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Christianese:

The Language of the Believers

Copyright © 2002 by Pastor Donald E. Moore

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All glory to God. If there is any error, it is my fault, not His.

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*** The names of satan and devil will never appear with capitals, as he is not worthy of any grammatical considerations. The Lord, whether as a noun or pronoun, will always appear in capital letters, Amen!**

Christianese

“Who’s Got a Dictionary?”

"Ma, it ain't in here." I remember my mother turning, smiling, and saying, " 'Ain't' ain't in the dictionary, son". Well, that was some 50 years ago, and now “ain’t” *is* in the dictionary. This is due to the fact that language changes over a period of time, and meanings are changed by the group that frequently uses the words. For nearly two thousand years, Christians have used words that have been common to their Faith, but have very different meanings to non-Christians.

*****The Bible is its own dictionary.*****

Consequently there are words and phrases with meanings not commonly understood by unchurched people. Christians have developed colloquialisms and word definitions that are specific to our Faith and are very confusing to people in the world. This phenomenon occurs not only in the church, but also in the world. Phrases like, "he's cool", "she's hot", "he was on fire", "what's up?", "let's get down". Some of these phrases have been changed by “pop culture” through music, art, sports, radio and television. Pop culture has no dictionary and we must consult with the youth of the day to get the meaning of many words and phrases. But in the Christian Faith, the Bible is the dictionary of these phrases, and holds the key to understanding the meaning of Christian words and the Christian mindset. The Christian’s goal is to do what Jesus said, "*be in the world, but not of the world*", but over time the culture of the world has a way of rubbing off on us. Phrases of the world are combined with Christian words and give birth to a language that I call –

“Christianese”

“they will speak with new tongues” Mark 16:17.

Who's Got a Dictionary?

Consider the following conversation:

- 1.) Chris: "Hi, my friend, are we one in the Lord?" Igor: "Huh?"
- 2.) Chris: "Are you washed in the Blood and sanctified?" Igor: "Huh?"
- 3.) Chris: "You are going to the wedding feast of the Lamb, aren't you?" Igor: "Huh?" Chris: "Are you understanding what I'm saying?" Igor: "No!"
- 4.) Chris: "You must be born again." Igor: "There you go with that strange talk."

The translation of what Chris means goes like this:

- 1.) "Hi my friend, are we one in the Lord?"

Translation: Have you accepted Jesus as your Boss and brother so therefore God is your Father and we are spiritually united under Jesus as the Christ-Messiah and Saviour?

- 2.) "Are you washed in the Blood and sanctified?"

Translation: Did you accept Christ's death as payment for all your sins, and therefore you are set-apart to God as special? (washed and sanctified)

- 3.) "You are going to the wedding feast of the Lamb, aren't you?"

Translation: Because of 1 & 2 you are awaiting the Lord's coming, when Jesus will supernaturally appear and remove believers from the earth (the rapture, quickening) and go to Paradise for a great party. (wedding feast)

- 4.) "You must be born again."

Translation: Let's start from the beginning - have you heard the Gospel message, and did it cause you to be changed in thought and actions? (born again)

Jesus said, "*Ye must be born again...*"

"*How can a man be born again when he is old?*" said Nicodemus, (Jesus was speaking Christianese and Nicodemus didn't understand either, and today our language is still a "strange tongue" to many.

Christianese

My greeter stretched out his arms and as a smile exploded upon his face, he very warmly said, "Como esta?" and then waited for a response. Before I could think of the appropriate answer, I said "yes" and then his smile reflected the confusion of my mind, for it was obvious I had not understood the language. As he escorted me across the room I was thinking about the words he used, "como esta", and from out of the distant past of Spanish class 101, I remembered the correct response, "estoy bien" (I'm fine). With an embarrassed smile, I said "estoy bien." He put his arm around me and we both shared a laugh as the ice began to melt. It was clear to my host that my feeble understanding of the language would be a barrier to communication, if he continued to "habla espanol" (speak Spanish) to me.

The Russian driver had been given clear instructions. He was to pick up the teacher from America and bring him to the lecture hall, where he could address the missionary Bible students. He was so excited to have this responsibility that he immediately began to say "slovo bogu, slovo bogu" and rattle on in conversational Russian. He talked all the way to the meeting, and the only phrase I could remember him saying repeatedly from time to time was "slovo bogu". So whenever he would say "slovo bogu", I would respond "slovo bogu to you, too". When we arrived at the meeting, a man approached me and in English introduced himself as my interpreter, so we approached the podium. I decided to break the ice by teaching them an American religious phrase that has become very widespread, namely "God is good...all the time". To my surprise when I shouted out "God is good", my interpreter said to the people "Slovo Bogu" and the place erupted in spontaneous shouts of praise to God, and I realized that we were now speaking the same language. I flashed back to the car trip and thought how the driver had been greeting me and praising God at the same time. I then realized that Russian Christians would warmly greet each other by praising God, and this was their way of saying hello and identifying the saints (involved believers).

