unable to fully comprehend either the being or the actions of the Creator, although many do try. However, because we are made in the image of God, we are able to know about Him and to know Him in a relational way. This is why God presents Himself to us the way He does: as having a face (Ex 33:11), ears (Neh 1:6), and eyes (Job 28:10), sitting on a throne, flying on the wind, or fighting in battle (ie human characteristics). These ideas help describe Him to us.

Arguments for the Existence of God: Generally, there are four given arguments for the existence of God. The first says that if everything we see has cause, then the universe has cause. Therefore, if the universe has cause, then that cause can only be by God. The next has to do with the order and design of the things around us which gives evidence of intelligent purpose. That purpose leads us to believe there must be a purposeful God who created it to function this way. The third argument starts out with the idea of God's greatness. The final argument says we have a sense of right and wrong and this sense could have only been given to us by God. In more technical terms these are referred to as the cosmological, teleological, ontological and moral argument.

People have an inner sense of the knowledge of God and that He exists. The Scriptures confirm this. Interestingly, the Bible just assumes that God exists. How can He not exist? “In the Beginning God created the heavens and the earth,” Genesis states. Nature itself reveals the existence of God. In the Old Testament, King David writes, “The heavens declare the glory of God.” The Heavens refer to the sky, sun, moon and the stars. The reason why people still deny the existence of God is sin. Paul says that sin causes people to deny their knowledge of God, but they are without excuse. As a Christian we come to know God as a loving Father. As Christians we know that the universe does have God as its cause, and it does show evidence of purposeful design, and God has given us a sense of right and wrong and a sense that his judgement is coming someday.

### *B. The Essence of God*

God is substance, but not material substance. He is neither just energy nor pure thought. We cannot think of God in terms of space or size fitting into any particular dimension. We can not see God but according to the Bible some people have, in fact, seen God (Gen. 32:30, Exod. 3:6; 24:9, Num 12:6-8; Deut 34:10, Is 6:1). The closest that we can come to think of God, is spirit. We can say that God is a living God. He is an active, intelligent and emotional being who is certainly aware of Himself and the people and things which He created. We often refer to God as Father or Father God. God is Father in the first person of the Doctrine of the Trinity which you’ll study later. This refers to God in all His deity. We also speak of the eternal Spirit of God, which means God Himself.

The Westminster Confession of Faith says:

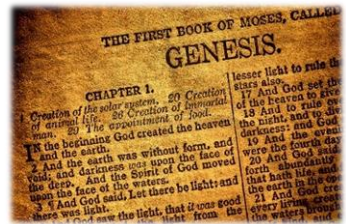
There is but one only, living, and true God, who is infinite in being and perfection, a most pure spirit, invisible, without body, parts or passions; immutable, immense, eternal, incomprehensible, almighty, most wise, most holy, most free, most absolute; working all things

according to the counsel of his own immutable and most righteous will, for His own glory; most loving, gracious, merciful, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin; the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him; and withal, most just, and terrible in his judgments, hating all sin, and who will by no means clear the guilty.

The term *essence* and *substance* are practically synonymous when used with God. If there is no essence or substance, then there cannot be any attributes. When we speak of God, we speak of an essence, not just an idea of God.

*Bible Verses that talk about the Essence of God.*

**PSALMS 18:30** - As for God, his way is perfect: the word of the LORD is tried: he is a buckler to all those that trust in him.



**EXODUS 20:4-6** - Thou shall not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: 5 Thou shall not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; 6 And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

**PSALMS 139:7-10** - Where shall I go from thy spirit? Or where shall I flee from thy presence? 8 If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. 9 If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; 10 even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.

**MATTHEW 5:48** - Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

**JOHN 4:24** - God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth.

*C. Importance to the Believer.*

The study of the Doctrine of God provides the Christian with needed information to approach the other doctrines. Understanding the Doctrine of God inspires us to approach other doctrines with a higher level of feeling. Creation, God's creation, the world around us and humankind reveal the nature of God. This doctrine can be better understood by knowing that God has a purpose for all of his creation, especially Christian. His purpose is revealed through Christians, to whom He has given that purpose. He's given that purpose to us. His characteristics flow over into all of his creation, especially humanity. God has essence; He is active, intelligent and an emotional being, and He's given that to us. This helps the Christian to place value in their beliefs.

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## *Chapter Two – Humanity and Sin (Anthropology)*

What is man and woman? What does it mean to be created in God's image? What is sin? Am I a sinful person? What effects has sin had on us? What effects has sin had on the world.

Objectives:

- To understand 'Humanity' and how we are meant to relate to God.
- To identify several main key points associated with the doctrine of Humanity and sin.
- To understand its importance and relate it to the life of the believer.
- To use several Biblical references to illustrate the key points.
- To use meaningful theological terms associated with this subject.

Under humanity and sin, this presentation will argue the nature of man, his fall and humanity's sin.

Humanity & Sin is a commonly held belief among Christians. Anthropology is the study of humankind. The Christian study of humanity is quite different to the world's view of humanity. In studying humanity, we look at mankind's sinful nature. We deal with sin in context of breaking the law of God. Sin is rebellion against God's authority. To state it more harshly, sin is an irrational, negative, and rebellious reaction against God. Mankind's sin results from pride and hostility to God. It goes further by expressing a wilful antagonism towards God. In addition, often in discussing humanity and sin, we come across two other related phrases: 'original sin' and 'total depravity'. The idea of 'original sin' is that we are born in sin; this inner sinfulness is the source of sins; it is inherited from Adam so we sin because we are sinners. 'Total depravity' has more to do with the results of original sin. Being in sin is being in total darkness and God alone brings light to that darkness. So through these three elements: the nature, fall, and humanity's sin, we see how God made man, what happened and the position of humanity today and how it helped set the stage for a coming Saviour, Jesus Christ.

## *A. The Nature of Man.*

The Bible often uses the word 'Man'. The word really refers to mankind or humankind. Some people frown on the use of this word to represent both men and women. It, indeed, includes both man and woman. Both male and female are God's creation. The two genders complement each other, leading to an enriching cooperation (Gen 2:18-23). God created man in his own image. There is a sense of a reflection of God's moral personality and character in this statement. We have the ability to feel, reason and make choices. We also have the ability to communicate and fellowship with God. All of this means that we did not evolve, but were made for a purpose. We are physical and our physical beings are materially linked with the rest of God's creation, but according to the scriptures we are more than physical: we are made up of body and soul, a Dichotomial view. Other places in scripture refer to us as having a body, soul and spirit, a Trichotomial view. However, the Dichotomial view of humans is usually accepted more than the Trichotomial view. The Trichotomial view separates the soul from the spirit. However, both views point to the fact that we are both material and immaterial. The material refers to our flesh while the immaterial refers to our soul, spirit, heart and conscience. Interestingly, the embodiment of the soul is necessary to God's design for humans. We experience joy, love, sadness, environment and other things around us. There was nothing wrong or evil about the body that God gave us. If sin had not occurred, ageing and death would not be part of our lives (Gen 2:17; 3:19; Rom 5:12). The soul emphasizes the uniqueness of our individuality.

Through God's creation of man and woman, we have a relationship with God. Mankind's' uniqueness comes from the fact that we were made in the divine image of God. We were made to know God.

At the same time that God created Man, He also created the world, the animals, the plants, the sun, the moon and all the stars in the sky. He also created light and heat; everything that was made, was made by God. This

certainly differs from non-Christians or the world's view of creation. It must be said that it's not within the objectives of this study to provide a defence against the world's view of creation, evolution and scientific differences between the Bible and so-called scientific facts and evolution.

*Bible Verses that show what the Bible says about the Nature of Man.*

**GENESIS 1:26 – 27** - And God said; let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. <sup>27</sup>So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

**MATHEW 10:28** - And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

**JOB 27:1-4** - Moreover Job continued his parable, and said, <sup>2</sup>As God liveth, *who* hath taken away my judgment; and the Almighty, *who* hath vexed my soul; <sup>3</sup>All the while my breath *is* in me, and the spirit of God *is* in my nostrils; <sup>4</sup>My lips shall not speak wickedness, nor my tongue utter deceit.

**THESSALONIANS 5:23** - And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and / *pray God* your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**GENESIS 2:7** - And the LORD God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

## *B. The Fall of Man.*

The Fall of Man goes back to the first book of the Bible, Genesis. It's about Adam and Eve who were real people in a real situation. God placed Adam and Eve in a situation of happiness and promised to establish them. Their home

was the Garden of Eden and there was one rule that they were to follow and that was not to eat from a particular tree in their Garden. This tree was known as the Tree of Good and Evil. Other Bibles translates this as the Tree of Knowledge or Conscience. Adam and Eve ate from this tree and thus committed a sin that affected all of mankind. Their sin was unique in that up until that point, Adam and Eve did not have a sinful nature. Their choice involved obeying or disobeying God. So the issue, was whether Adam and Eve would let God determine what was good and bad, or seek to decide that for themselves, in disregard of what God had said. This continues to be the issue today.

We first hear about Satan here. He appeared in the form of a snake. Satan openly contradicted God telling Eve that there would be no consequence from eating from the Tree. Through Eve's action, she doubted God's word. She offered the apple to Adam and he also ate. Thus both of them sinned against God. The results of their sins were threefold: First, the snake would have to crawl on its stomach for eternity. Secondly, Satan would forever be opposed by those people who followed God. Finally, Eve and women as a whole would suffer in childbirth and would be in a supportive role to their husband rather than a leadership role.

Genesis introduces us to both an exciting and sad story. Adam and Eve were given life eternal, but because of sin, death came into being. In the fall we see the perversity of human nature. Adam is linked to all the greats of the Bible and to the human race. Most of the Biblical books' main characters are shown to be sinners and their deaths are also recorded. Paul comments, 'in Adam all die' (1 Corinthians 15:22). But, of course, that's not the end of the story. In studying the doctrines of Jesus Christ, Salvation, The Holy Spirit and Christian hope, you will see what God has done to turn the tables on death and re-established a way to having eternal life!

*Bible Verses that talk about the Fall of Man.*

**MATTHEW 19:3-5** - The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? 4



And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made *them* at the beginning made them male and female, 5 And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?

**ROMANS 5:12-21** - Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: 13 (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. 14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come. 15 But not as the offence, so also *is* the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, *which is* by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. 16 And not as *it was* by one that sinned, so *is* the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift *is* of many offences unto justification. 17 For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.) 18 Therefore as by the offence of one *judgment came* upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one *the free gift came* upon all men unto justification of life. 19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. 20 Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: 21 That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

**GENESIS 2:15-17** - And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. 16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou may freely eat: 17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shall not eat of it: for in the day that thou eat thereof thou shall surely die.

**GENESIS 3:1** - Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

**GENESIS 3:2-6** - And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: 3 But of the fruit of the tree which *is* in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. 4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: 5 For God knows that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. 6 And when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, and that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make *one* wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

**GENESIS 3:14-16** - And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou *art* cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shall thou go, and dust shall thou eat all the days of thy life: 15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. 16 Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire *shall be* to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

**1 CORINTHIANS 11:3** - But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman *is* the man; and the head of Christ *is* God.

### *C. Humanity's Sin*

*Bible Verses that talk about Humanity's Sin.*

**HEBREWS 11:24-25** - By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; 25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.

**JOHN 3:19** - And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

**ROMANS 3:23** - For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.

**EPHESIANS 2:1-2** - And you *hath he quickened*, who were dead in trespasses and sins; 2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience.

**ROMANS 3:19** - Now we know that whatever things that the law says, it says to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and the entire world may become guilty before God.

**ROMANS 6:23** - For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**JAMES 2:26** - For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

**REVELATION 21:8** - But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

**ISAIAH 59:1-2** - Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear HEAVY, WHICH it cannot hear: 2 But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid *his* face from you, that he will not hear.

**JOHN 14:6** - Jesus said unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

**ACTS 4:12** - Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

**ROMANS 5:12** - Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.



Scriptures say that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Rom 3:23). Sin separates us from God by creating a barrier. God is holy and without sin. The scriptures point out three aspects that make up sin; the sin of Adam or 'imputed sin' and because Adam was the head of the human race, we all relate to Adam in that sin. Then there's 'inherited sin' as every person, is born with a sinful nature inherited from his parents. Finally, there's 'individual or personal sin'. This is sin we do because of our sinful nature. There is also a certain power to sin and even a love of sin. The Bible speaks of living in a state of sin through continual practise of it. Along with sin comes guilt, a powerful feeling of failure, sadness and acknowledgement of wrongdoing. As mentioned above, there is also the result of sin; a separation from God and thus the inability to come into God's presence because of sin in our lives.

Adam lived to be nine hundred and thirty years old. There were many other people who lived long lives in the Bible. Some Theologians say that God never intended us to die but it was sin that brought death to us. The condition of mankind today is not what God wanted for us. Sin distorts us from being what God intended us to be.

Most important of all is that this barrier of sin that separates us from God is, one of the main reasons why God, in His sovereign love, sent Jesus Christ His Son to die on the cross as a final sacrifice for man's sin.

