

God Exists...

navigating the web to truth



Book 1 of the '89 Basics Series

*Navigate the web of thought for the truth about God,
His plan, the three personalities of the Trinity,
and other principles of Christian faith.*

Joe Griffin



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Media Ministries**

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This book is edited from the lectures and unpublished notes of Joe Griffin.

For a complete listing of available MP3s and publications, see our website at: www.joegriffin.org

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Dedication

Every professional has a mentor. An apprentice learns his trade from a master and I have had the privilege of learning the hermeneutics of dispensational, pretribulational, premillennial, infralapsarian theology from the preeminent theologian of the twentieth century, Rev. Robert B. Thieme, Jr., who was the pastor of Berachah Church in Houston, Texas, from 1950-2003. His advances in the literal-grammatical-historical method of biblical analysis produced cutting-edge expositions of God's immutable truth to believers throughout the world. His due diligence in studying and teaching the Word of God for over five decades led myriads to spiritual maturity and prepared a host of men with the gift of pastor-teacher to present Bible doctrine to congregations across the United States and abroad. The doctrinal content of this series of books reflects these dynamic teachings from which I have benefited as pastor of Grace Doctrine Church. It is from enduring devotion and continuing gratitude that I dedicate this series to Robert B. Thieme, Jr.

Preface

Before you begin your Bible study, if you are a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, be sure you have named your sins privately to God the Father.

If we confess our [known] sins, He is faithful and righteous to cleanse us from all [unknown, or forgotten sins] unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9)

You will then be in fellowship with God, filled with the Holy Spirit, and ready to learn Bible doctrine from the Word of God.

“God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in [the filling of the] spirit and [biblical] truth.” (John 4:24)

If you have never personally believed in the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior, the issue is not naming your sins. The issue is faith alone in Christ alone.

“He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey [the command to believe in the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.” (John 3:36)

Acknowledgments

The publication of this series of books on the basic doctrines of the Christian faith is the result of popular demand. Without the appeals of so many people who have listened to the audiotope series, this project would never have been considered. Bringing it to fruition required the diligent assistance of a number of faithful people.

Years ago, the original class notes were lost in a computer disk crash. Modern publishing requires that manuscripts be provided in digital format. Carole Allen, a member of Grace Doctrine Church, took on the task of restoring the lost documents from the original hard copy and without her help the venture would never have gotten off the ground.

Patti Stanfield of Stanfield Designs in Wildwood, Missouri, did a masterful job of preparing the restored data for publication according to standards from *The Chicago Manual of Style*. The professional appearance of this series is due to Patti's hard work. I appreciate her patience with me as I missed several deadlines along the way.

Finally, my picture on the back cover does as much grace to the subject as photographic expertise can provide. I am privileged to have had my countenance struck by one of the country's leading photographers, Gary Knight of Blue Ridge, Georgia. A fellow member of the Berachah Battalion, Gary went out of his way to come to St. Charles to do the shoot.

Appreciation is extended to Lindenwood University of St. Charles, Missouri, (www.lindenwood.edu) for allowing

us to use Boonesfield Village's Old Peace Chapel at its Daniel Boone Campus in Defiance, Missouri, for the photo sessions.

Joe Griffin, Pastor
Grace Doctrine Church
St. Charles, Missouri
May 2010

INTRODUCTION

About the '89 Basics Series

You are about to delve into the *'89 Basics Series*, a series of basic instructional biblical studies. This study is designed for two categories of people:

- (1) Those who are not familiar with Christianity but would like to become oriented to its basic beliefs and doctrines.
- (2) Those who already consider themselves to be Christians but have to this point not been entirely clear on what principles are basic to the Christian faith.

We affectionately refer to church as God's "Classroom for Christianity." I am the teacher. The textbook is the Bible. You are the student.

In our course of study you will find it helpful to have a Bible handy. If you do not own one, may I suggest that you purchase the *Oxford Scofield Study Bible*. It is available in the King James Version and the New International Version.

In our beginning study, we are going to discuss God. You may not believe there is a God. This is all right. You are free to believe what you wish. Our goal in this study is simply to present, as objectively as possible, what the Bible has to say about God. We will seek to prove nothing. Our expressed purpose is to publicly state what we believe. You are left to take this information and do with it what you will.

We will discuss the existence of God from the standpoint of logic, essence and matrix. First of all, we will examine the

existence of God from the standpoint of logic.

This volume is part of a four-book series that contains my class notes for the *'89 Basics Series*. You may wish to use it as a study guide while listening to the series on audiotape or MP3 recordings, or study it independently. Please note that the program can be used effectively with either books *or* tapes or in a combination of books *and* tapes. As you read through the textual material, reference will direct you to listen to the audio media should you desire. The corresponding lesson number will be noted as shown below.

BAS-01

If you would like to obtain other books in this series or the recorded series, please provide your mailing address, indicating the book title and/or your desired media format (audiotape or MP3) and mail it to the address indicated on the inside back cover of this book. Entitled *End Notes*, this information states our Financial Policy and provides ordering information for those who desire to continue the series or proceed with further studies.



CHAPTER ONE

Six Logical Propositions

Proposition #1: GOD EXISTS

If we are going to study the Bible we will obviously have to discuss the existence of God.

Whether or not you think God exists is not our concern at the moment. We are looking at this concept from the standpoint of logic.

Thinking logically, it would be inaccurate to make the statement, "I do not believe that God exists."

To say you do not believe God exists ignores the fact that He may exist outside the current boundaries of your knowledge.

You would be more accurate to say, "Based on what I now know, I do not believe that God exists."

Your conclusion must be based on one of two sources of reasoning:

- (1) Rationalism: Knowledge obtained through reason. Philosophers are rationalists.
- (2) Empiricism: Knowledge obtained through experience. Scientists are empiricists.

As a result you would be accurate to make one of the two following statements:

- (1) "On the basis of rationalism, I do not believe that God exists."
- (2) "On the basis of empiricism, I do not believe that God exists."

There is a third means of perception known as faith: the acceptance of an established criterion as the basis of reality.

In Christianity, that established criterion is the Bible. Whatever the Bible says is considered to be reality. Application of principles learned from the Bible is considered to be one's guide for life and practice. Consequently, the Christian learns under a system of faith and that faith is directed toward the writings of Scripture.

Faith is a non-meritorious system of learning. The subject never has the merit but rather the object. So under faith, the issue is not the one who believes but what is believed. Further, the Christian maintains that the only objects of faith which hold merit are Jesus Christ and the Bible... the Living Word and the Written Word.

Proposition #2: GOD REVEALS HIMSELF

If God exists, then we are forced to assume that He is responsible for our existence.

For God to be God nothing could logically have existed before God existed. If it did then who created it? And if this were true would not that person be God instead? The only way for God to be God is for Him to transcend all things. This requires of Him eternal life. Now since God is the first Person on the scene then all things that subsequently came into existence must have been created by Him.

Now if God has created us—and under the logic of cause

and effect He did—and if He desires to have a relationship with us, then it follows He must reveal to man the terms of that relationship.

In order for God to reveal to man the terms of a meaningful relationship with Him, God has to reveal Himself to man.