Definition of New Tongues

On a trip to Ohio, when we had run out of car games, my wife began teaching my youngest son a slang language she calls “alfalfa”. He caught on very quickly, and instantly I was an outsider. As I struggled to figure out what they were saying, I started getting angry and paranoid. “Are they talking about me? What are they saying?” I began to feel isolated and resentful. When someone gets saved, they are excited and changing rapidly. Their loved ones feel isolated and resentful, just as I felt when my wife and son’s new language was foreign to me. This reaction is strange to the believer in that we think, “I have found something that makes me happy and fulfilled, and I’m more moral, yet they’re upset with me”. Well, duh! You’re acting strangely and speaking a language that’s foreign to them. You speak this new tongue to your new friends and spend time with and talk to and about a new invisible friend. Christianity is more about relationship than theology, and central to relationship is communication. Bible believing fundamentalists see themselves as set apart from the world, and therefore often speak in their own Christianese dialect.

The following pages are devoted to isolating and breaking down the theological as well as cultural meanings of Christianese terms. This work endeavors to assist the confused non-believers in learning the language, to call the mature to examine their doctrine, and also to serve as a teaching aide on various church issues. We will also deal with the confusion of Tongues as a spiritual supernatural gift.

A statistic I read once said that 70% of all believers have come to the Lord in the last ten years. That's right, 70% of all believers who have been saved since Jesus rose from the dead have been saved in the last decade! This would mean that the great harvest (that the apostles spoke about and Jesus promised) has begun. We need now to prepare to make it as easy as possible for new converts to speak the language of the church.

As a Bible teacher I have seen the look on new converts’ faces when mature believers throw these phrases around, as if everyone knows this language. This language has little or no meaning to the new convert except to make them feel excluded,

Christianese

for they do not understand. The Lord did not intend for our Faith to be a private club or a closed society; therefore it behooves us to address this dilemma and quickly clarify for the unsaved and the new believers what we mean when we speak Christianese.

Teachers of the occult, new age, witchcraft, eastern religion and other false religions have attempted to give different meanings to Christian terms. II Timothy 3:1 says, "*But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: for men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy..... always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.... but you have carefully followed My doctrine*". Therefore, the new converts must be re-educated with "sound doctrine". Spiritual compromise has gone too far and we must reclaim the meanings of the Gospel of Jesus the Christ. He is not one of many higher powers; He is the only Higher Power. Our Lord is distinctive, and so is our language. This book is to inform the un-churched, and edify (build up) the saints who must teach the world about Jesus.

First are Biblical definitions of terms and words that are specific to our Faith. Although the Bible is our source for definitions and meanings, these are sometimes colored by present day usage. Second, we take the Bible words and place them in combination with modern phrases that are relevant to our culture. Therefore, we must discuss how believers use words and phrases within this present day cultural setting. Our goal is to give clarity to the Bible-believing Christian, and a fighting chance to the novice. May God bless you as you experience the world of Christianese.

Remember, Christianese, like any language, is influenced by region, social and spiritual point of reference; i.e. denomination, clergy, etc. Don't lose your sense of humor. If you don't have one to lose, try to find one, you **sold out saint** (totally devoted believer in Christ). Our foundation is that of "*Bible* believing, Spirit filled **mainstream** Christianity" (see page 107). *Bible* terms won't change, as the *Bible* is stable and unchanging, but colloquialisms do change over time.

Who's Got a Dictionary?

Whether you are a meat-eater or are only ready for milk, (terms used by Apostle Paul to differentiate between the advanced vs. beginning disciples) you will find this work of value to clarify and define the ageless language of the *Bible*. You will also find yourself thinking about how to better communicate the Truths of the Gospel.