#### *D. Importance to the Believer*

The doctrine of Humanity and Sin, as with that of the Person of Jesus Christ on earth, brings to light a key ingredient of God's purpose for mankind, and

establishes values in the Christian's life. Establishing this as a value helps us to live a moral and righteous lifestyle. Sin is rebellion against God's authority. To state it more harshly, sin is an irrational, negative, and rebellious reaction against God. Mankind's sin results from pride and hostility to God. It goes further by expressing a wilful antagonism towards God. In addition, often in discussing humanity and sin, we come across two other related phrases: original sin and total depravity. The idea of 'original sin' is that we are born in sin; this inner sinfulness is the source of sins; it is inherited from Adam so we sin because we are sinners. 'Total depravity' has more to do with the results of original sin. Being in sin is being in total darkness and God alone brings light to that darkness through sanctification. So through these three elements: the nature, fall and humanity's sin, we see how God made man, what happened and the position of humanity today thus it set the stage for the coming Saviour, Jesus Christ and his plan of salvation for us.

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## *Chapter Three – The Person of Jesus Christ (Christology)*

Who is Jesus? Why is there so much emphasis on Jesus? What part does He play between God and man?

Objectives:

- Some beliefs about Jesus Christ.
- To see Jesus as a human being.
- To see Jesus as Saviour of Mankind.
- To see the relationship between Jesus Christ and the believer.
- To illustrate several Biblical references to the key points.
- To use meaningful theological terms associated with the Person of Jesus Christ.

Under the person of Jesus Christ, this presentation will argue the deity of Christ, Christ's humanity and Christ as saviour of the world.

Christology is a commonly held belief among Christians. In the lesson on The Person of Jesus Christ or Christology, we present Jesus as God, as man and as Saviour. The three elements are all bound up together revealing that God came amongst mankind in order to reunite the relationship between God and Man which had been destroyed through sin. The student sees in Christ's deity the fact that He wasn't just a person but part of the Godhead. The student sees the two natures of Christ and His purpose for us.

### *A. The Deity of Christ*

Christianity and all its doctrines centre on the person of Jesus Christ. The testimony of the Bible and millions of Christians through the centuries from the early church through the ages until today confirm that Jesus is God. Faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour transforms a person's life. Jesus, himself, made implicit and explicit claims to his own uniqueness and divinity. At His own baptism Jesus announced the arrival of the Kingdom of God and often referred to himself as the Son of Man who had authority to forgive sins. The

church over the centuries has repeatedly confirmed that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

The doctrines of the Person of Christ are also intimately associated with the Doctrine of the Trinity; that God exists in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Those who confess that Jesus is the son of God confess his deity. Jesus Christ became incarnate (man), became the second person of the Trinity and died on the cross for us. In Daniel 7:13-14 He is the one who comes to us as a servant and the one who comes to suffer and die for our sins as well as rise from the dead.



One of the reasons for disbelief, heresies and difficulties in the church is the attempt to explain the mystery of Jesus Christ and his Deity. Many false doctrines have been brought into being because of this. The scriptures described Jesus as the eternal Creator of the Universe. In John, one of the apostles called him, "my Lord and my God". Acts says that he was made both Lord and Messiah. In Matthew 28:20, Jesus finishes his ministry on earth saying, "And remember. 'I am with you always, to the end of the age'."

*Bible Verses dealing with the Deity of Christ.*

**MARK 1:6-13** - And John was clothed with camel's hair, and with a girdle of a skin about his loins; and he did eat locusts and wild honey; 7 And preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose. 8 I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost. 9 And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. 10 And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him: 11 And there came a voice from heaven, *saying*, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. 12 And immediately the Spirit drove him into the wilderness.

13 And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him.

**MARK 1:23-27** - And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, 24 Saying, Let *us* alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God. 25 And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. 26 And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him. 27 And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine *is* this? For with authority he even commanded the unclean spirits, and they do obey him.

**MARK 9:31** - For he taught his disciples, and said unto them, the Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day.

**MARK 2:17** - When Jesus heard *it*, he said to them, they that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

**MARK 2:10** - But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he said to the sick of the palsy,)

**MARK 2:27-28** - And he said unto them, The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath: 28 Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath.

**DANIEL 7:13-14** - I saw in the night visions, and, behold, *one* like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. 14 And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion *is* an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom *that* which shall not be destroyed.



**MARK 8:31** - And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.

**MARK 9:9** - And as they came down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were risen from the dead.

**HEBREWS 1:3** - Who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.

**PSALM 45:6-7** - Thy throne, O God, *is* for ever and ever: the scepter of thy kingdom *is* a right scepter. 7 You love righteousness, and hate wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

**HEBREWS 1:10-12** - And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of your hands: 11 They shall perish; but thou remains; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; 12 And as a vesture shall thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.

**JOHN 20:28** - And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God

**MATTHEW 28:20** - Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.

**ACTS 2:31-36** - He seeing this before spoke of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. 32 This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. 33 Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. 34 For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he said himself, The LORD said

unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, 35 Until I make thy foes thy footstool. 36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

## *B. The Humanity of Christ*

Bible Verses that show the humanity of Christ.

**MATTHEW 2:1-9** - Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, 2 Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. 3 When Herod the king had heard *these things*, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. 4 And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. 5 And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judea: for thus it is written by the prophet, 6 And thou Bethlehem, *in* the land of Judah, art not the least among the princes of Judah: for out of thee shall come a GOVERNOR, WHICH shall rule my people Israel. 7 Then Herod, when he had privately called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. 8 And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found *him*, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also. 9 When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.

**LUKE 1:28-35** - And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, *thou that art* highly favoured, the Lord *is* with thee: blessed *art* thou among women. 29 And when she saw *him*, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. 30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. 31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shall call his name JESUS. 32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: 33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. 34

Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?  
35 And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

**LUKE 1:9-18** - According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. 10 And the whole multitude of the people was praying without at the time of incense. 11 And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. 12 And when Zacharias saw *him*, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him. 13 But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shall call his name John. 14 And thou shall have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. 15 For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. 16 And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. 17 And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. 18 And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years.

**JOHN 8:12** - Then Jesus spoke again to them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

**JOHN 1:1-5** - In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. 4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men. 5 And the light shines in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

**JOHN 1:14** - And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

**JOHN 4:6-7** - Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with *his* journey, sat thus on the well: *and* it was about the sixth hour. 7 There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus said to her, Give me a drink.

**JOHN 8:12** - Then Jesus spoke again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followed me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

**JOHN 19:34** - But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.

**LUKE 4:40** - Now when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them.

**2 CORINTHIANS 5:21** - For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

**HEBREWS 4:15** - For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are*, yet without sin.

Every year on December 25<sup>th</sup>, we celebrate Christmas. It's an exciting holiday with presents under the Christmas tree, friends and family gathered around the table enjoying each other's fellowship with a meal. Different churches are all active in putting on different types of Christmas programmes; dramas, singing carols and Christmas parties. Commercially, for the lead up time to Christmas, there are Christmas trees in shops with decorations hanging about and signs wishing you a Merry Christmas. There are even Christmas carols and songs being heard over the radio and speakers around town. This is the way it's been since we were born, at least in countries like New Zealand and other western countries. In celebrating Christmas, we celebrate the birth of

Jesus Christ. Jesus' birth is a historical fact. He was born a Jew in the town of Bethlehem in Judea.



We celebrate because, indeed, Jesus is special. From the miraculous conception of his mother, Mary, to his birth, the Bible says that Wise men from the East saw his star in the heavens and came to worship Him. Angels went amongst shepherds' who then heard singing and rejoicing. Jesus' birth was the most exciting events in the history of humankind as he was both a complete

human being and at the same time, the eternal Son of God. God came to be amongst us! He was human and He came to live with us. His own pre-existence and deity were clearly stated by Jesus himself in this statement, "Amen, Amen, I say to you before Abraham came to be, I am!" His pre-existence was in being the 'Word of God'. John (from the book of John) states that in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He (The Word) was in the beginning with God. Here, Jesus is referred to as the 'Word'. He came to be the 'Light of the World'. So Jesus came from God, He became flesh and lived among us. Even though Jesus was God, He was also human, and because of His humanity he also experienced tiredness, He became thirsty and he also died a real death. However, even in his humanity, Jesus, in his deity, never made an error in statement, action or judgement. Unlike us, He was without sin. In fact, it was for our sins that Jesus came for. He came as Saviour of the World.

In focussing on Jesus' deity, we can easily think that Jesus' humanity should not be emphasized. However, the incarnation of Jesus refers to both of His natures; His humanity and His deity. Jesus experienced temptation but was without sin. He resisted temptation and overcame it. At Gethsemane his struggles were real. Because of this human nature, He understands our own suffering because He has experienced them.

### *C. Christ as Saviour of the World*

*Bible Verses that show Christ as Saviour of the World.*

**JOHN 4:42** - And said unto the woman, now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard *him* ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.

**1 JOHN 4:14** - And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son *to be* the Saviour of the world.

**MATTHEW 1:21** - And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shall call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

**LUKE 2:10-11** - And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. 11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

**2 PETER 1:11** - For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

**2 PETER 2:20** - For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.

**2 PETER 3:18** - But grow in grace, and *in* the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him *be* glory both now and for ever. Amen.

**1TIMOTHY 1:15** - This *is* a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.

**ACTS 5:31** - Him hath God exalted with his right hand *to be* a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.

Throughout the New Testament Jesus is referred to as the Saviour of the World. In the book of Matthew, an angel of the Lord instructed Joseph to name the child Mary had conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, 'Jesus', for he will save his people from their sins.' At the moment Jesus was born, an angel of the Lord told the shepherds in the fields, 'Do not be afraid; for see – I am bringing you good news of great joy for all people; to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord.' Jesus was often referred to as 'Lord and Saviour'. The apostle Paul writes, 'nobody should doubt that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners'. In the Book of Acts, Jesus is described as the Saviour of Israel. Peter and the apostles testified before the Jewish council in Jerusalem that God had exalted Jesus at his right hand as Lord and Saviour, that he might give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. Later, we will study the Doctrine of Salvation which will give us a much deeper understanding of Jesus as Saviour to the World.

#### *D. Importance to the Believer*

Christianity and all its doctrines centre on the person of Jesus Christ. The testimony of the Bible and millions of Christians through the centuries from the early church through the ages until today confirm that Jesus is God. Faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour transforms a person's life. At His own baptism Jesus announced the arrival of the Kingdom of God and often referred to himself as the Son of Man who had authority to forgive sins. This was and still is a major revelation. The church over the centuries has confirmed repeatedly that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. The doctrines of the Person of Christ are also intimately associated with the Doctrine of the Trinity; that God exists in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Those who confess that Jesus is the son of God confess his deity. Jesus Christ became incarnate (man), became the second person of the Trinity and died on the cross for us. Through these actions, we have salvation.

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## *Chapter Four – The Doctrine of the Trinity (The Trinity)*

What is the trinity? What does the bible say about it? How can God be three persons, yet one God?

Objectives:

- To understand some of the main beliefs associated with the Trinity.
- The Father, the Son and Holy Spirit.
- Being born again, you become a new creation.
- To illustrate several Biblical references to the key points.
- To use meaningful theological terms associated with the Trinity.

Under the Doctrine of the Trinity, this presentation will argue the unity of the Father, the Son and The Holy Spirit, and the purpose of each person within the Trinity.

The Trinity is a belief commonly held by Christians. In the Doctrine of the Trinity, we have the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and these are the three points being presented in this study. This course has already presented God, The Person of Jesus Christ and The Holy Spirit as separate Doctrines. The Doctrine of the Trinity brings together the unity of the Father (God), the Son (Jesus Christ) and the Holy Spirit. They are all inseparable but yet individuals and yet the same. The Trinity reveals the integrated oneness of God. The three together make up the Godhead Christians worship.

*Bible Verses* that support the belief that the Trinity is made up of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

**JOHN 10:30** - I and *my* Father are one.

**GENESIS 3:22** - And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever.



**ISAIAH 48:16** - Come ye near unto me, hear ye this; I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there *am* I: and now the Lord GOD, and his Spirit, hath sent me.

**MATTHEW 3:16-17** - And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: 17 And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

**1 CORINTHIANS 12:4-6** - Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. 6 And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which works all in all.

**EPHESIANS 4:4-6** - *There is* one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; 5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 One God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in you all.

**1 PETER 1:2** - Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

**1 PETER 3:18** - For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.

**JUDE 20:21** - Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

**REVELATIONS 1:4** - John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne.

**1 CORINTHIANS 1:3** - Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ.

**JOHN 1:1-4, 14** - In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. 4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men. 14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

**COLOSSIANS 2:9** - For in him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

**MATTHEW 17:1-9** - And after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, and brought them up into an high mountain apart, 2 And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. 3 And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him. 4 Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. 5 While he yet spoke, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. 6 And when the disciples heard *it*, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. 7 And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid. 8 And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only. 9 And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead.

**MATTHEW 1:18, 21, 23** - Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. 21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shall call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. 23 Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

**MATTHEW 11:27** - ALL things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knows the Son, but the Father; neither any man knows the Father, save the Son, and *he* to whomsoever the Son will reveal *him*.

**LUKE 10:22** - All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knows who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and *he* to whom the Son will reveal *him*.

**JOHN 14:9** - Jesus said to him, have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and why do you say, show us the Father?