However, God is infinite and man is finite. Therefore, not only does God have to reveal Himself to man, He has to do it in such a way that man can understand it. Therefore ...

Proposition #3: GOD MAKES SENSE

Up to this point we have determined under logic that God does exist. For this existence to be made known to man, God must reveal Himself to man and He must do so in a way which makes sense.

Christianity believes that the manner in which God reveals Himself to man is by means of the Bible.

You may not accept the Bible at the moment as the only source of divine revelation, but under the logical premise that if God exists and if He desires that man know about Him, then He must reveal Himself in some way.

If we exclude the Bible as that source of information, then we are left to debate what is the alternate official source of divine revelation. That controversy has been argued for millennia and we do not have the time to resolve it here. Allow me to cite a couple of passages from Scripture involving the fact that God makes sense.

1 Corinthians 14:33 - God is not a God of disorder.

Verse 40 - Everything should be done in a professional

and organized manner.

Romans 1:18 - The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness,

Verse 19 - since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them.

Verse 20 - For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—His eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been created, so that they are without excuse.

Proposition #4: GOD HAS A PLAN

If God reveals himself to man and if God desires to have a personal relationship with man then it must follow that God has designed a plan in order to accomplish this end. Consequently, God's plan must be a perfect plan and that plan must include you.

Proposition #5: I AM A HUMAN BEING

If you consider yourself to be a person then it is logical for you to believe that God has a personal plan for you.

So, if there is a God, and if He has revealed Himself, and if He makes sense, and if He has a perfect plan, and if He has a perfect plan for you, then you owe God a hearing.

Proposition #6: I OWE GOD A HEARING

The operative word here is "hearing." To listen to a presentation requires nothing but an open mind.

In this course, I am going to as simply as possible present

information regarding God, His plan and His purpose. I will never require of you anything but your attention. This is because God does not require more than that of you. There are no gimmicks, no duties to perform, no rituals to observe, no creeds to recite, no money to be paid. All God asks of you is objectivity and a willingness to give Him a hearing.

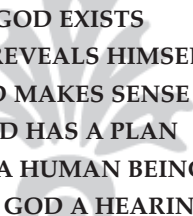
We didn't come here for you to give us something; we are here to give you something.

This may be a shock to some of you who have had some exposure to religion. Christianity is not a religion.

Religion is man's attempt to gain salvation or God's approval by human works. Christianity is a relationship between God and man based on the work of Jesus Christ on the Cross.

Religion is a satanic effort to blur the distinctions between what God has done for man and what man tries to do for God.

The issue is what God has done for man. And what He has done is provide for us a perfect plan by which we can come to know Him and live with Him forever.



**GOD EXISTS
GOD REVEALS HIMSELF
GOD MAKES SENSE
GOD HAS A PLAN
I AM A HUMAN BEING
I OWE GOD A HEARING**

CHAPTER TWO

The Three-Phase Plan of God

Phase One: Salvation

- (1) Protestant Christianity believes that salvation is obtainable by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone. All that God is free to do for man is based on the work of Christ on the cross.
- (2) Faith in the Bible is seen in two words, the noun “faith” and its verb form, translated “believe.”
- (3) For example, in Ephesians 2:8 we read:
“For by means of grace you have been saved by means of πίστις, *pistis*: faith...”

Romans 3:20, 28

Galatians 2:16

Romans 4:4

- (4) Now note Acts 16:31: “Believe (πιστεύω, *pisteuō*) on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved.”
- (5) Both are non-meritorious words. Faith must be placed in an object for it to have validity.
- (6) Belief must be directed toward an able target for it to be effective.
- (7) The Bible teaches that the only object to which saving faith can be directed is the Person and work of Jesus Christ. I Corinthians 3:11; Acts 4:12; John 14.

Phase Two: The Believer in Time

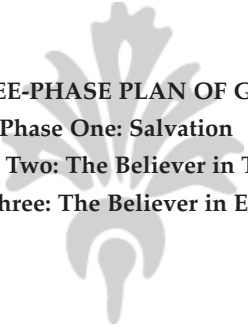
- (1) This is the post-salvation life of the believer.
- (2) The question so few people are able to answer is, "After salvation, what?"
- (3) The Bible mandates that if we are to please God we must learn His Word.
- (4) 2 Peter 3:18 says: Grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
- (5) 2 Timothy 2:15 says: Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth.
- (6) The Bereans, in Acts 17:11, tell us how intensive our study of the Word should be: The Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day ...

Phase Three: The Believer in Eternity

- (1) Physical death is no longer a problem nor is it a source of fear and trembling.
- (2) At the moment the believer dies, his soul and spirit exit the body and go immediately into the presence of God and Jesus Christ in heaven.
- (3) 2 Corinthians 5:7-8 makes this clear when it says, We walk by faith, not by sight; (8) We are confident, and willing to be away from the body (physical

death) and at home, face to face with the Lord.

- (4) The word for “home” in Greek is ἐνδημέω, *endêmeô* and means “to be among one’s people in his own place and land.”
- (5) This refers to our heavenly citizenship which begins at the moment of salvation.
- (6) However, our privilege to function in its heavenly environment is not realized until physical death.
- (7) Immediately following physical death we go instantly to heaven and are face-to-face with Christ.
- (8) The Greek word πρὸς, *pros* is best translated here “face-to-face” indicating our intimate presence with our Lord.
- (9) Human life cannot evolve from inert matter and therefore demands a Creator which also possesses these characteristics to a superior degree.



THREE-PHASE PLAN OF GOD
Phase One: Salvation
Phase Two: The Believer in Time
Phase Three: The Believer in Eternity

CHAPTER THREE

The Trinity

I. Introduction

- (1) Protestant theology is characterized by its belief in the doctrine of the Trinity.
- (2) Many “Christian” organizations and denominations reject this idea out of hand.
- (3) Again, you are free to accept or reject the information. My appeal is that you give the information an honest and objective hearing.
- (4) When a person accepts the doctrine of the Trinity he is known as a Trinitarian.
- (5) Trinitarianism: Belief in the union of three divine Personalities, namely, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit into one essence.
- (6) I believe the reason that some do not accept the doctrine of the Trinity is because they fail to note the last phrase of the definition of Trinitarianism: “...into one essence.”
- (7) “Into one essence” brings in the concept of Monotheism.

II. Monotheism

- (1) The belief that there is only one God.
- (2) It teaches that the God of the universe is the

Creator of all that exists.

- (3) Genesis begins by assuming that there is only one true God and that assumption is maintained throughout the Bible.
- (4) Although the Trinity is revealed in the Old Testament, it is done so very subtly.
- (5) Obvious references to the doctrine would have tempted Polytheism: A belief in a multiplicity of deities.
- (6) But the uses of the words Elohim (God), YHWH (Lord), and Adonai (Lord) reveal the concept of Trinity.
- (7) The New Testament teaches the Trinity while at the same time continues to hold to strict Monotheism.
- (8) 1 Corinthians 8:4 - ...there is no other God but One.

Verse 6 - ...for us there is but one God, the Father, from Whom all things come and for Whom we live.