In an American Baptist church, if you desire a response from the audience while preaching, you solicit a response by saying "Amen", and the people will gleefully respond back, "Amen!" This is not the case in India. In India, the correct phrase to solicit a response is a loud "Hallelujah!" Yet in Ghana, Africa, if you say "Hallelujah", the people respond "Amen." You may know the correct words very well, but that doesn't mean you know the correct usage of the words. Knowing the language is much more than knowing the words. Language is the ability to communicate, and therefore enter into relationship. Some of this book will prove timeless and the rest will be dated. I may have to rewrite this work in five years or less as we see younger people getting converted, since their culture is chock-full of raps and rhymes. ***So let's bounce!*** (Leave this groundwork and begin). All words and defined phrases are underlined, as you've noticed by now. Plumbers talk plumber talk, pilots talk pilot talk. Christians talk *Christianese*;

"They shall speak in new tongues"

Definition of New Tongues

1st Definition:

Jesus came speaking a **new tongue**; He redefined words. We will then begin to speak this new tongue using Jesus' meanings. In the Bible, the Hebrew and Greek texts are the words, but their meaning must be interpreted in the context of ancient Jewish and Middle Eastern society. For example, Jesus, in most of His parables, made reference to Jewish culture in an agricultural setting.

So the Christian continues to speak a language that has meanings drawn from farming or ancient Jewish practices. Consider "**I'm in the Vine**". This is a picture of abiding with the Lord spiritually - using a vineyard setting, we are as grapes on the Vine. Jesus used familiar illustrations to talk about spiritual things. To the believer, this "new tongue" becomes a new language as well as a new understanding of the world.

2nd Definition:

A Christian will also experience a change in the way he usually speaks. Profanity, for example, begins to disappear from the tongue of the believer. Doubt, unbelief and defeatism should also begin to fall out of use. This **new tongue** of redefined words and phrases is an absolute for a believer. If a Christian is to be **Christ-like** and have the **mind of Christ**, he will no longer view the world as before and therefore language will change; no more **worldly tongues** (vulgar sexual slang, using holy names as curse words). A casual "Hallelujah" spoke in the presence of a total stranger who is also a believer speaks volumes. Anywhere in the world a simple "Amen," "Hallelujah," or "Praise the Lord" is understood in **Christianese**. The speaker becomes a kinder, gentler, more courteous and more positive person. Added to this will be words and phrases that have been redefined, like "**I was backslidden**," which means, "I spoke or acted as I did before I found the Lord." It does not mean I slid on my back!!

3rd Definition:

Mark 16:17... "*they will speak with **new tongues***". Well,

Definition of New Tongues

unfortunately, great confusion can result in the churches by using this next definition. New Tongues is a spiritual language spoken by a believer which neither he nor any other believer understands without supernatural assistance. Yet the speaking of this language by Faith results in spiritual benefit to the speaker. There are two uses to this language. When spoken in a service or among a gathering: the speaker, by a supernatural urging of the Holy Spirit, speaks either unintelligible gibberish, or an existing language unknown to him. For example, someone will speak a series of phrases that are not a known language, or someone who knows no Chinese will speak Chinese! Immediately following will be a translation or interpretation of the gibberish or language that was spoken. This of course is a miracle beyond human capability. We see a clear example of this in Acts 2:4-6: “*And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language.*” The disciples, men and women (about 120 in all) were uneducated Galileans, but are heard to be speaking many languages and dialects. This demonstration resulted in the conversion of 3,000 people. Did the saints speak these actual languages, or just speak gibberish that the hearers interpreted as their language? In any case, a miracle happened by Tongues. This spiritual language has a purpose in conveying knowledge from the spirit realm to the natural realm, but to process the information, it must be translated into a known language. It is believed that God is giving a message to benefit the group of believers or unbelievers.

God may also be doing a sign and wonder to get the attention of the unbelievers in order to save them. A sign and wonder is a supernatural attention-getting event that causes people to wonder, think, and be amazed. Once the gibberish is interpreted, it will become a prophetic message, a warning or a proclamation of what is to come) Word of Wisdom, (guidance and direction that is supernatural) or Word of Knowledge (information and facts

that reveal something).

1 Corinthians chapter 12 deals with these spiritual phenomena, which are called ***gifts***. They are not “gifts” in the sense that they belong to the user, but are loaned to the user for the benefit of the group. They are momentary manifestations on loan through the power of the Spirit. A gift may be given to different people at different times. A person may repeatedly receive this gift, and due to experience may be a frequently used source of spiritual information. Hence the titles, “a gifted one, anointed, seer, prophet,” etc. A person may be used often at church meetings and may, over time, become quite proficient at hearing and understanding God’s voice, but God may use anyone, at any time. God may contact the spirit of man at any time, but most often this contact is made when man is seeking God as in Prayer, Praise and Worship.