**JOHN 16:27** - For the Father himself loves you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.

**JOHN 14: 6-10** - Jesus said to him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. 7 If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. 8 Philip said to him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. 9 Jesus said unto him, have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and why do you say, Show us the Father? 10 Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwells in me, he doeth the works.

### *A. The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit*

The scriptures tell us, that there is only one God and that is God; and in the Trinity, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are that one God. The Scriptures further teach that the terms Father, Son and Holy Spirit designate different persons. God is the Father, the first person of the Trinity. Jesus Christ in His deity and also humanity is the second person of the Trinity. The Holy Spirit, who is one eternal spirit, is the third person. Together they exist eternally as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The Doctrine of the Trinity's basic belief is that God exists in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The word 'trinity' is made up of two words, 'tri' and 'unity'. Tri indicates three and unity indicates united together. So trinity is the unity of the three.

Interestingly, this word cannot be found anywhere in the Bible but it's clearly taught in both the Old and New Testaments. The Doctrine of the Trinity is simply a result of natural reasoning of a truth that's revealed in the Bible. This truth comes out of the incarnation of God the Son and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Thus Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit is proof itself. The New Testament provides scattered direct and indirect references to the deity of Christ and the divine personality of the Holy Spirit. It recognises the Father as God, the Son as God and the Holy Spirit as God; and it presents them as three distinct persons.

The doctrine says that within one being of God, three persons exist. Many find this difficult to grasp. John Calvin, a well known theologian, speaking for the Trinity, expresses it this way: "Scripture sets forth a distinctive of the Father from the Word and the Word from the Spirit." Word (of God) here, is a common name for Jesus. The historical Christian church, supporting the Doctrine of the Trinity, maintains that the terms Father, Son and Holy Spirit refer to actual persons, not simply modes of existence. A popular short definition goes like this, 'there is within the one being that is God, three co-equal and co-eternal persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit'. This has been the position of the historical church for over 1900 years. Several recognised church creed's support this.



The Apostles Creed was written to help clarify the Doctrine of the Trinity and to refute various heresies that had crept into the church. Read through it below.

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
the Creator of heaven and earth,  
and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord:  
Who was conceived of the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried.  
He descended into hell.  
The third day He arose again from the dead.  
He ascended into heaven  
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty,  
whence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and life everlasting.

Notice the relationship between God, repeated to be the 'Father', and Jesus Christ, repeated to be His only Son and then, 'our Lord'. In the last paragraph, the first line distinguishes the person of the Holy Spirit as being separate.

The Nicene Creed was written for similar purposes. It says:

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made, being of one substance

with the Father, by whom all things were made.

Who, for us men for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried; and the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again, with glory, to judge the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life; who proceeds from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; who spoke by the prophets.

And I believe one holy catholic and apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The Westminster Shorter Catechism says: 'There are three persons in the Godhead; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.

Let's look at a few Bible verses that refer to the different persons of the Trinity. Genesis, the first book of the Bible, Genesis 1:1 says, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." It further says, "Let's make man in our image, of our likeness". Later it continues, "In the image of God". In Genesis 3:22 it makes reference to 'us'. Isaiah 48:16 refers to God and his Spirit.

Mathew 3:16-17 provides us with well-known examples of the existence of three persons in the baptism of Jesus. In this incident, God speaks aloud from heaven saying how pleased He is with Jesus and then the Spirit of God descends in the form of a dove onto Jesus.

Another incident when Jesus was transfigured in Matthew 17:1-9, reveals the different person of God and the Son. Both the deity and person of the Son are presented.

However, the student must be aware that there are a few groups who oppose the Doctrine of the Trinity in one way or another.

### *B. Importance to the Believer*

The Doctrine of the Trinity provides a clearer understanding of who we worship and believe in. Understanding Jesus as God, as man and as saviour helps us understand who they worship. The three elements are all bound together, revealing by way of revelation to the Christian that God came amongst mankind in order to reunite the relationship between God and man which had been destroyed through sin. The student sees in Christ's deity the fact that He wasn't just a person but part of the Godhead. God redeemed us from sin. The cost was Him experiencing death on the cross that we might be saved from our sins. Without understanding sin, the Person of Jesus Christ and the Trinity, we would not be able to approach the Doctrine of Salvation because first we must understand why humanity needs saving.

## *Chapter Five – Salvation (Soteriology)*

What is salvation? How does it fit in with the overall purpose of God? Why do we need to be saved?

Objectives:

- To examine some of the main beliefs about Salvation.
- To see why there is salvation for the unsaved.
- Being born again, you become a new creation.
- To illustrate several Biblical references to the key points.
- To use meaningful theological terms associated with Salvation.

Under the Doctrine of Salvation, this presentation will argue the Atonement for Sins, Personal salvation and Regeneration by the Holy Spirit, and Justification by Faith.

Soteriology is a belief commonly held by all Christians. Soteriology, the Doctrine of Salvation, is a major theme throughout the Old and New Testaments. It is for all of mankind and centres on the person, Jesus Christ. Salvation in the Old Testament is expressed in terms of deliverance, as from danger, distress or death. God instituted the need for sacrifice for the atonement for sin. The people of Israel would go to the temple to sacrifice animals for forgiveness of their sins. In the New Testament, God continues the act of Salvation which delivers the believer from the Wrath of God: the hold that sin has over us. Jesus came to save us from our sins. That God would reach out to sinful man by sending His Son Jesus, is the greatest manifestation of His love for us. It deals with God's favour, which is not based on any merit of humankind. This also speaks of God's holiness. God provided salvation through the person and work of His Son because He is a holy God. Salvation may be looked up in one aspect that views the believer as being delivered from sin and spiritual death. Another aspect has to do with the present deliverance over the power of sin and finally it could refer to the future deliverance of all believers through a glorified resurrected body. As the student approaches the study of Salvation, one point to remember is that; a person must approach God on God's terms. These terms will become clearer



as the study progresses. However, the Bible again clearly points out that all who trust Christ will be saved. Further to this, the basis for our salvation is Jesus' death on the cross and the final sacrifice He made for our sins. To begin to understand these aforementioned terms, let's first look at the atonement and how it relates to Salvation. The atonement shows the need for Christ to be a sacrifice and how Jesus dealt with our sins on the Cross. Regeneration is what happens inside us when we accept what Christ did on the Cross for us. And finally, our faith in Christ allows us to stand before God justified to be counted among His family

### *A. The Atonement*

God told the people of Israel to provide a blood sacrifice for making atonement for their sins. In biblical times the sacrificial system of atonement was practised for centuries by Israel. Here, the meaning of atonement is something done in place of something else, as in the Old Testament shedding the blood of animals in place of an individual's sins. It provided people release from punishment through the covering of sin by blood. Without the shedding of blood there was no forgiveness of sins. This atonement would never have been necessary if Adam and Eve had not sinned. That is the reason why Jesus had to die on the cross for all humanity; to be a final sacrifice through which humanity's sin could be forgiven.

In the New Testament, God offers everyone eternal forgiveness in Christ. In studying the person of Jesus Christ, it was shown that Jesus was both man and divine. It was in His humanity that He was able to experience the suffering that took place on the Cross. This sacrifice, this suffering provided cleansing from the defilement of sins for the world. Christ became the final sacrifice for all people. In Matthew 16:24 Jesus himself said, 'If you want to be my followers, you must deny yourself and take up the Cross daily and follow me.' (The reference to the Cross refers to a horrible death by which the Romans inflicted punishment. They would take a person and nail that person's hands and feet to two crossed pieces of wood. They would then stand the Cross upright and let the victim hang there until they slowly died.)

The necessity of atonement is clear. In 1 Corinthians 3:11, it says that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. Further, it states that there is no salvation in any other; for there is no other name under heaven, given among people, whereby people can be saved. The suffering of Christ was an awful event in the history of the world, but this atoning sacrifice by Jesus represented the sins of everyone for all time. Now, it is the faith in the blood that Christ shed on the Cross that allows us to enter into Salvation.

This act is the central focus whereby the world can come back to God. But, alas, Christ crucified became a stumbling block to the Jews, and for many it was foolishness. To many in the world, it is still a stumbling block; even today, wicked people still feel the same opposition to this fundamental doctrine.

To conclude, Jesus' death is not the end. It was due to Christ's divinity that He rose from the grave and conquered death, and lives today.

*Bible Verses* that talk about the atonement of Christ.

**HEBREWS 9: 22** - And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.

**EPHESIANS 2:9** - Not of works, lest any man should boast.

**ROMANS 1:18; 3:9; 5:21** - For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; 9 What then? are we better *than they*? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; 21



"Even though I walk  
through the darkest valley,  
I will not fear no evil, for you  
are with me.."

Psalm 23:4

That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

**1 THESSALONIANS 5:9** - For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.

**ROMANS 3:5** - But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? *Is* God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man)

**LEVITICUS 17:11** - For the life of the flesh *is* in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls: for it *is* the blood *that* makes atonement for the soul.

**HEBREWS 9:22** - And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.

**EPHESIANS 1:17; 2:13** - That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: 13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

**COLOSSIANS 1:20** - And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, *I say*, whether *they be* things in earth, or things in heaven.

**EPHESIANS 5:2** - And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour.

**1 JOHN 2:7-11** - Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning. 8 Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shines. 9 He that says that he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness even until now. 10 He that loves his brother abides in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. 11 But he

that hates his brother is in darkness, and walks in darkness, and knows not where he goes, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.

**LUKE 9:23** - And he said to *them* all, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.

**JOSHUA 8:1; 10:18** - And the LORD said unto Joshua, Fear not, neither be thou dismayed: take all the people of war with thee, and arise, go up to Ai: see, I have given into thy hand the king of Ai, and his people, and his city, and his land: 18 And Joshua said, Roll great stones upon the mouth of the cave, and set men by it for to keep them:

**1 CORINTHIANS 3:11** - For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

**ACTS 4:12** - Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

**LUKE 24:25-26** - Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: 26 ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?

**ROMANS 3:25-26** - Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; 26 To declare, *I say*, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

**1 JOHN 2:1-6** - My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: 2 and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world. 3 And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. 4 He that says, I know him, and keeps not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 5 But whoso keeps his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in

him. 6 He that says he abides in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.

## *B. Regeneration*

Not only is this the most exciting aspect of the Doctrine of Salvation but perhaps the most fascinating section of the entire study. For both the Christian and non-Christian it represents the peak of the process of reconciling mankind with God. We could even say that it's the climax of the story that's presented in the entirety of the Bible, from Genesis to Revelations.



First and foremost the process involves accepting Jesus as saviour; to be saved from sin. It's an action that a person performs, to ask Jesus to forgive them because of their sins and to ask the Holy Spirit to come in and help that person live the type of life that is pleasing to God. At this point, God does something to the person; they become new, and from that point on, when God looks at that person, He sees the person through Jesus Christ. Remember, Jesus was the final sacrifice for all mankind for the forgiveness of sins. God sees the person restored to the position of Adam and Eve before they sinned in the garden.

This process of becoming new has a theological term associated with it, known as 'regeneration'. It is the re-creating of the fallen human nature. Jesus, Himself, says, 'you must be born again'. In John 3:3, Jesus goes on to say, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you are born again, you cannot see the Kingdom of God." It's a rebirth from death (living in sin) to life (a person's soul will never die). The change that comes about represents the very root of a person's being. It's radical in that the changes can only be done by the Holy Spirit. It affects the whole person, their emotions, their will and their intellect. This change cannot just be taught, explained or understood until a person

experiences it for themselves. This only happens when a person comes to Jesus Christ; asking forgiveness and committing himself or herself to Jesus. Non-Christian populou cannot understand this. The scriptures explain this by saying, "With men and women, this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." (Mat 19:26, Mark 10:27).

When a person accepts Jesus Christ as their personal saviour, they are instantaneously provided with every spiritual blessing in Christ and are declared to be complete in Christ! What a profound action! When a person receives Jesus Christ by faith there are a number of abilities they're given: power to become sons of God, everlasting life, the ability to not walk in darkness, to live even if they die, a priest of the Kingdom of God, the power to discern, reborn into the Spirit of God, and made complete again in Jesus Christ

Here, the student needs to understand two different aspects associated with the regeneration process. These two factors have been taken by the church and developed into doctrines. One has to do with the Sovereignty of God and another with the Free Will of the Individual. The Sovereignty of God means that God alone is the author of regeneration, and He saves whom He pleases. Free will on the other hand talks of how God and Man are co-authors in regeneration. One is through the Action of God; the other includes the action of the person. One is un-conditional while the other is conditional; in that the person makes a decision to accept Jesus as their saviour. The student needs to understand that these differences are the creation of theologian's ideas. Both views seem to be expressed in Scripture. It's this author's belief that God in His wisdom, being all knowing and all powerful, has presented both views. Remember, "With men and women, this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

The miracle of regeneration is shown through these Bible verses. Read through these. If you cannot understand the Bible version used, use a modern English version instead.

*Bible Verses* that talk about regeneration.

**Colossians 2:10** - And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power.

**John 1:12** - But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name.

**John 3:36** - He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abides on him.

**John 8:12** - Then Jesus spoke again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

**John 11:25-26** - Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he was dead, yet shall he live: 26 and whosoever lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?