Ephesians 4:6 - ... one God and Father of all.

1 Timothy 2:5 - For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the Man, Christ Jesus.

Galatians 3:20 - A mediator is not a go-between representing the interests of one individual, but God is One.

Mark 12:29 - "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord."

- (9) Consequently, it must be understood that orthodox Protestant Christianity subscribes to a strict Monotheism, that is, a belief in one God.
- (10) Within Monotheism, the doctrine of the Trinity is revealed.

III. The Matrix Concept

- (1) Definition: A situation within which something originates, develops or is contained.
- (2) In our analysis, the Matrix is the Monotheistic principle of "One God."
- (3) Within the matrix of Monotheism is contained the doctrine of the Trinity.
- (4) Remember, Trinitarianism identifies the Trinity as the three Personalities of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- (5) Each Personality of this Godhead possesses the same, identical essence.
- (6) Let's put it another way: God is one in essence but three in Personality.
- (7) There is an epigram which seeks to describe this phenomenon: The Trinity is both Three-in-One and One-in-Three.
- (8) However it might be more easily understood from the standpoint of mathematics.
- (9) When contemplating the Trinity from the standpoint of Personality, the equation reads:
 $1 + 1 + 1 = 3$.

- (10) When contemplating the Trinity from the standpoint of essence, the equation reads:
 $1 \times 1 \times 1 = 1$.

IV. Illustrations in Nature Revealing the Trinity

The Triune Universe

- (1) The universe is made up of three components: Time, Space, and Energy.
- (2) Time: A measurable period during which an action occurs.
- (3) Space: The boundary in which objects exist and events occur, each having position and direction.
- (4) Energy: The work that a system is capable of doing.
- (5) Energy provides the power to move objects through space for measurable periods of time.
- (6) We will now take these three components and note that each is made up of a trinity.

The Triad of Time

- (1) Time is made up of three tenses: past, present and future.
- (2) The Father is unseen, as is the future.
- (3) The Son is the revealed member of the Godhead and represents the present.
- (4) The Holy Spirit reveals divine truth by drawing on facts learned in the past.

- (5) In this example, time is analogous to the oneness of essence while past, present and future are analogous to the Personalities of the Godhead.

The Triad of Space

- (1) Space is three-dimensional: length, width and depth.
- (2) If everything were one-dimensional then everything would be invisible.
- (3) A second dimension must be evident for the first to be seen.
- (4) God the Father cannot be "seen" unless He is revealed by the Son.
- (5) 1 John 4:12 - No man has seen God at any time. John 14:9b - "He that has seen Me has seen the Father."
- (6) Space also requires a dimension of depth.
- (7) Whereas length is invisible without width, neither may become reality without depth.
- (8) The Holy Spirit provides us with the depth of understanding necessary to experience the reality of the Trinity.
- (9) In this example, space is analogous to the oneness of essence while the dimensions of length, width and depth are analogous to the three Personalities of the Godhead.

The Triad of Light

- (1) Note 1 John 1:5: God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.
- (2) Visible light is that portion of the electromagnetic spectrum, which is detected by the human eye.
- (3) This electromagnetic radiation is energy moving through space at 186,242.4 miles per second.
- (4) This energy is transmitted in wavelengths varying from “short” to “long” frequencies.
- (5) Near the middle of this spectrum is where visible light occurs.
- (6) The “short” frequencies are that portion of invisible light waves called ultraviolet.
- (7) Ultraviolet frequencies can neither be seen nor felt.
- (8) The “long” frequencies are that portion of the invisible light waves called infrared.
- (9) Infrared cannot be seen but they can be felt by warming the substance on which they fall.
- (10) By representative analogy, these three frequency ranges represent the personalities of the Trinity:
 - (a) Ultraviolet represents the Father: Neither seen nor felt.
 - (b) Visible light represents the Son: Both seen and felt.

- (c) Infrared represents the Holy Spirit: Not seen but felt.

Analysis

- (1) Visible light, when directed through a prism, is separated into a rainbow of colors called a “spectrum.”
- (2) The spectrum actually breaks down the light ray into its component parts called “frequencies.”
- (3) Each frequency is perceived by the human eye as a separate color.
- (4) Because of the make up of visible light, the human eye perceives all colors as a combination of three primary frequencies: red, green and violet.
- (5) Those of you with an art background please note: The three primaries of visible light are different from the three primaries of solids. Those dealt with in the art world as primaries are yellow, cyan and magenta.
- (6) A beam of white light is analogous to the essence of God, or the matrix.
- (7) Each beam of white light contains three primaries: red, green and violet.
- (8) This triad is analogous to the three Personalities of the Trinity.
- (9) Illustrations:
 - (a) Eggs: shell, white, yolk
 - (b) A man: son, husband, father

CHAPTER FOUR The Essence of God

I. Sovereignty

- (1) Definition: God has supreme volition. He has unqualified and undisputed ascendancy and autonomy. He is in charge.
- (2) Deuteronomy 4:39 - The Lord is God in heaven above and on the earth below. There is no other.

1 Samuel 2:6 - The Lord brings death and makes alive; He brings down to the grave and raises up.

Verse 7 - The Lord sends poverty and wealth; He humbles and He exalts.

1 Chronicles 29:11 - Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor, for everything in heaven and earth is Yours. Yours, O Lord, is the kingdom; You are exalted as Head over all.

- (3) Conclusion: God is the ultimate and absolute Authority of the universe.

II. Righteousness

- (1) Definition: God is totally and completely correct in all His thoughts, decisions and actions. He is infinitely accurate since He has never been guilty of error nor subject to question. God's righteousness is independent and cannot be compared with

someone else. Consequently, God's perfect righteousness rejects human standards of self-righteousness. See Isaiah 64:6.

- (2) Psalms 145:17 - The Lord is righteous in all His ways...

2 Corinthians 5:21 - For God has made Christ, Who had no sin, to be sin for us, so that we might become the righteousness of God in him.

Romans 3:22 - This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe.

- (3) Conclusion: God is the ultimate and absolute Standard of the universe.

III. Justice

- (1) Definition: God cannot be unfair; He demands that all variance to His standards be condemned while all adherence be rewarded. He is objective, unprejudiced, and unbiased and is completely fair in His judgments. God's justice is expressed to the human race in two categories: (1) blessing; and (2) cursing.

- (2) 2 Chronicles 19:7 - Let the fear of the Lord be upon you. Judge carefully, for with the Lord our God there is no injustice or partiality or bribery.

Deuteronomy 32:4 - He is the Rock, His ways are perfect, and all His ways are just. A faithful God Who does no wrong. Upright and just is He.

Job 37:23 - The Almighty is beyond our reach and exalted in power; in His justice and great

righteousness, He does not oppress.

Romans 3:25 - God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in His blood.

Verse 26 - He did this to demonstrate His justice at the present time, so as to be just and the One Who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.

Romans 2:11 - God does not show favoritism.

- (3) Conclusion: God is the ultimate and absolute Judge of the universe.