The gift of Tongues is still in operation today, and will usually result in a form of prophecy which edifies (builds up), exhorts, and comforts, and is useful in evangelism and other spiritual work. This is because Tongues is a sign and wonder which gets people’s attention and conveys supernatural information or encouragement. This “gift”, when spoken in the assembly during church service, should come with an interpretation (translation). During prayer, worship, or during a message, someone will get everyone’s attention, and will speak in an unknown language or strange gibberish. “A YA TO BAY O.” Then the same speaker or another person will begin to interpret what was said (“The Lord will heal the sick today”). It is as if a secret coded message was said and then decoded for all to hear. Remember, the message is from a supernatural source and should have an impact on those listening. A meeting will often be lifted to an exciting level when this gift is in manifestation; the information given will be useful to the ***body*** (a term used to mean “Christians” – see pages 34, 35, 101-104). Since Tongues with interpretation is a ***prophetic gift***, it can be tested to see if it is from God. Tongues with interpretation must always agree with Scripture. 1 John 5:6-8: “*This is He who came by water and blood - Jesus Christ; not only by water, but by*

Definition of New Tongues

water and blood. And it is the Spirit who bears witness, because the Spirit is truth. For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are One. And there are three that bear witness on the earth: the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three agree as one.” Tongues operate in and by our spirit in cooperation with the Holy Spirit. The water is a term for the Word of God (pg. 38). The Blood is the sacrifice of Christ that removes our sin, which makes us qualified to have relationship with the Holy Spirit and operate with His gifts. Therefore, a Tongue must have the support of, and be in agreement with the Word (Bible). If a Tongue and interpretation tell us to rob or kill someone, which violates the Word (10 Commandments), that Tongue must be rejected. If events are prophesied, then time will reveal the accuracy of the Tongue spoken and the interpretation.

*****Finally, remember that what you believe does not determine what God can and cannot do. What you believe only limits what you can do. Spiritual gifts and miracles happen today, and will continue until He comes.**

We have discussed that there are spiritual gifts. Tongues and Tongues with interpretation are spiritual gifts. This vocal gift is a form of prophecy - speaking for God or by God or speaking the Word of God. A Tongue spoken in this manner is prophecy. God speaks to and through men and women throughout Scripture. Tongues is only in the New Testament. God spoke to the prophet, priest and king in the Old Testament, while after the Christ's coming He speaks to all men and women by the Spirit through gifts, signs and wonders.

4th Definition:

“they shall speak with new tongues” as a prayer language.

This is a further exercise in Faith. The speaker talks gibberish as if it is an intelligible language, believing that he is speaking to an invisible God who understands what is being said. I Corinthians 14:2, *“He who speaks in a tongue, speaks mysteries to God for no one understands him.”* I Corinthians 14:14, *“If I pray in a tongue my mind is unfruitful - but he who prays in a tongue edifies himself.”* Simply put, praying in a Tongue is speaking to

God in a way that builds up and strengthens the inner, spiritual man. This makes no sense to the natural man, but has spiritual value. It should be obvious that this is an act of, and an exercise of Faith. Prayer itself is an act of Faith, for we are talking to an invisible God that we believe is Spirit and that He understands all languages. Prayer in Tongues is the next step beyond prayer in your known language. God hears your words, and also understands the silent prayer of your heart. He discerns the true content of the heart, even when our words do not line up with what we're praying. Sometimes people say one thing, but in their hearts mean something else. Well, consider that prayer in Tongues avoids the confusion; the words are often meaningless, while the heart is still open to God. Our constant verbalizing can get in the way of the clarity of the heart which God is seeking. As we verbalize, we can pray with false humility, talk boldly or even slip into a lie, express doubt and unbelief, or misquote ourselves or Scripture, and mess up what God's getting ready to do. Somehow, shutting down the understandable language frees the mind so we can better hear the voice of God and our own spirit as well; truly a miracle. God spoke through the prophet, priest, and occasionally a king, but now He wants each believer to believe by Faith that we can speak mysteries to Him, and He to us in our spirits. The added purpose is therefore an exercise of Faith, and the edification (building up) of the believer.