**1 Peter 2:9** - But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.

**1 Peter 1:3** - Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

**John 3:6** - That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

**John 3:5-8** - Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and *of* the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again. 8 The wind blows wherever it wants, and thou hears the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and where it goes: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

**Ephesians 2:5** - Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)

**2 Corinthians 5:17** - Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new.

**Matthew 19:26** - But Jesus beheld *them*, and said unto them, with men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.

### *C. Justification by Faith*

Bible Verses that show that the Christian is justified by faith.

**ROMANS 5:21** - That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

**ROMANS 4:5-8** - But to him that doesn't, but believes on him that justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. 6 Even as David also described the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputed righteousness without works, 7 *Saying*, Blessed *are* they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. 8 Blessed *is* the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.

**II CORINTHIANS 5:17** - Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new.

**TITUS 3:5** - Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.

**GALATIANS 3:5** - He therefore that ministers to you the Spirit, and works miracles among you, *doeth he it* by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?



**1 JOHN 3:9** - Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remains in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

**1 JOHN 1:10** - IF we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

**GALATIANS 5:4-6** - Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. 5 For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. 6 For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision avails any thing, nor un-circumcision; but faith which works by love.

**GALATIANS 3:3** - Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?

**PSALMS 37:34-40** - Wait on the LORD, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land: when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see *it*. 35 I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree. 36 Yet he passed away, and, lo, he *was* not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found. 37 Mark the perfect *man*, and behold the upright: for the end of *that* man *is* peace. 38 But the transgressors shall be destroyed together: the end of the wicked shall be cut off. 39 But the salvation of the righteous *is* of the LORD: *he is* their strength in the time of trouble. 40 And the LORD shall help them, and deliver them: he shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, because they trust in him.

**GALATIANS 5:1, 13** - Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. 13 For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only *use* not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serves one another.

**PROVERBS 3:5-6** - Trust in the LORD with all your heart; and lean not unto your own understanding. 6 In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

Justification by Faith means to acquit, to be declared righteous. The penalty of death has been paid. We are free of any judgement of sin. All those who trust in Jesus Christ are right before God. Romans 8 says there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. The Spirit of God has set them free from the law of sin and death. So justification is declaring that a person is righteous in God's sight. It's based on what God has done for those who have repented of their sins. We become reconciled to God.

Faith and trusting in Christ and his righteousness is the main point of justification. God continues to forgive the sins of those who are justified. Our faith justifies us to stand before God, righteous. John says that no one who is born of God practises sin because God's spirit lives in that person. They cannot sin because they are born of God. John doesn't mean that Christians do not sin, for Christians do sin. However, Christians do not practise sin, because they are born again.

Martin Luther, a well-known German reformer and theologian taught: justification by grace through faith. He pointed out that faith believes that Christ came to save us personally. It's trusting in Christ and acting on God's promises, relying on Him. Christ takes our sin and we take His salvation.

To Conclude: the life of faith is both exciting and fulfilling. The book of Psalms says to delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart. Trust in Him and he will watch over you. In the book of Proverbs, it says to trust in the Lord whole-heartedly, not on your own understanding; acknowledge God in all things and He will guide your steps. Amen.

#### *D. Importance to the Believer*

That God would reach out to sinful man by sending His Son Jesus is the greatest manifestation of His love for us. It deals with the non-meritorious favour of God. This also speaks of God's holiness. God provided salvation through the person and work of His Son because He is a holy God. Salvation may be looked up in one aspect that views the believer as being delivered from sin and spiritual death. Another aspect has to do with the present

deliverance over the power of sin and finally it could refer to the future deliverance of all believers through a glorified resurrected body. The basis for our salvation is Jesus' death on the cross and the final sacrifice he made for our sins. The suffering of Christ was an awful event in the history of the world. But this atoning sacrifice by Jesus represented the sins of everyone for all time for the whole world. Now, it is the faith in the His sacrifice on the Cross that allows us to enter into Salvation.

Christians are now justified. Justification by this faith means to acquit, to be declared righteous. Faith, trusting in Christ and his righteousness is the main point of justification. The penalty of death has been paid. We are free of any judgement of sin. All those who trust in Jesus Christ are right before God. The Spirit of God has set the Christian free from the law of sin and death. So justification is declaring that a person is righteous in God's sight. It's based on what God has done for those who have repented of their sins. We become reconciled to God. God continues to forgive the sins of those who are justified. Our faith justifies us to stand before God, righteous.

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## *Chapter Six – The Nature and Work of the Holy Spirit (Pneumatology)*

What is the Holy Spirit? Why is there so much emphasis on the Holy Spirit?  
What part does the Holy Spirit play between God, Humanity and Jesus?

### Objectives

- To examine several main beliefs associated with the Holy Spirit.
- To understand the Holy Spirit as a person.
- To understand the purpose of the Holy Spirit
- To understand the relationship of the Holy Spirit and the believer.
- To illustrate several Biblical references and key points.
- To use meaningful theological terms associated with the Holy Spirit.

Under the Holy Spirit, this presentation will argue the Person of the Holy Spirit and the Work of the Holy Spirit in the World, in the Scriptures and in Salvation.

The Nature and Work of the Holy Spirit is a commonly held belief by all Christians. Terms like 'The Spirit', 'The Spirit of God', 'The Holy Spirit', 'My Spirit', and 'His Spirit' occur throughout the Scriptures from the beginning to the very end. In the King James Version, the Holy Spirit is referred to as the Holy Ghost. In the New Testament, the Holy Spirit is mentioned over 280 times. The Holy Spirit is known for his person and work, along with the importance of spiritual gifts in Christians' lives. The three elements of the Nature and Work of the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures, in the World, and in Salvation, provide us with a summary of an active person of the Godhead. Throughout history the Spirit of God has been active by guiding the Prophets and Apostles to the truth of God. The Holy Spirit continues to be active in the world today. When Jesus ascended into heaven, He left us the Holy Spirit. At salvation we are 'born again' by the work of the Holy Spirit. He reveals the truth of the miracle of salvation for those who ask. The Holy Spirit lives in us from then on guiding and teaching us.

## *A. In the Scriptures*

*Bible Verses* that show the work of the Holy Spirit in Scriptures.

**EPHESIANS 3:5** - This in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.

**ACTS 28:25** - And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, well spoke the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers.

**EPHESIANS 1:17** - May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him.

**JOHN 16:13** - Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will show you things to come.

**1 CORINTHIANS 2:12** - Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

The Spirit spoke through the people of God. Throughout the history of the world of the Old and New Testaments, he revealed great truths to the Prophets and Apostles. He guides and reveals. He reveals things to us that we could not otherwise know. The world only understand knowledge on one level whereas Christians, through the Holy Spirit understands things on a far different level. Without the Spirit of God, these truths cannot be understood by the world. For example, Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit equips and anoints people to do his work. It was through the Holy Spirit that Jesus preformed miracles.

## *B. In Salvation*

*Bible Verses* that show the work of the Holy Spirit in salvation.

**GALATIANS 5:16-18** - *This* I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. 17 For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. 18 But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

**TITUS 3:5** - Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.

**JOHN 6:63** - It is the spirit that quickens; the flesh profits nothing: the words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life.

**JOHN 3:3-8** - Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. 4 Nicodemus said to him, how can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? 5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again. 8 The wind blows where it chooses and thou hear the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goes: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

**1 CORINTHIANS 3:16** - Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you?

**JOHN 14:17** - *Even* the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it sees him not, neither knows him: but ye know him; for he dwells with you, and shall be in you. 18 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. 19 Yet a little while, and the world will no longer; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. 20 At that day ye shall know that I *am* in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you. 21 He that hath my commandments, and keeps them, he it is that loves me: and he that loves me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. 22 Judas said unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? 23 Jesus answered and said unto him, if a man loves me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. 24 He that loves me and not keeps my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me. 25 These things have I spoken unto you, being *yet* present with you. 26 But the Comforter, *which is* the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. 27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world gives, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. 28 Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come *again* unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I. 29 and now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe. 30 Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me. 31 But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence.



**ROMANS 8:9** - But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man has not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

**1 CORINTHIANS 12:13** - For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether *we be* Jews or Gentiles, whether *we be* bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

The Holy Spirit gives new life. At salvation we are 'born again'; we become a new person. The Holy Spirit regenerates us, indwells in us and baptizes us. We are baptized into the body of Christ. In this baptism, there is a sense of security in being part of God's family. In the Scriptures, this baptism first took place at Pentecost; the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit. In the baptism of the Holy Spirit, there is an enabling to keep us from sin.

### *C. In the World*

*Bible Verses* that show the work of the Holy Spirit in the world.

**JOHN 16:8** - And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.

**ACTS 5:32** - And we are his witnesses of these things; and *so is* also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.

**PSALMS 33:6** - By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.

**JOB 26:13** - By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent.

**JOB 33:4** - The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.



**GENESIS 1:2** - And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

**ACTS 13:2** - As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

**JOHN 15:26** - But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, *even* the Spirit of truth, which proceeds from the Father, he shall testify of me.

**JOHN 16:7-15** - Nevertheless I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. 8 And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: 9 Of sin, because they believe not on me; 10 Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; 11 Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged. 12 I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. 13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will show you things to come. 14 He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show *it* unto you. 15 All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show *it* unto you.

**ACTS 13:2** - As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

**ACTS 21:11** - And when he was come unto us, he took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus said the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owns this girdle, and shall deliver *him* into the hands of the Gentiles.

**1 TIMOTHY 4:1** - Now the Spirit speaks expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.

**ACTS 28:25** - And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, well spoke the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers.

**HEBREWS 10:15** - *Whereof* the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before.

**EPHESIANS 2:22** - In whom ye also are built together a habitation of God through the Spirit.

**1 CORINTHIANS 6:19** - What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

**ROMANS 8:9-10** - But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man doesn't have the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ *be* in you, the body *is* dead because of sin; but the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness.

The Holy Spirit was in the beginning with God, and is referred to as the Breath of God. Part of the work of the Holy Spirit is creation and recreation or renewing. The Holy Spirit has used leaders in power to convict them of their evil deeds throughout history. The Holy Spirit convicts us also of sins in our lives and our need of salvation. In reference to the world, part of the work concerns holding back the evil of the world.

Before Jesus' death, we were promised a Helper, a person who would provide encouragement and strength. The work of the Spirit is to glorify Jesus Christ by showing His disciples who He is and what He means to them. The divinity of the Spirit is acknowledged in verses such as Acts 5:3-4: "to lie to the Spirit is to lie to God". In Scripture we learn that the Holy Spirit is a person, through the use of the pronoun 'He'. Being a person indicates intelligence, will and individuality.

John says that when the Holy Spirit comes, he will guide us into all truth. This is one of the purposes of the Holy Spirit; to reveal truth to us. The Spirit is the third Person of the Trinity, equal to the Father and the Son. He is equal in the Doctrine of the Trinity: the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is of the Father; he is sent by the Father. When we accept Jesus Christ as personal saviour, the Holy Spirit comes and dwells in us to guide and teach us.

#### *D. Importance to the Believer*

Throughout history the Spirit of God has been active by guiding the Prophets and Apostles to the truth of God. The Holy Spirit continues to be active in the world today. When Jesus ascended into heaven, He left us the Holy Spirit. At salvation we are 'born again' by the work of the Holy Spirit. He reveals the truth of the Miracle of Salvation for those who ask. The Holy Spirit lives in us from then on guiding and teaching us. He reveals things to us that we could not otherwise know. The world only understands knowledge on one level whereas Christians through the Holy Spirit understands things on a far different level. Without the Spirit of God, these truths can not be understood by the world. The Holy Spirit gives new life. At salvation we are 'born again'; we become a new person. The Holy Spirit regenerates us and indwells in us and baptizes us. We are baptized into the body of Christ. In this baptism, there is a sense of security in being part of God's family. In the Scriptures, this baptism first took place at Pentecost; they were filled with the Holy Spirit. In the baptism of the Holy Spirit, there is an enabling to keep us from sin.

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## *Chapter Seven – The Church (Ecclesiology)*

What is the Church? When was the beginning of the Church? What about the Christian and the church?

### Objectives

- To understand what the church is.
- To examine the history associated with the church.
- To see the relationship of the Christian and the church.
- To illustrate several Biblical references and key points.
- To use meaningful theological terms associated with the study of the church.

Under the Church, this presentation will argue the beginning of the Church at Pentecost and the Outpouring of the Spirit of God, and Christian Hope.

The Church is a commonly held belief with all Christians. Ecclesiology or the study of the Christian church is a subject that many theologians have



agonised over for decades. The reason being that it's an example of the way the church should be. There are three elements shown: The beginning of the church, What is the church and the believer, the Church and the world Christians live in. Hopefully this will give the student a bird's eye view of the church's beginning and how God poured out His Spirit on the people. An explanation as to what the church is helps us to see the purpose of the church. That purpose hasn't changed in the last two thousand years. This explanation also shows what the church isn't. It isn't a building with bricks, wood, nails and roof. Finally, we

conclude by showing the purpose of Christians today, both individually and collectively. To sum up Christians collectively are the Church.

## *A. The Beginning of the Church*

Pentecost –Acts 1:4-5 tells how people crowded about in a room. This was shortly after having seen Jesus rise from the dead and ascend into heaven. There was a sudden motion. The wind blew through the room and strange things started to happen: people were speaking other people’s languages. Everyone became aware that something special had happened. Peter, one of Jesus’ disciples, proclaimed that it was the result of the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Peter then preached Christ, His death, His resurrection from the dead and His ascension into heaven. He preached the necessity of receiving Christ by faith as Saviour and being baptised in Jesus’ name. Three thousand believed in Christ that day. This was the beginning of the church. These people left and preached the same message so more people were saved and the church grew.