BAS-03

IV. Love

- (1) Definition: God's love is the motivator of His grace. God's love can be described in two categories: Unconditional and personal. God has unconditional love for the entire human race. (John 3:16) He has personal love for His children who believe in Christ for salvation. Romans 8:37-38
- (2) The love that God has for the unbeliever is unconditional and is stated in John 3:16, "For God loved the world so much that He gave His uniquely born Son, so that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."
- (3) The person who accepts God's invitation to eternal life through faith in Christ becomes the recipient of His personal love as noted in 1 John 4:19 - We love because He first loved us.

Romans 8:37 - In all these things we are more than

conquerors through Him Who loved us.

Verse 38 - For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers,

Verse 39 - neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- (4) Conclusion: God is the ultimate and absolute Benefactor of the universe.

V. Eternal Life

- (1) Definition: God has neither beginning nor end. There never has been a time when God did not exist. There never will be a time when God does not exist. His existence goes beyond time and space and is eternal.
- (2) Exodus 3:13 - And Moses said unto God, "Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' then what shall I tell them?"

Verse 14 - God said to Moses, "I AM THAT I AM;" and He said, "This is what you are to say to the children of Israel: 'I AM has sent me to you.'"

Verse 15 - God also said to Moses, "Say to the children of Israel, 'The Lord, the God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob—has sent me to you. This is My name forever, the name by which I am to be remembered from generation to generation.'"

- (3) The sentence, I AM THAT I AM —*hayah sher hayah*—is the Hebrew verb “to be.” It is God’s identification of Himself.
- (4) The sentence is very difficult to translate but converts to English in the following ways:
 - a. “I am the being One, I am He who is.”
 - b. “I am He who I will be.”
 - c. “I was who I was, I am who I am.”
 - d. “I shall be who I shall be.”
 - e. “I am He who exists.”
- (5) All these translations carry the idea of the Eternally Existing One.
- (6) Jesus Christ associated Himself with this eternal life concept on several occasions.
- (7) Revelation 1:8 - “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “Who is (present), Who was (eternity past), and Who is to come (future), the Almighty.”
- (8) Jesus was in constant debate with several of the Jewish sects during His earthly ministry. One of these groups was the Pharisees.
- (9) As a part of our study of Eternal Life, let’s take a look at John, Chapter 8.
- (10) The Pharisees asked in verse 53 - “Are you greater than our father Abraham? He died, and so did the prophets. Who do you think you are?”
- (11) To this query our Lord responded in Verse 54 - “If I glorify Myself, My glory means nothing. My

Father Whom you claim as your God is the One Who glorifies Me.”

Verse 55 - “Though you do not know Him, I know Him. If I said I did not, I would be a liar like you, but I do know Him and keep His Word.”

Verse 56 - “Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing My day; He saw it and was glad.”

- (12) At this point the Jews responded in Verse 57 - “You are not yet 50 years old and you have seen Abraham!”
- (13) To this our Lord answered with the well-known formula which speaks of both self-existence and eternal life - “I tell you the truth, before Abraham was born - ἐγὼ εἰμι, *egô eimi*-I am!”
- (14) Indicating the effect this term had on the Jews they immediately picked up stones with which to stone Him in verse 59.
- (15) “I am” implies eternal existence which includes existence during the lifetime of Abraham.
- (16) “I am” is a term recognized by the Jews as a claim to the title of deity.
- (17) On the night He was betrayed, one of His trials was before the Jewish ruling body called the Sanhedrin and its High Priest Caiaphas.
- (18) In Mark 14:61, Caiaphas asked Jesus, “Are you the Christ (meaning the Messiah), the Son of the Blessed One?”

Jesus responded in Verse 62, "I am."

- (19) Caiphias was enraged and unlawfully condemned Christ of the capital crime of blasphemy in Verse 63, "Why do we need any more witnesses?"

Verse 64 - You have heard the blasphemy. What do you think?" They all (members of the Sanhedrin) condemned Him as worthy of death.

Verse 65 - Then some began to spit at Him; they blindfolded Him, struck Him with their fists, and said, "Prophesy!" Then the guards took Him and beat Him.

- (20) Christ as the great I AM is the only source of salvation available to mankind.

John 14:6 - Jesus answered, "I am the way the truth and the life. No man comes to the Father except through Me."

- (21) Conclusion: God is the ultimate and absolute Being of the universe.

VI. Omniscience

- (1) Definition: God knows all that is knowable. For all of eternity God has known in the most intricate and minute detail all the thoughts, decisions and actions of history, their causes and effects, and their relationships to each other.
- (2) In addition, God has always known all of the potentialities, probabilities and alternatives of history and the ways they would have changed history had man's free will decisions so chosen.

- (3) God is not gaining in knowledge because there is nothing which He does not know.
- (4) The English language uses the Latin prefix *omni-* to mean "all."
- (5) The Latin *scientia* means knowledge.
- (6) Thus, "omniscience" means one who possesses knowledge of all things.
- (7) Logically, then, God's knowledge cannot be limited by time or even human history.
- (8) Of God's omniscient knowledge, that portion which He desires for us to know is found in the completed canon of Scripture.

Deuteronomy 29:29 - The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may follow all the words of His law.

- (9) 1 Chronicles 28:9 - ... the Lord searches every heart and understands every motive behind the thoughts.

Psalms 139:1 - O Lord, you have searched me and You know me.

Verse 2 - You know when I sit and when I rise;
You perceive my thoughts from afar.

Verse 3 - You discern my going out and my
lying down; You are familiar with all my ways.

Verse 4 - Before a word is on my tongue You

know it completely, O Lord.

Verse 5 - You hem me in— behind and before;
You have laid Your hand upon me.

Verse 6 - Such knowledge is too wonderful
for me, too lofty for me to obtain.

Isaiah 46:10 - I make known the end from the
beginning, from ancient times what is still to
come. I say: My purpose will stand, and I will
do all that I please.

Matthew 10:29 - ...“not one (sparrow) will fall
to the ground apart from the will of your Father.

Verse 30 - Even the very hairs of your head
are numbered.”

Hebrews 4:13 - Nothing in all creation is hidden
from God’s sight. Everything is uncovered and
laid bare before the eyes of Him to Whom we
must give account.

- (10) Conclusion: God is the ultimate and absolute
Intellect of the universe.

BAS-04

VII. Omnipotence

- (1) Definition: God is limitless in His ability and
power. He is able to accomplish whatsoever
He wills, whensoever He pleases, and to do so
without regard to any outside circumstance,
influence, interference or assistance.

- (2) The word literally means that God is all-powerful.
- (3) There is no limit on God's power to accomplish anything He wishes.
- (4) However, there are certain restraints on what He allows Himself to do.
- (5) For example:

2 Peter 3:9 - (The Lord) is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish but that everyone should come to repentance.

Romans 1:16 - I am not ashamed of the Gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes.

- (6) These two verses make it clear that it is God's desire for everyone to be saved.
- (7) His omnipotence will save anyone who believes.
- (8) However it is clear that many will not be saved.

Revelation 20:15 - If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

- (9) When God's omnipotence overrules certain scientific laws as observed by man, these divine events are classified theologically as miracles.
- (10) For example: God the Father locked the earth in its orbit at the request of Joshua.

Joshua 10:12 - On the day the Lord gave the

Amorites over to Israel, Joshua said to the Lord in the presence of Israel: "O sun, stand still over Gibeon, O moon over the Valley of Aijalon."

Verse 13 - So the sun stood still, and the moon stopped, till the nation avenged itself on its enemies, as it is written in the Book of Jashar. The sun stopped in the middle of the sky and delayed going down about a full day (24 hours.).

Verse 14 - There has never been a day like it before or since, a day when the Lord listened to man. Surely the Lord was fighting for Israel!

- (11) Another similar event is noted in 2 Kings 20 where God reversed the earth in its orbit at the request of Isaiah.

2 Kings 20:8 - Hezekiah had asked Isaiah, "What will be the sign that I will go up to the temple of the Lord on the third day from now?"

Verse 9 - Isaiah answered, "This is the Lord's sign to you that the Lord will do what He has promised: Shall the shadow go forward ten steps or shall it go back ten steps?"

Verse 10 - "It is a simple matter for the shadow to go forward ten steps," said Hezekiah. "Rather, have it go back ten steps."

Verse 11 - Then the prophet Isaiah called upon the Lord and the Lord made the shadow go back the ten steps it had gone down on the stairway of Ahaz.

- (12) A parallel account of this miracle is given in Isaiah 38:6-8.

- (13) Jesus Christ turned water into wine at the marriage in Cana of Galilee.

John 2:6 - Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from 20 to 30 gallons.

Verse 7 - Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water." So they filled them to the brim.

Verse 8 - Then He told them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet."

Verse 9 - They did so, and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine.

- (14) The Holy Spirit worked a miracle when he fertilized Mary's ovum in the conception of the humanity of Jesus Christ.

Luke 1:34 - "How will this (my pregnancy) be," Mary asked the angel, "Since I am a virgin?"

Verse 35 - The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy One Who is born will be called the Son of God."

- (15) Conclusion: God is the ultimate and absolute Power of the universe.

VIII. Omnipresence

- (1) Definition: God is all places at all times, observing at once all events of history. His omnipresence allows Him to transcend both time and space.

- (2) As a result of His attribute of being in all places at all times, God is the perfect Judge.
- (3) Omnipresence means that He is the Eyewitness to all events from Eternity Past to Eternity Future.
- (4) He observes all things, which happen in all places at all times and He does so simultaneously.
- (5) This in no way implies that God is in everything.
- (6) Such a belief is the foundation of the religion called Pantheism.
- (7) Pantheism teaches that the contents of the universe taken as a whole is God.
- (8) In fact, the word "pantheism" literally means that everything is God.
- (9) This is not true. God is God and He is everywhere at all times.
- (10) However, you do not see God in the sunset, or in a flower, or in a waterfall.
- (11) What you see are the results of His creative work.
- (12) He is present and observes these things but these things are not God.
- (13) The omnipresence of God is seen in many passages of Scripture.

Psalms 139:7 - Where can I go from Your Spirit?
Where can I flee from Your presence?

Verse 8 - If I go up to the heavens, You are there;
if I make my bed in the depths, You are there.

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

Verse 10 - Even there Your hand will guide me,
Your right hand will hold me fast.

Proverbs 15:3 - The eyes of the Lord are everywhere,
keeping watch on the wicked and the good.

Hebrews 4:13 - Nothing in all creation is hidden
from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and
laid bare before the eyes of Him to Whom we
must give account.

- (14) In fact, throughout Scripture we see the term,
"His eyes," utilized to convey the idea of God's
omnipresence.
- (15) Conclusion: God is the ultimate and absolute
Monitor of the universe.

IX. Immutability

- (1) Definition: God does not change. He is the same
yesterday, today and forever (Hebrews 13:8). He is
neither capable of nor susceptible to change which
guarantees that all His attributes remain constant.
- (2) Immutability, the fact God never changes, and
omnipotence, God's unlimited power, produces
His faithfulness.
- (3) Faithfulness is God's reputation for doing what
He says He will do.

- (4) His omnipotence gives Him the power to accomplish whatever He says.
- (5) His immutability means that He can't go back on His word once given.
- (6) The result is that He keeps His promises without fail and He honors His Word without question.
- (7) Numbers 23:19 - God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should change His mind. Does He speak and then not act: Does He promise and not fulfill?

1 Kings 8:56 - "Praise be to the Lord, Who has given rest to His people Israel just as He promised. Not one word has failed of all the good promises He gave through His servant Moses."

Hebrews 1:10 - "In the beginning, O Lord, You laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands.

Verse 11 - They will perish, but You remain; they will all wear out like a garment.

Verse 12 - You will roll them up like a robe; like a garment they will be changed. But You remain the same, and Your years will never end."

- (8) Conclusion: God is the ultimate and absolute Stabilizer of the universe.

X. Veracity

- (1) Definition: God is perfect truthfulness. He has never been or ever will be in error. He is incapable

of lying. We can depend on Him to tell us the truth.

- (2) The Bible is the sum total of God's veracity to the human race.
- (3) Since He can never change under immutability and is perfect truthfulness under veracity, then we are forced to conclude that the Bible is 100% correct in all of its statements.
- (4) Psalms 33:4 - The Word of the Lord is right and true; He is faithful in all He does.

Psalms 119:142 - Your righteousness is everlasting and Your law is true.

John 17:17 - "Sanctify them by the truth; Your Word is truth."

John 1:1 - In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Verse 14 - The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the One and Only, Who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 14:6 - "I am the way the truth and the life. No man comes to the Father except through Me."

- (5) Conclusion: God is the ultimate and absolute Counselor of the universe.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Three Personalities of the Trinity

I. Introduction

- (1) All we are allowed to know about God, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit is contained in the completed canon of Scripture.
- (2) One of the problems inherent in God's effort to communicate His thoughts to us is the fact that He has supernatural intelligence while we possess only a human mentality.
- (3) In an effort to communicate with the human race, God uses what we will call "language of accommodation."
- (4) It will ascribe to God certain human thoughts, emotions or sins that He does not possess in order to communicate His policies and decisions within a human frame of reference.
- (5) Genesis 6:6 makes this statement: It *repented* the Lord that He had made man on the earth...
- (6) Look at the English word "repent": To change one's mind with regard to past action or conduct because of regret or dissatisfaction. The awareness of one's moral or spiritual shortcomings and a resultant change of mind.
- (7) The immediate question, which arises, is: In view of our recent study of divine essence, how can

God repent if He has never sinned?

- (8) Was there something wrong with His decision to create the human race?
- (9) The Old Testament is written in Hebrew and the word found here in verse 6, which is translated “repent”, is *nacham*.
- (10) *Nacham* is the Hebrew equivalent of the New Testament Greek’s μετανοέω, *metanoëô*, both of which mean to “change one’s mind.”
- (11) Neither word has anything to do with feeling sorry for one’s sins.
- (12) But now another question emerges: In view of our recent study of divine essence, how can God change His mind?
- (13) The answer is that He doesn’t. God has a set of absolute standards to which man must submit.
- (14) When man fails to submit to these standards then it is classified as sin and God’s righteousness requires that divine justice discipline the individual.
- (15) Whenever mankind follows the standards of God, righteousness demands that divine justice bless the individual.
- (16) The principle is that God cannot do anything that would compromise any attribute of His divine essence.
- (17) The problem is that man does change and in so doing requires that God impose on man the

standards compatible with human behavior.