In becoming Christians, came persecution. Stephen, preaching Christ, was stoned to death. Because of it, Christians became scattered throughout the region, but preached Jesus where ever they went. Paul, a Jewish persecutor of the church, was saved on his way to Damascus and became the greatest evangelist of the Apostolic Age. He preached to the Jews and to the non-Jews. He preached throughout Asia Minor and also in Rome and the church continued to increase. Paul was beaten, shipwrecked, imprisoned, hunted and stoned throughout his travels. He ended up in prison in Rome and the church still continued to grow. During this time, letters were written to encourage the church. Books were written by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John (later called the Gospels) telling the life of Christ and what He did. The book of Revelation gives us foreknowledge of the future of the church.

*Bible Verses* that talk about the beginning of the church in Jerusalem.

**ACTS 1:4-5** - And, being assembled together with *them*, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father,

which, *saith he*, ye have heard of me. 5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

**ACTS 2:42-47** - And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. 43 And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. 44 And all that believed were together, and had all things common; 45 and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all *men*, as every man had need. 46 And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, 47 Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.



**ACTS 4:4** - Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand.

**JOHN 15:18-19** - If the world hates you, ye know that it hated me before *it hated* you. 19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

**ACTS 7:54-60** - When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with *their* teeth. 55 But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, 56 and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. 57 Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, 58 and cast *him* out of the city, and stoned *him*: and the witnesses laid

down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul. 59 And they stoned Stephen, calling upon *God*, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. 60 And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

**ACTS 9:20-21, 29-31** - And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God. 21 But all that heard *him* were amazed. - 29 And he spoke boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians: but they went about to slay him. 30 *Which* when the brethren knew, they brought him down to Caesarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus. 31 Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied.

**GALATIANS 1:16-21** - To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: 17 Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. 18 Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. 19 But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother. 20 Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not. 21 Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia.

**ACTS 15:28-29** - For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; 29 That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.

**ACTS 20:31** - Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.

**1 PETER 1:1** - Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.

**1 PETER 5:13** -The *church in Babylon*, elected together with *you*, salutes you; and so *doth* Marcus my son.

**ACTS 1:8** - But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

## *B. What is the Church?*

*Bible Verses* that help define the church: Read through these verses for an understanding of what the church is.

**REVELATION 19:6-10** - And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thundering, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigns. 7 Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. 8 And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. 9 And he said unto me, Write, Blessed *are* they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he said unto me, these are the true sayings of God. 10 And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See *thou do it* not: I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

**1 PETER 2:9-10** - But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: 10 Which in time past *were* not a people, but *are* now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.





**1 CORINTHIANS 3:16-17** - Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you? 17 If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which *temple* ye are.

**1 CORINTHIANS 1:1** - Paul, called *to be* an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes *our* brother.

**1 THESSALONIANS 1:1** - Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians *which is* in God the Father and *in* the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

**1 CORINTHIANS 13:13** - And now abide in faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these *is* charity.

**MARK 12:29-31** - And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments *is*, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: 30 And thou shall love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this *is* the first commandment. 31 And the second *is* like, *namely* this, Thou shall love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.

**JOHN 13:35** - By this shall all *men* know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love, one for another.

**MATTHEW 28:18-19** - And Jesus came and spoke unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

Jesus stated in Matthew 16:18, "I will build my church." Jesus is the founder of the Church. The Christian life is a union with Jesus Christ and with other believers. The word, 'Church' comes from the Greek word 'Kyriakos', meaning belonging to the Lord. The Church was referred to in the New Testament as the people of God and the Temple of God. It was also

considered to be the Bride of Christ. And the Church in the New Testament usually refers to the local congregation but of course today, it also has a broader meaning; being part of a Christian family now located throughout the world.

### *C. The Believer, The Church and the World which Christians Live*

Faith provides an unparalleled hope and purpose in the Christian's life. It's living a life that's can't be separated from Jesus Christ; a Spirit led life shared with other people of God. It's a communal life. We are refreshed and encouraged through fellowship with other Christians and the Word of God. The Christian has a peace, deep within, that the world can not understand or ever have neither understand. The Christian lifestyle makes us stand out from those around us. It's the way we are. Remember, in coming to know Jesus as our Saviour, we have been renewed and changed. This was the work of the Holy Spirit. What we have received in Christ and especially the love of Christ in us overflows to everyone around us. Our distaste for sin and selfishness makes us stand 'out of place' to the unsaved around us. In some ways the Christian lives in a sub culture which is opposite and adverse to the worldly culture that exists around us. The non Christian would know little of Christianity and because we don't participate in the worldly ways of sinful practices; the Christian often experiences humiliation, embarrassment or un-comfort. Still, because of who we are, God has given us a love for those around us, the world, for those who haven't experienced what we have. We should never be surprised by the dictates, actions and decisions made by people, public and governmental institutions, which we see as damaging, immoral actions that contribute further to the degradation of society and against what Christians believe to be good and righteous. The Christian and the church are in this world for the sake of those very people and institutions that often scoff and laugh at the Christian values.

*Bible Verses* that talk about the believer, the church and the world we live in.

**MATTHEW 5:14** – You are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

**ROMANS 8:24-25** - For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a person sees, what does he yet hope for? 25 But if we hope for that we see not, *then* we patiently wait for *it*.

**JEREMIAH 29:11**- For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.

**REVELATION 22:20** - He which testifies of these things says, surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

**JOHN 17:14-16** - I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 15 I pray not that thou should take them out of the world, but that thou should keep them from the evil. 16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

**ROMANS 12:2** - And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

### *D. Importance to the Believer*

The reason being, it's an example of the way the church should be. What the church is helps us to see the purpose of the church. That purpose hasn't changed in the last two thousand years. Christians collectively is the Church. In becoming Christians for the early church, came persecution. Stephen, preaching Christ, was stoned to death. Because of it, Christians became scattered throughout the region, but preached Jesus where ever they went. Paul, a Jewish persecutor to the church, was saved on his way to Damascus and became the greatest evangelist of the Apostolic Age. Faith provides an unparalleled hope and purpose in the Christian's life. It gives us a mission. It makes us want to share what we have with other who don't have it. We see

that the church is living. Christians living a life that's can't be separated from Jesus Christ; a Spirit led life shared with other people of God. It is both sanctifying and glorifying. It's a communal life. We are refreshed and encouraged through fellowship with other Christians and the Word of God. The Christian has a peace, deep within, that the world can not understand or ever have neither understand. The Christian lifestyle makes us stand out from those around us. It's the way we are. Remember, in coming to know Jesus as our Saviour, we have been renewed and changed.

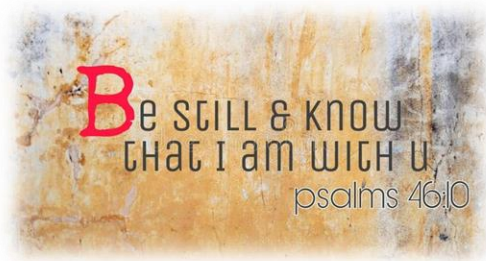
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## Chapter 8: The Nature of God

*Bible Verses* that provide information about the Nature of God:

**EXODUS 15:26** - And said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the

LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I *am* the LORD that heals you.



shepherd; I shall not want.

**PSALMS 23:1** - The LORD *is* my

**JEREMIAH 23:6** - In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this *is* his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

**EXODUS 17:14-15** - And the LORD said unto Moses, Write this *for* a memorial in a book, and rehearse *it* in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. <sup>15</sup>And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovah Nissi.

**JUDGES 6:24** - Then Gideon built an altar there unto the LORD, and called it Jehovah shalom

**GENESIS 22:14** - And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah Jireh: as it is said *to* this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen.

**JOHN 4:24** - God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth.

**DEUTERONOMY 6:4** - Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God *is* one LORD

**JOHN 17:1-3** – Jesus spoke these words, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You: <sup>2</sup>As You have given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as you have given him. <sup>3</sup>And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent

**II CORINTHIANS 13:14** - The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, *be with you all.* Amen.

**REVELATION 19:6** - And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thundering, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omni potently reigns.

The Nature of God can be learned from the various references of who God is and what He can do. For example, Jehovah is a name frequently used in relation to the covenant names of God. Elohim is used when dealing with the creative power of God and is in the plural form of God. El-Elyon refers to the most high God; El-shaddai, the all-sufficient God; and El-Olam, the everlasting God. Adonai implies the right of God to rule and demand submission to His will. There is Jehovah-Rapha, the God who heals. Jehovah-Nissi, Jehovah-Shalom, Jehovah-Ra'ah, Jehovah –Tsidkenu and Jehovah-Jireth referring to the Lord our Banner, the Lord our Peace, the Lord our Shepherd, the Lord our Righteousness, the Lord our Provider and finally the Lord Who is There. These are also names that represent different aspects of God. They reflect the greatness of His being and nature.

As shown from the scripture verses; God is Spirit. God is not limited by space or time. God is everywhere continually. God is outside of time. It's His creatures (all of creation) that live within the constraints of time not God Himself. This is why God is near to all who call upon Him, in truth (Psalms 145:18).

## *A. Dualistic Nature*

There have been a lot said and written on God's nature and Christ as being the agent of God, and also the purpose of God. There is an evangelical statement of faith developed by the National Association of Evangelicals that list several points within it that relate to this. The date in which it was written was 1942. It talks about God's word being inspired, infallible and authoritative. Inspiration has to do with being from God and/or God breathed. One of the major doctrines of evangelical Christian is the belief in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit all existent in one God. Again, to be a Christian one has to accept Jesus Christ as God and that he had a sinless life. He performed miracles and was born of a virgin and the Bible talks about His blood being an atonement for our sins. Jesus rose from the dead and now sits on the right hand of the Father and that He will return in power and glory. Jesus came to take away the sins of the world. So, sinful people need to be saved and renewed by the Holy Spirit. The father sent the Holy Spirit to us which has a ministry enabling us to live a Godly life. The Bible also tells us that the lost and the saved will be resurrected to live an eternity in heaven or in hell. There is a spiritual unity that believers have in Jesus Christ. This is all contained this Statement of Faith which is generally levelled at Evangelical Conservatives.

The Statement of Faith as written by the National Association of Evangelicals says, 'We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative word of God.' Well, Ockenga describes the phrase 'Finger of God' which is another way of talking about the power of God. Jesus used this phrase when people accused Him of doing miracles through the power of Beelzebub. In answering them, he said, 'But if I with the Finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.' In speaking about inspiration, the inspiration of the Bible comes from God. God spoke through the prophets in various ways and now through Jesus. God spoke to people in ancient times, like Moses, who wrote down God's words which are inspired by God. This is how God's word is inspired. Thus God as revealed Himself through the spoken word. God has also revealed himself physically and in dreams. He speaks to us through the Holy Spirit and through the Minister and others. It is a communication of supernatural knowledge from God. Joseph dreamed

about the coming famines in Egypt. Nebuchadnezzar dreamed of the times of the Gentiles. But inspiration is not revelation; it's the communication of truth through God's appointed spokespeople. Luke was inspired as he wrote the Book of Luke. He may or may not have had revelation but what he wrote became inspired. God used writers and their different vocabularies, gifts, methods of thought and logical processes. Thus, over the years the Bible was brought into being as a guide for human life and through it God can do an amazing work in people's lives. Other than being inspired, it is also accurate and infallible as Archaeology has provided further evidence of this through its historical accuracy.

## *B. Christian Creeds*

The Christian must believe in the trinity of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit for this is what makes a person a Christian. The



*For unto us  
a child is born*

...AND HIS NAME SHALL BE CALLED

Wonderful, Counsellor,  
**The Mighty God,**  
*The Everlasting Father,*  
*The Prince of Peace.*

Apostles' Creed says, 'I believe in God the Father almighty ... And in Jesus Christ his only son our Lord ... And in the Holy Spirit.' The Nicea Creed says, 'I believe in one God, the Father Almighty ... And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten son of God ... Light of light, very God of very God, begotten not made... And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father, who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets.' I used this creed as a statement of my own theology in what I believe on my web-site. The Chalcedon Creed in 451 AD reaffirmed the Trinity and the dual nature of



Jesus Christ as both God in His fullness and man in his fullness. There is a super rational nature to the Trinity as no one could have invented the idea. The Trinity is a cornerstone of the Christian and must be accepted by faith. We have security in Him and salvation from the atoning work of Christ and sanctification from the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Through Christ we live a dualistic nature, one is a world of matter while the other is the world of the spirit. Attributes of God is infinity, eternity and permanence. God is not limited in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth. God is omnipresent because he is unlimited and infinite. God is present everywhere at every moment. This is seen in the Bible and it must be truth for it to be the God of the universe. God is also omniscience because God knows all. God is omnipotence in that He can do all things which show His infinite power. No one made God as He has always been, He is eternal. This of course is a mystery in itself, God is eternal. When God made us, He obviously put some of 'God-ness' in us by giving us the ability to chose in making decisions. We, being of God are in no way divine. Of course we aren't. We don't know how Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit and the Father are one, but it is true nevertheless.