- (18) In Genesis 6, the human race reached the ultimate in degeneracy and degradation.
- (19) Verse 6 says that God repented, i.e., changed His mind about His creation of man.
- (20) But this is “language of accommodation” describing in human terms God’s attitude toward human failure.
- (21) God did not change His mind about creating the human race: His righteous standards required that justice switch from a status of blessing to one of discipline.
- (22) Another “language of accommodation” ascribes to God certain portions of the human anatomy which He does not possess in order to communicate His *modus operandi*.
- (23) We have just seen passages that spoke of the “eyes of the Lord.”
- (24) God does not have eyes, but “language of accommodation” helps us understand the concept of omnipresence.
- (25) 1 Peter 3:12 contains three:
The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and His ears are attentive to their prayers (unique prerogative of the royal priest), but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.
- (26) This verse shows that God blesses the positive believer while He disciplines the negative believer.

II. God the Father

- (1) We are about to see that the three Members of the Trinity are explained to us in “language of accommodation.”
- (2) These terms are designed to teach the function each Member has in the grace plan of God.
- (3) God is called the Father, who in human frame of reference is the head and planner of the household.
- (4) He is said to be the Father of all believers in 1 Corinthians 8:6 - ...for us there is but one God, the Father, from Whom all things came and for Whom we live...
- (5) He is the Father of Jesus Christ as is noted in Chapter 1, verse 3 of the following books: 2 Corinthians; Ephesians; Colossians; 1 Peter; 1 John and 2 John.
- (6) He is also said to be the Father of all believers in Galatians 3:26 - You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.
- (7) Such a verse as this emphasizes the fact that all men are not the children of God; only those who have expressed personal faith in Christ for their eternal salvation.
- (8) Since only those who accept Christ as Savior are children of God then we must conclude that not all men are children of God but only the few.

III. God the Son

- (1) In Eternity Past, Jesus Christ, as a co-equal Member of the Trinity, agreed from His own volition to execute the plan of the Father.
- (2) This plan included a means of salvation for fallen humanity. (Genesis 3)
- (3) Since man had become sinful and was therefore lost in his sins, a Savior was needed to rectify the problem.
- (4) That Savior had to serve as a Mediator, which is a person who is equal to both parties in a dispute.
- (5) Jesus Christ is history's only qualified candidate for such mediation. 1 Timothy 2:5 - There is one God and one Mediator between God and men—the man Christ Jesus.
- (6) He is undiminished deity and true humanity in one Person forever. Hebrews 10:5a - "A body you have prepared for me." Hebrews 10:7c - "I have continued to do your will."
- (7) To be a qualified Mediator, Jesus Christ had to be a sinless Man, guiltless of all charges.
- (8) Had Christ, as a Man, been guilty of even one sin, He Himself would be in need of a Mediator. James 2:10 - Whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it.
- (9) Jesus must also be God, not merely an agent or representative. (John 1:1, 14)

- (10) Since Christ was both God and perfect humanity in one Person, His sacrificial, spiritual death on the cross was found acceptable by God the Father to forgive man of his sins.
- (11) The union of both deity and humanity in one Person is called in theology the hypostatic union.
- (12) Definition: In the Person of Christ are two beings, inseparably united, without mixture or loss of separate identity, without loss of transfer of properties or attributes, the union being personal and eternal.
- (13) Consequently, Jesus Christ is the unique Person of the universe. (Matthew 28:6; Acts 1:9-11; Hebrews 12:2; 1 Thessalonians 3:13)
- (14) Since it is in hypostatic union that Jesus Christ fulfills the salvation plan of God, He is therefore called the Son of God since He is submissive to that plan.
- (15) This submission is seen in Philippians 2:6-11

Verse 6 - Christ Jesus, Who being in the essence of God, did not consider equality with God something to be maintained,

Verse 7 - but emptied Himself, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.

Verse 8 - And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to death—even the death of the cross!

Verse 9 - Therefore God exalted Him to the

highest place (resurrection, ascension and session) and gave Him the royal title that is above every name,

Verse 10 - that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven (angelic creation) and on earth (those alive at the resurrection of the Church) and under the earth (those who are physically dead at the resurrection of the church),

Verse 11 - and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

- (16) Thus, God the Father was the *Author* of a three-fold plan.
- (17) Jesus Christ was to *execute* Phase I of the plan in the Virgin Birth, Hypostatic Union, Incarnation and the work on the Cross.
- (18) The Holy Spirit is to *explain* the Christian way of life to the believer in Phase II of the plan.

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IV. God the Holy Spirit

- (1) The Holy Spirit is our Teacher, explaining to us the lifestyle of the believer.
- (2) John 14:26 - "But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, Whom the Father will send in My name, will teach you all things and will bring to your remembrance everything I have said to you."
- (3) The Holy Spirit is spoken of as a Person in the Bible as per 2 Corinthians 13:14 - May the grace

of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

- (4) All the attributes of deity are attributed in Scripture to both Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.
- (5) We do not have time to cite them all in this study but I will provide some references for you. Look up and read all of these references which document the fact that both Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit are said by the Bible to possess all the attributes of deity.

Jesus Christ

Sovereignty: Matthew 28:18; Hebrews 1:8-9; 2:8b

Righteousness and Justice combined under the term Holy: Luke 1:35; Hebrews 7:26; 2 Timothy 4:8; 1 John 2:1; Revelation 16:7

Love: John 13:34; 15:9

Eternal Life: John 1:1; 8:58; Colossians 1:16-17; 1 John 5:11-13

Omniscience: Matthew 9:4; John 2:24-25; 10:15; 21:17

Omnipotence: Matthew 24:30; Philippians 3:21; Hebrews 1:3

Omnipresence: Matthew 18:29; 28:20; John 14:23

Immutability: Hebrews 1:12b; 13:8

Veracity: John 1:14,17; 14:6; Ephesians 4:21; Revelation 3:7

The Holy Spirit

Sovereignty: 1 Corinthians 12:11.

Righteousness and Justice combined under the term Holy: 2 Corinthians 13:14; Romans 14:17; Isaiah 4:4

Love: Romans 15:30; Galatians 5:22

Eternal Life: Hebrews 9:14

Omniscience: Acts 6:10; 1 Corinthians 2:10

Omnipotence: Luke 4:14; Romans 15:19

Omnipresence: Psalm 139:7-12

Immutability: Ephesians 4:30

Veracity: John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13; 1 John 5:6

CHAPTER SIX

Review

So far in our basic studies we have established the following:

- (1) From logic we have determined that God exists.

If God exists then in order for us to know Him He must reveal Himself. If God chooses to reveal Himself then He must make sense. For God to make sense He must be organized and therefore He must have a plan. Obviously if He chooses to reveal himself to us then that plan must be designed for the human race. If we are humans then we owe God a hearing.