The deity of Jesus identified Jesus' nature in being the same as God. We have scripture passages like, 'I am in the father and the father in me.' And also, 'Whoever has seen me has seen the Father and I and my Father are one.' This is historic and orthodox Christianity. Be aware that there are new evolutionary concepts being developed by people who promote evolution. One such heresy is that Jesus is in God because all is God and God is all. This carries a smack of animatism in it. Other phrases are being thrown about that are confusing real believers on the deity of Christ. The deity of Christ was shown by the supernatural virgin birth. Through Jesus God assumed flesh, entered this world, experienced time, space and material things. God alone became man in the only incarnation event in history; this is both awesome and staggering. Any other example is simply satanic counterfeiting attempts that try to discredit Christ. In being born on earth, Jesus assumed two natures, one of humanity and one of deity. Because of being a human, He experienced suffering as we know it and being divine He was perfect and sinless. Jesus himself said, 'For I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will

of him that sent me.' In His humanity, He was a perfect example for us to follow.

Any other possible reference of any God-like power from any other religious book is false simply by the nature of the book itself. You must understand that Jesus' deity is shown by His miracles. The apostles' felt that these miracles were evidence of his deity. Peter reminded the people of Israel about all the miracles performed by Christ. Even Jesus said, 'Believe me for the very works sake.' Jesus came also to die on the cross for. This was essential in order to fulfil Old Testament prophecy. This is so very important to understand because it was His death that has atoned for our sins. It was His blood that He shed for us as a final sacrifice but rising from that death, He revealed His power over death thus providing us the same power over death and a future in Heaven. This had to be for in the very beginning, it was sin that introduced death into the world. Death was never meant to be! And there was a promise of His return as the angels proclaimed on the Mount of Olives, 'this same Jesus who is taken up from you ... shall come again in like manner as you have seen him go into heave.'

### *C. The God Head, Three in One*

So the Holy Spirit is one of the God-head. The Holy Spirit was sent after Jesus left; the Son and Holy Spirit existed already and were at the Creation of time. Jesus was in the beginning as the Word of God. The purpose of the Holy Spirit is to convict us of sin and to show us what is right. In the beginning humanity chose to sin against God and that event created a need for somebody to take our sins away and to be a final sacrifice for us. Jesus came as a Saviour to save us from our sins. The Holy Spirit continues a work of renewal in our lives thus helping us transform into that which God wants us to be. Just look at how the Holy Spirit changed Paul's life. We have this born again experience which is part of the renewal we encounter in Jesus when we become a Christian. This renewal requires our surrender, our obedience and trust in Christ. The Bible says that God wants all people to be saved. He's doesn't want any to perish and He wants all to come to repentance. People

come to Jesus by accepting Him as their Saviour. Paul says, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be save, and your household. Also, 'God ... Is the Saviour of all people, namely of those who believe.' Salvation is of God but the exercise of faith is an individual responsibility. In First Thessalonians, 'If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.. For the Lord will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first.' For those not in Christ, it will be the resurrection of damnation which involves eternity in hell. This is what is going to happen in the end times; Jesus will return.

In regard to the church; the schism of churches is hard to understand. So many churches say that are the one church and others aren't. According to Ockenga, there is no salvation outside the Church, for Christ died for the Church and there is no salvation except by justification of the individual who Christ died for. I am not totally sure what he is saying by this because the church doesn't save you. but I quote it because as I see it, the Church here is not denominational but the body of believers. When you are saved, you are saved into the body of believers. At all times, we must see this; the church is the body of believers in the world.

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## *Chapter 9: Inspiration of the Scriptures*

What is needed for something to be inspired of God. There are necessary presuppositions (A.A. Hodge, 1860) which must be admitted before the possibility of inspiration. But let me make it clear, these presuppositions are not necessarily totally convincing to everybody. Different presuppositions exist that may enable a person to accept the inspiration of God. I list the first presupposition as being the existence of a personal God, possessing the attributes of power, intelligence, and moral excellence in absolute perfection. Many even struggle with this, yet for a belief in the inspiration of God, they must accept this presuppositions. The 2<sup>nd</sup>, He exists in all parts of the universe and is beyond limits of experience in His relation to the universe. Above all, and freely acting upon all from without. Within all, and acting through the whole and every part from within in the exercise of all his perfections, and according to the laws and modes of action he has established for his creatures, sustaining and governing them, and all their actions. Well, to a lesser extent, people accept this especially as this has to do with God's creation which is being shunned more and more. 3<sup>rd</sup>, His moral government over mankind and other intelligent creatures, whereby He governs them by truth and motives addressed to their reason and will, rewards and punishes them according to their moral characters and actions, and benevolently educates them for their high destiny in his communion and service. This is becoming less and less as governments make decision contrary to that of God and what it means to be a Christian. 4<sup>th</sup>, mankind instead of advancing along a line of natural development from a lower to a higher moral condition, have fallen from their original state and relation, and are now lost in a condition involving corruption and guilt, and incapable of recovery without supernatural intervention. Miracles and supernatural has

gone out the window openly taught against in most churches and even evangelical churches. The 5<sup>th</sup> involves the historical integrity of the Christian Scriptures, their veracity as history, and the genuineness and authenticity of them. And finally, the truth of Christianity in the sense in which it is set forth in the sacred record. The truth in the Scriptures of which is involved in the doctrine that the Scriptures are inspired. Now, those which rest upon their own intuition and the moral spiritual evidences of divine truth, such as the attributes of God. What is involved in this is how people think in terms of their own sinful nature which is part of the nature of the human. For most, there is an innate acceptance of sinfulness and doing wrong. This is how we are made. There has now been challenges as to the reality and proof of the Scriptures as being true.

Of course several things has changed this attitude such as Biblical Archaeology and the Dead Sea scrolls providing us with a set of the Old Testament Scriptures a thousand years older than we have had. That set turns out to be the same as we still have today proving authenticity of the Scriptures. And therefore, as this is true for the Old Testament, It can also be true for the New Testament. So we are collecting more and more critical evidence as to the true origin and contents of the sacred books. This evidence has slightly turned the tide of unbelief and trust. Hodge, in his book, Inspiration of the Bible covers: certain presuppositions for inspiration. He discusses statements of the church doctrine of inspiration along with stated proofs of the Doctrine of Inspiration which as he says come from the Bible's own statements of inspiration which were endorsed by God through, signs, wonders and gifts of the Holy Spirit. He further states that every part of the Scriptures bears evidence of a human and divine origin as a whole and in every part. Furthermore, that the Scriptures is an organism, wholly composed of many parts. There are no discrepancies whatsoever in the Scriptures and any so called discrepancies are violent improbability. He finishes by saying that false doctrines of inspiration include Pantheistic, Materialistic, and Naturalistic principles and finally he states there are no partial inspiration of the Scriptures.

## *A. Revelation*

A large amount of information available about God is now the result of mere human speculation. With Christians, this is the lack of good Biblical teaching in the Church. As much as I like my brothers and sisters, I found the weakness in their teaching of the Scriptures a major problem. This weakness thus extends to their congregation. Godly wisdom has totally been corrupted by sin, the result of human speculation about God is also corrupted by a sinful mind. Thus no definite conclusion about God and His actions can be obtained through mere human knowledge for any knowledge of God must come from the Bible and/or the Holy Spirit. General Revelation comes through the creation which God has brought about but the idea of God's miraculous creation is being torn down in Christian circles seen all around the Christian church. It also comes from man's observation of God's sustaining power. A new science that enhances the creation is the idea of design in the world and the universe.

In seeing the world and the universe and how it works, it has to have been a miraculous design for even many had shell scientists see that it just could not have happened. So, this 'installed' understanding of sin and creation is enough to make man aware of the existence of God, and to create in him a desire to know God. Now, when any person desires to know the real God, the omniscient and righteous God would surely make information available about Himself to this seeker. This happened to me; as a young man I was not happy of my life. I saw the world as being full of chaos. Life just didn't make sense. The way people lived their lives didn't make sense to me. The Holy Spirit of God was dealing in my life because I began opening my life open to the possible that God was real. Now, this special revelation comes directly from God. This need to understand that this type of revelation cannot be obtained by the use of mere human wisdom. No other religious book in the world is inspired by God except the Bible. The Bible is just not another religious book either. None of them contain inspired information about salvation or Jesus Christ. There might be some accidental similarities between the statements in the Bible and books of other religions. This might be accidental, or even a corrupt form of truth found in the Bible. One book I was recently reading said

that the Bible is the only religious book that had prophecy which is all through the Bible. Inspiration is from God if it is righteous and Godly inspiration, otherwise if inspiration goes against the what the Bible say, that inspiration isn't of god. .

Hodge writes about the inspiration of the Scriptures. He starts out with the existence of a personal God in relation to the universe He has created. The next concerns His moral government over humankind where He governs them by truth according to His will and reason. Also, the admission that humankind has fallen from their original state and relation with God is another presupposition. There is an acknowledgement of the historical integrity of the Christian Scriptures and the truth of Christianity as set forth in the Bible.

Concerning the Church's stand on the Inspiration of the Bible; the sacred writers were so influenced by the Holy Spirit that their writing are, as a whole and in every part, God's word to us. They are an authoritative revelation to us from God. The Bible is secured as in the perfect infallibility of the Scriptures, as a record of fact and doctrine. This has been confirmed down through the ages by the collective minds of the ancient church. The inspiration that accompanied the sacred writers extends to their expression of their thoughts in language, as well as to the thoughts themselves. The effect being that in the original written copies the language expresses the thought God intended to convey with infallible accuracy, so that the words as well as the thoughts are God's revelation to us. Infallibility of thought cannot be secured or preserved independently of an infallible verbal rendering. The New Testament writers, while quoting from the Old Testament for purposes of argument, often base their argument upon the very words used, thus ascribing authority to the word as well as the thought. The Church doctrine recognizes the fact that every part of Scripture is at once a product of God's and of man's agency. Now, you must realize we can talk about what people think but there is accepted church doctrine from the Bible. God providentially produced the very man for the precise occasion, with the faculties, qualities, education, and gracious experience needed for the production of the intended writing. The words were supernaturally revealed to the writers by vision or language. This direct revelation applies to a large element of the sacred scriptures, such as

prophecies of future events, the peculiar doctrines of Christianity, the promises and threatening of God's word. Furthermore, the writers were the subjects of a divine influence called inspiration, which acted up and through their natural faculties in all they wrote directing them in the choice of subject and the whole course of thought and verbal express. But, it has been a long time since I have ever heard of a pastor teaching on these points.

So, the proof of the doctrine of inspiration comes from the statements of the Scripture themselves and the phenomena of Scripture when critically examined. As to the matter of the Bible's own statements of inspiration: all claims were endorsed by God by signs and wonders and gifts of the Holy Spirit. Jesus openly accepted all this of being from his Father in heaven. Where the sign is, God commands us to believe. A miracle is a divine sign accrediting the person to whom the power is delegated as a divinely commissioned agent. The gift of inspiration was promised to the apostles along with the filling of the Holy Spirit, the authority of speak as the prophets of God and their writings are classed on the level of the Old Testament. This authority has been confirmed by their own lives, the doctrines they taught and its power, plus the miracles they brought by testimonies of the early Christians. For example: Moses claimed that he wrote the Pentateuch by divine command. In addition, the Old Testament writers speak with 'thus says the Lord'. Again this was confirmed by the fulfilment of many of their predictions, the holiness of their lives, the moral and spiritual perfection of their doctrine and through many of their prophecies and the endorsement of Jesus Christ and His apostles. Christ constantly quoted the Old Testament. He declares that it cannot be falsified and that the whole law was fulfilled and all things foretold concerning himself in Moses, the prophets and the Psalms. All the apostles habitually appealed to the words of Scripture as the final authority. This proves infallibility.

Every part of Scripture bears evidence of a human origin. The writers of all the books were men, and the process of writing through which they originate was characteristic all human. The characteristics of thought and feelings of these writers have acted spontaneously in their literary activity, and have given character to their writings in a manner precisely similar the effect of character



upon writing in the case of other men. Furthermore, every part of scripture affords moral and spiritual evidence of its divine origin. There are transcendent truths revealed, a perfect morality, an unveiling of the absolute perfection of the Godhead, foresight of future events. Another characteristic, taken in connection with the foregoing, proves incontestably their divine origin as a whole and in every part. The sacred Scriptures are an organism, which is a whole composed of many parts, the parts all differing in matter, forms, and structure of each other. Sometimes, in quoting the Old Testament Scriptures, the New Testament writers quote the Septuagint version. In regards to so called discrepancies, the Church has never held to the verbal infallibility of our translations, or the perfect accuracy of the copies of the original Hebrew and Greek Scriptures now possessed by us.

These copies confessedly contain many 'discrepancies' resulting from frequent transcription. It is, nevertheless, the unanimous testimony of Christian scholars, that while these variations embarrass the interpretation of many details, they neither involve the loss nor abate the evidence of a single essential act or doctrine of Christianity. Such discrepancies as defined are a violent improbability. Proof must be shown of such discrepancies indeed if they exist. As to other questionable comments such as, 'I speak as a man' is a phrase occurring frequently, and its sense is determined by the context. The words of Paul are claimed as inspiration which makes Paul's word equal to that of Christ in infallibility and authority.