- (2) The Three-Phase Plan of God

Phase 1: Salvation
Phase 2: Life in time
Phase 3: Life in eternity

- (3) The Trinity

Illustrations from nature:

The Universe
Time
Space
Light

(4) The Essence of God

Sovereignty
Righteousness
Justice
Love
Eternal Life
Omniscience
Omnipotence
Omnipresence
Immutability
Veracity

(5) The Three Personalities of the Trinity

God the Father. Author of the plan.
God the Son. Executor of the plan.
God the Holy Spirit. Revealer of the plan.



CHAPTER SEVEN

The Fall of Man in the Garden

- (1) We have been studying who and what God is.
- (2) Even the most arrogant person is forced to admit that as humans we can never measure up to the standards found in God's perfect essence.
- (3) In fact, we are found by the righteousness and justice of God to be unacceptable to Him.
- (4) Why are we unacceptable to God and is it possible to establish any sort of a relationship with Him?
- (5) The answer to the first question is found in Romans 3:23, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God."
- (6) The answer to the second is found in 1 John 2:2, "Christ is the atoning sacrifice for our sins and not for ours only but for the sins of the entire world."
- (7) Let's take a quick look at sin, its cause and how we are condemned by it.
- (8) First of all, what is sin? Sin is the violation of any of the commands of Scripture. The Bible gives a set of principles made up of dos and don'ts. When we violate these mandates we have sinned.
- (9) The first command given the human species is found in Genesis 2:16 - The Lord God (Jehovah Elohim: Jesus Christ) commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden;

Verse 17 - "but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of human good and evil, for in the day that you eat thereof, dying, you shall surely die."

- (10) In Genesis 3 we see the first satanic attack on the plan of God.
- (11) Verse 1 - Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God (Elohim) really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden?'"
- (12) Here we see a subtle attack by Satan on the thinking of the woman. He is about to find out how well she has been paying attention in Bible class. By using "God," Satan recognizes there is a supreme being but rejects Christ.
- (13) Verse 2 - The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat from the fruit of the trees in the garden,

Verse 3 - but God (Elohim) did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"
- (14) One of the major problems throughout history regarding man's understanding God is man's inability to stick with the facts.
- (15) Note what Christ did say: "You may not eat from the tree of the knowledge of human good and evil."
- (16) He said nothing about touching the fruit. The mandate was for them not to eat.
- (17) The woman added to the Word. This is blasphemy which has been practiced throughout Christendom

down to this very hour.

- (18) Christ also said at the end of Genesis 2:17 that if they did eat, “dying they would surely die.”
- (19) What he was saying was that if you break this command and eat the forbidden fruit, you will die spiritual death.
- (20) Spiritual death is separation from God in which sin constructs a barrier between God and man.
- (21) As a result of this spiritual death, mankind will eventually suffer physical death.
- (22) The emphasis is on the immaterial—the spiritual death, not the material—physical death.
- (23) However the woman emphasized the less important physical death, ignoring the problem which initiates the physical death, i.e., spiritual death.
- (24) She says, “If we eat or touch it we will die (physical death).”
- (25) Please note that her motivation not to eat or touch, up to this point, was not a concern for the spiritual ramifications but the physical.
- (26) Note that the woman is in reality ignorant of what Christ actually said. As a result she has both added to and taken from His Word.
- (27) Deuteronomy 4:2 - “Do not add to what I command you and do not subtract from it, but keep the commands of the Lord your God that I give you.”

Proverbs 30:6 - Do not add to His words, or he will rebuke you and prove you a liar.

Revelation 22:18-19

- (28) Ishah has now revealed the contents of her soul to Satan. He now knows what she knows and how she thinks.
- (29) Genesis 3:4 - “You will not surely die,” the serpent said to the woman.
- (30) Please note that as is always the case, Satan is using an agent to distort the Word of God.
- (31) One of Satan’s favorite methods of promoting his insidious and nefarious schemes is the “let-me-show-you-how-you-are-being-oppressed” approach.

2 Corinthians 11:13 - Such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, masquerading as apostles of Christ.

Verse 14 - And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light.

Verse 15 - It is not surprising, then, if his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve.

- (32) Note the very first thing Satan attacks in the Bible is the Word of God itself: “You will not surely die.”
- (33) Please note the subtlety of this attack. Satan immediately picked up on the woman’s emphasis of physical death and her ignorance of spiritual death.

- (34) He was able to discern that she thought to eat or touch the tree meant immediate physical death.
- (35) Satan jumped on this with a half-truth: "You will not surely die."
- (36) This was partially true. By eating the fruit she would not instantly keel over dead which is what she imagined.
- (37) But she would instantly die spiritual death which would eventually lead to physical death.
- (38) Her ignorance of spiritual death and emphasis on the material body led to her deception.
- (39) When Satan told her she wouldn't die for eating the fruit, she became very interested.
- (40) Genesis 3:5 - "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."
- (41) Here Satan presents the false doctrine which denies the relationship between sin and punishment.
- (42) He further appeals to her arrogance by implying that God does not want her to be as smart as He is.
- (43) She is led to believe that to eat the fruit will not result in punishment but instead will put her on a par with God.
- (44) Genesis 3:6 - When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate it.

- (45) This was the first sin in human history. A barrier was established between the first couple and God.
- (46) The only way this barrier can be removed is through faith in Jesus Christ.
- (47) Ephesians 2:1 - As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and your sins...
- (48) This sinful nature tempts man to sin. Where the sin nature is the source of all temptation, human volition is the source of all sin.
- (49) So when we sin the following occurs: The will of God is resisted, the Word of God is rejected and the way of God is deserted.
- (50) A barrier exists between us and God and we are hopeless and helpless to do anything about it.
- (51) Hopeless in the sense that being separated from God means no relationship with Him; helpless in the sense that we are powerless to do anything about it.
- (52) Consequently, we are in need of a Savior Who can remove the barrier and place us in an acceptable relationship with God.
- (53) Once we accept Christ as Savior, the barrier is removed and we become a new spiritual species known as the children of God.
- (54) 2 Corinthians 5:17 - If anyone is in Christ, he is a new spiritual species. The old things (position in Adam; Spiritual Death and Old Sin Nature) have lost their power; behold, all things have become new (position in Christ; God's provision of special advantages to

the believer at salvation).

Verse 18 - Now all these things are from God
Who reconciled us to Himself through Christ...

(55) Reconciliation is a biblical term which means:
The sum total of all that Christ did on the Cross
in removing the barrier between God and sinful
man producing peace between the two parties.

(56) This barrier is said to be removed by Christ.

(57) But we have already learned that although God
desires that all come to salvation, not all will.

2 Peter 3:9 - The Lord is patient with you, not
wanting anyone to perish but that everyone
should come to repentance.

(58) Therefore, how does one appropriate the advantages
of the barrier's removal?

(59) Or, to put it another way, what must one do to be
saved?

(60) First of all, let's take a quick look at how one is
not saved.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Nine False Approaches to Salvation

- (1) **Verbal:** Requires you to repent of all your personal sins. The idea that in order to be saved you must feel sorry for your sins and to verbally renounce them.