Inspiration of superintendence meant precisely the definition of inspiration. By the inspiration of elevation is meant that divine influence which exalted their natural faculties to a degree of energy otherwise unattainable. The words, inspiration of direction means divine influence which guided the writers in the selection and disposition of their material and the words inspiration of suggestion mean that divine influence which directly suggested to their minds new and otherwise unattainable truth. These ideas come from a failure to distinguish between revelations the frequent and constant.

In the matter of sin, Philip and Cherian go on to say that the human mind is totally blinded by sin. If we allow it, even as Christians, sin can completely rule

our lives, but depending on the degree of unrepentance of that sin, the question then is whether they are a child of God. It knows nothing except rebellion against God. Thus anything that comes out of pure human speculation about God and His nature is bound to be wrong and most likely coming from the devil. Thus whatever people of other religions write about God on the basis of purely human intuition or (human wisdom) is bound to be totally erroneous. Any similarity with the Christian scripture is only a coincidence, and such similarities are not to be overemphasized. Nowhere does the Bible indicate that people would be saved through the methods of salvation found in their own faiths. This error has resulted from the wrong assumption that God has given His inspired revelation outside the Bible also. In turn this erroneous view has developed because of human philosophy and carnal wisdom which is running rampant in the world today as more false gods arise and are acknowledged today. Bible as Revelation gives much attention to the subject of divine revelation, and repeatedly affirms where this revelation has been recorded.

There are many references to the fact that God has revealed to His chosen prophets his true revelation. The same idea is found in throughout the Old Testament, and no less than 3800 times it says that only the specific revelation recorded through the Jewish prophets was to be considered the Scripture.

There are dozens of non-Christian religious books about which their writers acknowledge direct supernatural help or dictation. The Theosophical society, being one, has many books produced through the dictation of a demon by the name of Dhvaj Khu according to Philip and Cherian. Interestingly, the Theosophists give great lip service to the Bible, and many statements in their religious books are similar to statements found in the Bible. Even the church of Satan believe in the Bible and God in heaven! Yet quoting from them is quoting from the devil because they came from the source of evil spirits. About quoting from sources that are demonic, the Bible has the following to say: "Now the Spirit speaks expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils", I Tim. 4:1 According to I Corinthians 2:14, "But the natural man receives not the

things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned".

### *B. Jesus, The Second Personal of the Godhead*



Today, again, according to Philip and Cherian, we stand at a time in history when the doctrinal knowledge of people has decreased considerably. It simply isn't being taught in the churches because pastors are afraid that people will not agree with them. People today, sadly to say even those who call themselves Christians, show more loyalty

to various other religious books other than to the Bible. They give more credit to what other religious leaders says about their own religions. Though similarities are found between statements in the Bible and almost all other religions such as Hinduism. Like the Bible, the Hindu scriptures talk about God, salvation, condemnation, heaven, earth, sin, justification, afterlife, incarnation, and many other subjects of interest to Christians also. The Quran says good things about Jesus and I have heard some Roman Catholics say, there's no real difference between Christianity and Islam. This is the danger in regards to Islam. If Jesus is no longer important in your life and you stop seeing him as God, then in some ways Islam is not different. Many churches today that are (dead) no longer believe in the authority of the Scriptures and no longer believe who Jesus is. They don't even believe that he died on a cross for us. Many church openly teach that the Bible isn't true. Since spending some 15 years in the Middle East, I would think that any references to the Bible and Christians in the Quran are the work of the devil to create confusion. I may be wrong about this but I cannot come to think that there is anything good in the Quran. However, this doesn't mean that God can't speak to his people today; one cannot deny that God through the Holy Spirit leads and guides and teaches us. But also, miraculous signs have been given to those who aren't Christians in order to bring them into a relationship with God. Special revelation is given to many within the church to those who love Jesus.

Of course, any revelation given to His children must be in line with Revelation already stated in the Bible.

So as these religions use these nice words in describing Jesus just as a prophet; it does not mean that Jesus is nothing but a prophet. The Christian talks of salvation in the sense of escaping from condemnation, hell, and a new life. His personality and individuality are not obliterated. For a Hindu, salvation means being merged back into the Ultimate Reality (Para-Brahma), who himself is an impersonal cosmic force and not a person. For the Muslim, salvation will not be revealed until they come face to face with Allah and their sins will be weighed against their good deeds. This teaching alone is ripe in many churches today. So while the Christian idea of salvation is speaking about an individual rising to the most blessed personal state, the Hindu salvation is talking about going out of personal existence. The Muslim will have untold virgins in heaven. I often wonder what does the Quran teach in regards to what the women will have. The Hindu scriptures speak about sacrifices for salvation, and the Christian swallows this proposal hook, sinker, and the pole. The Christian also makes their sacrifices as do Muslims in the month long time of fasting during the day and eating during the night. This is called Ramadan.

Many people close their eyes to these comparisons because they simply don't know and they are afraid of appearing dumb. Islam is becoming more open in New Zealand and eagerly accepted by many because they don't see any difference between it and Christianity. We have failed the community not teaching this difference. The context is so ignored that any kind of meaning can be imposed upon what is said. This one 40 year old guy obviously oblivious to the Bible accepted Islam just to marry an Islamic girl. He said that he doesn't go to 'church' a lot; he actually means the mosque here. To him, the idea of Jesus being God just wasn't important; what was important was the fact that they still looked upon Jesus being important. That was enough. And this is part of the message of Islam.

There is even negativity among Christians when you speak in terms of these false religions. They seem to be afraid as if there may be something true about them. It is all that certain groups seem to focus on. And I include

Christians and certainly non-Christians. This was very present in the Bible College I attended many years ago in the States. In a way many Christians have accepted non Biblical scriptures, without realizing it. There is lip service given to an acceptance of different religions. Yet, in spite of this, there are actually very positive and exciting things happening in the Christian Church worldwide. In spite of what I've said, the Holy Spirit is alive and well dealing with people's hearts in almost every country of the globe. We should never forget the power of God in Jesus and through the Holy Spirit to indeed change lives and convict people of sin.

Also mentioned above is that any similarity with the Christian scripture is only a coincidence, and such similarities are not to be overemphasized. In missions these days, there's been a long time emphasizes on what we call 'contextualization'. The idea is to relate the Gospel to people's own culture. This is a good teaching principle; taking the person from a known to an unknown. The idea is good and I certain use it all the time but some go too far as to try to use the Quran to reveal Jesus. I certainly agree with the authors on the issue of how so many Christians believe whatever they are told. This is especially true with Mormons in New Zealand. But may I remind you that Paul declared in Athens the 'unknown god' which people already believed in and surly this 'unknown god' was some kind of fabrication of another heathen god for themselves, but Paul used this as a starting point to explain the Gospel. I refer back to my point on contextualization. Paul used it to relate to non-Christians, approaching them from their own religious point of view and showing them the truth in Jesus Christ thus eventually revealing to them their false hood in their own religious beliefs. Not all believed but some did and that was the start of the church in Athens. I certainly don't see this approach as dishonest and unethical. How does this apply to Islam and the Quran where there is information that directly relates to Christians and the Bible in the Quran? Now, I have read the Quran and I certainly believe it is a book of the devil and it is certainly very evil, but at the same time, indeed, I also see that God can use these things to reveal the truth of Jesus Christ to Muslims.

The Inspiration of the Scriptures is important. If one doesn't believe it, then they will never be sure about anything in the Bible. I believe it with all of my

heart. I believe it a fundamental basic belief that one must have to be a Christian. In researching this article, it has confirmed my own thinking and convictions and certainly gives me more confidence in my teaching and with speaking to others about Biblical topics.

False doctrines of inspiration include Pantheistic, Materialistic, and Naturalistic principles, and of course rationalistic principles in all their forms. There is no partial inspiration of the Scriptures.

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## Chapter 10. Sola Scriptura

Sola Scriptura is the doctrine that the Bible is the only infallible and inerrant authority for the Christian faith, and that it contains all knowledge necessary for salvation and holiness. The Bible being the authoritative Word of God, consequently, *sola scriptura* demands that only those doctrines are to be admitted or confessed that are found directly within or indirectly by using valid logical deduction or valid deductive reasoning from scripture. Any allowance of limited inerrancy would devalue sola scriptura. Next, the authority of the Bible is presented by J. Stafford Wright who tries to assess the way which we can approach and learn about God through reasoning. J.W Wenham considers Christ's use of the Old Testament and how He viewed those Scriptures which He used. N.T. Wright shares his experiences in regards to the authority of the Bible. He explains the claim of the authority of the Bible toward authority and inerrancy. Then there's B. B. Warfield on the Authority and Inspiration of the Scriptures. Next we have the Authority of Scripture by William Webster who tells us how the Scriptures claim divine inspiration for itself. Finally Ken Schurb explains how the Scriptures are the results of God's direct inspiration.



### A. The Holy Bible

Sproul says that 'The only source and norm of all Christian knowledge is the Holy Scripture.' This does not exclude God talking to us and guidance of the Holy Spirit in our live. However, in referencing the Reformation, he says that the major theological issue of the Reformation was the idea of justification. But a more controversial point was concerned with authority of the Pope which Luther challenged continually in 1517 in debates at Augsburg and Leipzig and then in 1518 with Cardinal Cajetan of the Dominicans. Luther argued that only the Scripture carries absolute normative authority. Luther felt that the sola of

Sola Scriptura were inseparably related to the Scriptures' unique inerrancy. So Sola Scriptura ascribes a unique authority to the Scriptures. Sproul quotes the Geneva Confession which was written in 1536 affirming the desire to follow Scripture alone as a rule of faith and religion, without mixing with it any thing which might be devised by the opinion of men apart from the Word of God, and without wishing to accept for our spiritual government any other doctrine than what is conveyed to us by the same Word without addition or diminution, according to the command of our Lord.

Interestingly, those that push limited inerrancy will say that the Bible is infallible only when it speaks of faith and practice. Whereas the Reformation put forward that the Bible is the only infallible rule of faith and practice. The Catholic Church seemed to have acknowledged two sources of special revelation, Scripture and the tradition of the church. However, some argue that tradition adds no new content to Scripture but only serves as a tool of the church. In this, the Reformation wanted to make sure that no church council, synod, classical theologian, or early church father was regarded as infallible.

Scriptures being the essence of Christianity according to Ramm has more to do with the state of evangelicalism. The Sproul continues by saying that to subordinate the importance of the Gospel would be to obscure the centrality of Christ. So, to subordinate Sola Fide to sola scriptura would be to misunderstand the essence of the Reformation. As Luther voiced that the Word of God alone must rule, and no Christian dare do other than allow it to enthrone itself in our conscience. Schaeffer says that holding to a strong view of Scripture or not holding to it is the watershed of the evangelical world. So the Scriptures are the central core of evangelicalism and also consistent evangelicalism. At the same time, to know that in Scripture we have divine revelation is no small matter to grasp. It doesn't depend on human ideas or speculation.

Sproul now asks whether Sola Scriptura is compatible with limited inerrancy. If we had limited inerrancy then that would reduce Scripture to be de facto to the content relating to faith and practice. Any attempts to use limited inerrancy only leads to canon reductionism, which questions both New Testament



supernaturalism and Biblical history. The Sproul goes so far to say that we exclude history from inspiration or inerrancy then we inevitably lose the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It would make Christians immune to Old and New Testament historical criticism. A person would not be able to relate the Scriptures to the physical history which Israel and Christianity grew out of. Limited inerrancy would also cause corrupt theology and would not be a guarantee to Biblical orthodoxy. With those who support limited inerrancy, other challenges are put forth against matters of faith and practice. Our faith and practice defends on a fully infallible rule or absolute acceptance of Sola Scriptura.

Wright introduces us to how we can discovery more about God through revelation. Since God has made us, He wants us to know Him and to have fellowship with Him. He questions, 'If the whole Bible is inspired by God, does this mean that every part of it is authoritative for us today? He then points out that the Bible is the only religious book that wants us to have personal knowledge of a personal God. It seriously deals with sin and our own life in terms of living the life that God wants us to live. In the very early church there were collected documents and letters about Jesus Christ. With some of these, there was an obvious authority on them which distinguished them from other writings. Eventually the Gospels and letters brought on recognition and canon by themselves. The Church became a vessel of keeping the canon the canon. The Old Testament was immediately accepted by the Christian church simply because Jesus referred to it constantly. Inspiration has been described in many extremes; such as: the writers were like typewriters and those who wrote it were simply enlightened by God. The Bible has been considered God's revelation to humanity, rather than man's thoughts about God. This was a special kind of inspiration that was given to the prophets and writers. He chose them and gave them the gifts and training and influenced their writings. This is the normal view of inspiration and for the person who studies it continuously gets the most out of it. We see that certain statements have been collected in the form of creeds from the Bible about the Trinity of God, the Person and Work of Jesus Christ, etc. These represent the basics of what we believe. Because of Jesus these beliefs are now given to all nations, not just Israel and the history and regulations of the law are given to us to remind us

what God has done for us. There were much deeper teachings for example by Jesus and Paul on the Ten Commandments. Revelation from scripture must be interpreted in light of context and comparison with the rest of Scripture.

Sproul confesses that the Bible is not without its difficulties and common sense shows us this, but fuller knowledge and further investigation will clear up any problem we find in the text. For example, there is difficulty in understanding the Trinity and the fact that Christ was divine and also human. Often some things must be accepted by faith until we can understand the different aspects of Christ's deity and humanity. Most difficulties can be placed within two areas: scientific difficulties and apparent discrepancies. One thing to keep in mind, the Bible was never intended to be a science textbook. This does not mean that it's inaccurate concerning things of science but it's from a different perspective and point of view. Anthropology and archaeology shows that civilization began in the Mesopotamian area around 6,000 BC and there has been no scientific discovery that has contradicted Biblical accounts. The Sproul says in regards to miracles, many can be explained rationally except for the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Also any discrepancies have been explained as solutions have been found for them.

Finally, Wright says on the other hand the Bible is not a book of difficulties. It teaches us what God is, what we are, and how we may live a life in close touch with God. It's a treasure chest with treasures waiting to be taken. Even more, it's a gold mine with the finest gold down below the surface.

### *B. Jesus and the Old Testament*

Wenham looks at how Jesus viewed the Old Testament Scriptures He used. First, he states that for years he has based his own life upon the belief that Jesus was a dependable Teacher who taught us to believe in the truth and authority of the Scriptures. However, sometimes when he finds scholars arguing about the historicity of Jonah, for example, he wants to believe them. This would take away the historical basis of Jonah and would also take away the force by which Jesus used the reference to the three days of Jonah.

Jesus took it literally of Jonah. Wenham believes that the Gospel-writers were guided by the Holy Spirit to write and they did to give us a reliable historical record. Christ's attitude was consistent and unchanging to the truth the history, authority and inspiration of the writing. To Christ, the Old Testament was true, authoritative and inspired. The God of the Old Testament was a living God and Old Testament teaching concerned itself with the teaching of a living God. Christ treated the historical narratives of the Old Testament as records of facts. He approached the Scriptures from a literal point of view. Jesus believed in the law as given by Moses; however He was more concerned with the ethics the law presented. The Lord also accepted the Davidic sonship and lordship of the Messiah and used this to teach what Messiah ship meant. Jesus gave an incredible slam against the people of Israel when he said, 'If the mighty works had been done in Sodom which were done here, it would have remained until this day. It will be more tolerable for Sodom in the day of judgement, than for you!' Jesus continued, 'Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day ... before Abraham was, I am.' If Abraham and the messianic promise were not historical, these sayings would be meaningless. In being tempted, on all accounts Jesus used the formula, 'It is written!' referring back to the Scriptures. But it's important to understand that Jesus' reference to the human authorship of the books of the Old Testament were second to the real author. The Scriptures collectively have shown what God has wanted to teach us.

For the Pharisees of Jesus' day, Jesus condemned them for not taking up the weightier matters of the law. Jesus said, 'whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heave: but whosoever shall do and teach them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. Jesus taught his disciple to obey not only the spirit of the law but also the letter. Jesus further spoke of Moses, 'he wrote of me, but if you believe not his writings, neither will you believe in me.' To understand this: faith, love and a right attitude must be a person's keys. But as to the Sadducees, Jesus plainly says that they don't know the scriptures or the power of God. What they knew was only by human reason.

The Old Testament is also a guide to ethics. It provides objective moral standards which speak to our hearts. The two greatest commandments as quoted by Jesus summed up the Old Testament. 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.' 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.' These two verses were the heart of the Old Testament. Taking a closer look, one can easily see that the mind of Christ was saturated with that of the Old Testament. Christ even though he elevated the Old Testament above all, He, himself, was above the Old Testament. For example, the Old Testament says, thou shalt not murder but Christ disapproved of hatred and a hating spirit which leads to murder.

We see that Post Reformation rightfully places Scripture in the primary place and everything else lines up with that. Wright says that the western generation has a problem with authority. But yet at the same time, people want to understand the line of authority as they ask, 'Who's in charge?' This really means, who takes the responsibility? We easily see that the meaning of authority changes according to the context which it's used in. Authority in the church is concerned with organization, boundaries and doctrine. In regards to the Bible, interestingly, however, when we read the text of the Bible, we usually apply it to ourselves and others who listen add various presuppositions to it subconsciously and often the authority of scripture becomes to simply mean, the authority of evangelical tradition. To some, authority is only used in terms of control. Control over the congregation, theology, programmes, etc. People want to make sure that the church doesn't go off in the wrong direction. However, according to the Sproul, the Bible doesn't necessarily consist of rules and regulations or list of commands to be obeyed or believed.

### *C. The Culture of The Bible*

So how can any text function as authoritative. We can say that the Bible is a catch of timeless truth. The Bible is culturally conditioned from Genesis to revelation as it is written as a witness to historical times and events, but this is not the reason for its authority. Sproul again states that the scripture's own view of authority focuses on the authority of God himself. Or another way of

saying this, though authority belongs to God, who has somehow invested this authority in scripture and in the New Testament, it is invested in Christ. From this point of view, the notion of God's authority is based on the fact that God is loving, wise, creator, and redeemer. The Bible isn't a vehicle of God's authority for the sake of the concept of authority itself. Rather, God's authority is vested in Scripture with a certain shape and character that is designed to liberate human kind. The New Testament gives us a strong theology of the authoritative Holy Spirit. God exercises His authority by working through the prophets and those He calls. The authority is centred on the stories that people have shared about Christ and their relationship with Christ. The story unfolds in specific narratives of creation, the fall, Israel, Jesus, the New Testament, the Holy Spirit and the Church. The Old Testament is a story that reached its climax in Jesus, for the Bible as a whole, is a means by which God puts His purposes of judgement and salvation to work. The Bible is designed to function through people, through the church, to those living by the Spirit. So the church was to do for the world what God did for Israel. They were, with scripture in its hand and heart, to speak and act for God in his world and use the authority of scripture to declare to the world authoritatively that Jesus is Lord. To conclude, we mustn't belittle scripture by bringing the world's models of authority into it. We must let scripture be itself.

Warfield says that the foundations of Christianity are laid in the apostles and prophets and their sanctified lives and Jesus Christ stands as the chief cornerstone as its only basis and its only head. He chose to found His church through a gifted and trained body of apostles guided by the Holy Spirit. Their authority came through as Christ's representatives. The authority of the Scriptures doesn't rest on the authority of the Church. The Scriptures determine the Church. Warfield says that apostolicity determines the authority of Scriptures, yet the apostles only ever claimed they were only acting as the agents of Christ, but with those who wrote the Scriptures wrote in the Spirit of Christ. Even though the Bible had a human authorship, behind them was a divine authorship with an influence of the Holy Spirit through the expression of God's will. The Bible is the crystallization of God's authoritative will.

Webster states that Scripture itself makes the claim of authority. Peter said that prophetic Scripture wasn't a human but a divine work. So Webster's point here makes a point that this does not include the writings of the Apocrypha. He wants us to understand this. This is confirmed by a number of Jewish Historians and the Early Church Fathers such as Athanasius, Epiphanius, Anastaius, the Patriarch of Antioch in 560 AD and Byzantium. Jesus never quoted from the Apocrypha. The Roman Catholic Church later adopted these writing in the 1600's to support their own theology which they developed later. Later, for some, canon came to have two meanings: one broad and the other narrow. The books that were considered inspired and authoritative were the proto-canonical status. The apocryphal, on the other hand, while not authoritative in defining doctrine were valuable for edification and held a deuterocanonical status. Augustine took up this position. St Jerome also distinguished between canonical books and the apocryphal books and along with Origen another Biblical scholars rejected the Apocrypha and the church nearly unanimously followed this view.

Paul says that all Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness. Paul was referring to the Old Testament which had already found cohesiveness hundreds of year's earlier! In saying this he indicates that it was authored by God. And because of this, is infallible and inerrant. The Bible doesn't depend on tradition either. The Pharisees misinterpreted the Scriptures in order to adhere to their own traditions. Jesus condemned them for this. He constantly used the Word of God as a standard of authority when He was in conflict with what others said. Christ applied Scripture to His own life and through obedience to the Word and He had victory in that. There was only one man in history who was a Jew; a direct descendant of King David; born in Bethlehem before 70 AD who claimed to be the Son of God and Messiah; performed miracles; entered Jerusalem on the back of a donkey, scourged, tortured, suffered crucifixion, reportedly died, buried and there days later reported to have risen from the dead. That person was Jesus.

Schurb says pretty much what most of the other authors have said in this essay; the scriptures are given to us as a direct result of God's direct

inspiration. So we ask, how can human words be identified unequivocally as the words of God? Barth (1886 - 1968) says that God's Word speaks to us and is heard by us as the authentic witness to divine revelation and is therefore present as the Word of God. This is part of the culture of the Bible. Near the turn of the 20th century Biblical history was subjected to relentless criticism at the hands of scholars who ruled out the prospect of supernatural intervention in the world. Of course, people can do and say what they want to say about the Bible. This has always been. Barth's idea that Scripture becomes the Word of God when God so wills; however, this does not differ much from Calvin's view that the Holy Spirit only decides at times to work graciously through the Word. But we know that Christ is both divine and human. The bible is the word of God given through the pens of men; it too is divine and human. The human words of the Bible are God's words and his truth. God's Word is all that matters, and that His Word to us is 'yes' in Jesus Christ.

#### *D. The Holy Spirit*

Note that 'The only source and norm of all Christian knowledge is the Holy Spirit.' I found this interesting in light of the thousands of books written on various subjects of Christianity, this includes Bible doctrines, books of the Bible and everything else. Other authors put forth questions and answers those questions through explanations and reasoning. One comment says that the Bible has a special kind of authority and revelation given only by God through the Prophets. Luther voiced that the Word of God alone must rule, and Christians dare not do other than allow it to take over ones conscience. So as we see that protestant churches are confessional and thus reformable because they are fallible. However, often when decisions are made by a church, they are often treated as infallible by those in leadership who made the decisions and everyone in the church are expected to follow those decisions blindly. This flows over into other Christian organizations; local and international missions, small Christian organizations, Christian and education training centres. This happened with the Children of God where their leader almost became God like! Some Christian organizations become Christian

sects because of this where there is no accountability. This is so true and in some ways Protestant Churches can have similarities with even Catholic Churches. One author commented, 'But it should be pointed out that Scripture alone is the essence of Christianity.' Of course, there is more to Christianity than the Scriptures in the sense of fellowship, prayer and the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Wright seems to think that there can be valid explanations of the various miracles in the Bible and can easily be explained by human events. I find that this attitude waters down the super naturalness of the Scriptures. In order to present the authority from a non-fundamentalist viewpoint, Wright seems to turn to reason more often than not in order to explain the way the Bible has been written rather than say God in his majesty gave us the Scriptures super naturally and divinely. I think he got a bit off track. Why take this approach? It actually reminded me of those of the Jesus Seminar who aren't even within the circle of Christendom.

Jesus taught his disciples to obey not only the spirit of the law but also the letter. Jesus further spoke of Moses, 'he wrote of me, but if you believe not his writings, neither will you believe in me.' I recently taught in a local missionary training college where they taught Genesis from what is called the document viewpoint. Parts of Genesis and the Torah was divided up into sections listed alphabetically almost saying that Moses didn't write it. Of course this is heresy. If you don't believe that Moses wrote it, how can you believe that he wrote about Jesus? So as Wenham puts it: faith, love and a right attitude are the keys to an understanding of Moses and of Christ, which Moses wrote about. Those of the Jesus Seminar, those who believe in limited inerrancy and other anti-Christian people against the authority and inerrancy of the Bible will not simply accept God's Testimony to His own Word. Of course, now, the Jesus Seminar group has passed on. You don't hear of it anymore. Like the Sadducees, Jesus plainly says that they don't know the scriptures or the power of God. What they knew was only by human reason. Human reason, isn't this what is being proclaimed today that Scripture should be understood in terms of human reason and not by any supposedly super natural God! So



many in the church are appealing to human reason to understand God of the Bible.

I think that N.T. Wright in his, 'How can The Bible be Authoritative?' was really good reading. He summed up that the 'authority of scripture' was a shorthand expression for God's authority, exercised somehow through scripture.

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## **Profile**

Dr Phil Smith has written a number of related articles and books. He has been a Christian for more than fifty years and continues to faithfully serve God in whatever capacity he can. He is presently associated with Biblical Training.org in Washington State and also with the Missionary Training Institute in Yeosu, South Korea. He and his wife were missionaries in the Middle East for many years. They attend City Bible Church in Hamilton, New Zealand. Phil has the most experience in Linguistics, Old Testament history and Islamics, His educational profile is shown below. Phil's sole purpose is to further the kingdom of God in the world. His website and blog is *philsblog.online*.

His qualifications include a Dr of Religious Education, and a PhD in Biblical Archaeology, MA in Applied Linguistics, MA in Biblical Archaeology, Post Grad Diploma in TESOL, Graduate Diploma in Teaching, BA, Dip Writing, Dip Business Admin, Cert TESOL, Cert Applied Linguistics, His educational accomplishments grew out of his interest in tertiary teaching, biblical studies and biblical archaeology. His research and study has been an ongoing life process. (Many of the above diplomas and degrees are NZQA, with some having other educational standards)