This mistakenly assumes that the English definition for the word repent is the same as that of the Greek word found in the Bible.

The Greek word which is translated by the English word "repent" is μετανοέω, *metanoëô* which simply means "to change your mind." And what you are commanded to change your mind about is Jesus Christ as Savior.

No verbal promises are necessary; no renunciation of sins is required.

- (2) **Commitment Salvation:** This implies that one must make a commitment to Jesus Christ before he is saved. This usually means attending church, giving up your wild and woolly ways, and serving around the church.

But to do such things is simply the result of a believer who is growing in grace. They are not the conditions of salvation. God takes you just the way you are and through doctrine molds you into the person He wants you to be.

- (3) **Lordship Salvation:** This is based on the epigram: "If Christ is not Lord *of* all, He is not Lord *at* all."

But Jesus Christ is Lord whether we accept that fact or not. At salvation the new believer cannot be fully aware of all the aspects of the Person of Christ.

All that is required for salvation is accepting Christ's work on the cross as the solution to our sin problem. The understanding that He is the Lord of our life comes with spiritual growth.

- (4) **Ritual Salvation:** Includes informing a person that when he accepts Christ as Savior he must prove this belief by performing some ritual: Baptism, circumcision, observation of the Eucharist. But none of these are required of the unbeliever for salvation. Baptism and observation of the Eucharist are practiced by the believer after salvation. Baptism is optional while observing the Eucharist is commanded.
- (5) **Morality for Salvation:** Some people do not accept Christ as Savior because they think they are not yet good enough and want to wait until they get better.

This is an attempt really to be saved by keeping the law. To "get better" means to improve as a person in God's eyes by doing things that might please Him.

But Romans 3:20 says - By works of the law, no human shall be justified in His sight. The purpose of the law is the knowledge of sin.

Justification in God's eyes is only possible through faith in Christ. Romans 5:1 - Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Morality is no virtue since morality is required of the entire human race. Morality does not save. Only faith in Christ as personal Savior can save.

- (6) **Salvation by Emotion:** The claim that if you do not feel saved then you aren't saved. Many allege that if you do not weep tears of repentance you aren't saved. Others maintain that if you do not speak in tongues you are not saved. But salvation remains a simple act of positive volition toward the claim that Jesus Christ is our God/Man Savior and that by believing in Him we might have eternal life.
- (7) **Salvation by Church Membership:** It is ridiculous to claim that salvation is only possible by believing in Christ plus joining the church. If this were true, no one in the Old Testament could be saved, i.e., Moses, Abraham, Elijah, Jeremiah, David, et al., since the local church was developed historically after the resurrection of Christ.
- (8) **Salvation by Psychological Works:** Associates faith in Christ with raising your hand as you accept Christ so others will know; coming forward for a public profession of faith; walking aisles; weeping at the altar.
- (9) **Reverse Invitation Salvation:** Inviting Christ into your life or inviting Christ into your heart. When a human being first hears the Gospel he is spiritually dead. There is a barrier between him and God. God looks on that person as totally depraved and unrighteous.

Such a depraved person is not qualified to invite Jesus Christ anywhere. And most certainly such an invitation is not worthy of saving his soul.

Inviting Christ into your life or heart excludes placing your faith in Christ for salvation.

They are very subtle works but works they are. You do the inviting. This is human action.

“Believe” is a transitive verb. In other words, it is a verb which must have a direct object. That direct object is Christ.

He did the work on the cross. If you believe that, you are saved.

What Must One Do to be Saved?

I have to fight a desire to be melodramatic here. I would love to verbalize a grandiose lead-in to this subject. Such as: “Now I am going to teach you the technique, process and procedure whereby you may obtain eternal life and appropriate the salvation of your souls. We are now at the place in our study where I am going to inform you, from the Bible, what you must do to be saved.”

I would then say something like: “Now place a heading on your paper which reads, ‘What I must do to be saved.’ At the end of my lesson everything listed under that heading is what is required of you.”

I would then bow my head and offer the closing benediction and we would all go home.

You would be left with a piece of paper with a question at the top but absolutely nothing which you can do to be saved. God has taken care of it all. All that is asked of you is to believe it.

In the Greek of the New Testament there is one word which describes our decision to accept Christ as Savior. It has a noun form and a verb form.

The noun form is πίστις, *pistis* and is translated into the English by the word “faith.”

The verb form is πιστεύω, *pisteuô* and is translated into English by the word “believe.” The verb “believe” is a transitive verb. It must have a direct object and Jesus Christ is that direct object.

Consequently, to “believe” has no virtue or value unless it has an effective object. Remember, to say “I believe” has no logical impact. To say “I believe in Jesus Christ” is a logical statement. Or, you could say, “I have faith in Jesus Christ.”

Definition: To believe or to have faith is a firm conviction producing a full acknowledgement of God’s revelation of truth.

With regard to salvation that revelation of truth is Jesus Christ. Your faith in Him and your belief that He has saved your soul through His work on the cross produces salvation for you. The Scripture is filled with passages which clearly state that this is all that is required for salvation:

- (1) John 3:15 - “Everyone who believes in Him may have eternal life.

Verse 16 - For God loved the world so much that He gave His uniquely born Son in order that anyone who believes in Him shall never perish, but have eternal life.”

- (2) John 3:18 - “He who believes in Him is not judged but he who does not believe has been judged already because he has not believed in the unique person of the Son of God.”
- (3) John 3:36 - “He who believes in the Son has eternal life. He who does not believe in the Son of God will not see eternal life but the wrath of God abides on him.”

- (4) John 6:47 - "Truly I say to you, He who believes in Me has eternal life."
- (5) John 11:25a - "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me shall live even if he dies."
- (6) John 20:31 - These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have eternal life in His name.
- (7) Acts 16:31 - "Believe on the Lord Jesus and you shall be saved."
- (8) Romans 1:16 - I'm not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. It is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first also to the Gentile.
- (9) Romans 3:22 - Even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe.
- (10) Romans 3:28 - For we maintain that a person is justified by faith apart from the works of the law.
- (11) Galatians 2:16 - Nevertheless, knowing that a person is not justified by the works of the law but through faith in Christ Jesus even we have believed in Christ Jesus that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law. By works of the law, no person will ever be justified.
- (12) Galatians 3:26 - For all of you are the sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus. (Note: Not faith in Christ Jesus + anything.)

(13) 1 John 5:11 - This is the deposition, that God has given to us eternal life and this life is in His Son.

Verse 12 - He who has the Son has eternal life.

Verse 13 - These things I have written to you who believe in the person of the Son of God in order that you may know that you have eternal life.

(14) Ephesians 2:8 - For by grace you have been saved by means of faith. And this salvation is not from yourselves. It is a gift from God,

Verse 9 - not of works, lest anyone should boast.

These 14 passages should document beyond any doubt that your great salvation is appropriated by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone.

His work on the cross removed the barrier between God and man thus making it possible for us to have fellowship with the Trinity.

Now the big question:

What do I do now that I am a believer?



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