The life of a believer is a supernatural life, so doing the supernatural causes us to grow stronger. *"But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him"* (1 Corinthians 2:14). People who speak (pray) in Tongues are usually more open to operating in all the spiritual gifts. Therefore, they appear to have better results on the mission field. This is because the devil demonstrates his power in these cultures and spiritual gifts are needed to combat demonic displays, strange powers, witchcraft and superstition, which can and must be effectively silenced by healings and other signs/Tongues. Prayer in Tongues is not essential to achieve salvation. Great strength and devoted sacrifice have been shown by people who refuse this gift and prayer method. Miracles can

Definition of New Tongues

happen to all believers, and so does martyrdom. Nonetheless, we need to note that Scripture shows that Tongues were an evidence of the presence of the ***Baptism of the Holy Spirit*** (Acts 2, 8, 10, & 19). Apostles, disciples, laymen, women, Jews and Gentiles all experienced this language. No Scripture declares that God terminated this gift or any of the other Signs and Wonders. People who reject this gift usually do so prior to experiencing it. This is a very important distinction - prior rather than after experience. Most Christians who object do so before pursuing the gift, even though Paul said, “*Desire spiritual gifts.*” 1 Cor. 14:1, “*I would that ye all spoke in tongues...*” 1 Cor. 14:5, and “*...do not forbid to speak with tongues.*” 1 Cor. 14:39. The gift is given and received by Faith.

Jesus in Acts 1:4 is quoted as saying, “*to wait for the promise of the Father*” and in Acts 1:5, “*you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit*”, and in verse 8, “*receive power*”. If, after salvation you believe you have received everything God has for you, then you will not seek more by Faith, expectancy or hope. You will not actively receive the baptism or the power that is being offered.

It's Christmas morning - you go to open your gifts knowing that you've been promised a bike. You see the big box and notice many others. You know the big one is the bike and you “assume” the others are not for you. You open only the big box, get the bike and off you go. Yet in the other boxes were a helmet, reflectors, rear view mirrors, horn, tire pump, tire repair kit, generator night-light, padded seat cover, riding shoes. You can ride all right, but would do better with the nine additional gifts. There are nine gifts of the Holy Spirit, and one of them is Tongues. For twenty years I was saved, then while trying to defend I Corinthians 13:8-10 as proof that Tongues were not for Christians today I found my logic flawed: “*Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. For we know in part and we prophecy in part. But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away.*” We still know in part (v.9), therefore that

which is perfect (v.10) has not come. Therefore, prophecy, Tongues, and knowledge have not vanished away. Now I say as Paul said in I Corinthians 14:18 *“I thank my God I speak with tongues”*. Some people will receive and speak once or twice and due to lack of use receive no further edification, but that doesn't discount the great values others have found in prayer, praise and prophecy through Tongues.

Some do, some don't...Why???

To answer the question of why some believers do and some don't, we must look to man. Changes in modes of worship, *Bible* interpretation, use and exercise of gifts, and prohibition by clerics are some reasons why not. In other words the *Bible* says: *“they shall speak with new tongues”*, and then some said, “no, we won't”. To speak often requires Faith and an acceptance of the Scriptural texts that show support of Tongues, a willingness to look or sound foolish, or a powerful move of God may cause people to open their mouths and fulfill Acts 2:4 *“and they began to speak with other tongues...”* Notice I have underlined they in this sentence. Herein lies the problem; most people believe “the Holy Spirit began to speak.” But no, they must begin to speak. Then the Holy Spirit comes along to help and give us “utterance”, or we could say “furtherance”. With Faith in the Holy Spirit the individual must only follow Scripture. Luke 11:13: *“If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!”* Jesus is speaking and as He promised, Luke 24:49: *“Behold I send a Promise of My Father upon you”*. The Promise is endowment of power. We need to ask with expectancy and open our mouths and speak. This is simple to say and do if we haven't been talked out of it. As with all gifts, prophecy, healing, etc., Tongues can be viewed as voluntary. In most cases a yielding to the urging of the Spirit must be present, and by this yielding we find there is benefit through self-edification, and a blessing of prophetic words.

Doing something “spiritual” by Faith does cause us to be more spirit-minded and have a sense of God inside us. Tongues can be sung, spoken aloud, or just spoken in the mind. Tongues

Definition of New Tongues

may be used in the presence of others or in privacy. People use them in prayer, worship and praise. Remember, you are communicating with God, not each other. No interpretation is needed unless non-believers are present (as they will think you're nuts). I Corinthians 14:23 & 28: *"Therefore if the whole church comes together in one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those who are uninformed or unbelievers, will they not say that you are out of your mind? – But if there is no interpreter let him keep silent in church and let him speak to himself and to God."* If a speaker addresses the assembly in a Tongue, then someone should interpret. In this case, the Tongue will be prophetic in nature and will benefit the unbeliever: I Corinthians 14:22 - *"Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: but prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe (King James).* The church at Corinth was guilty of violating polite considerations, therefore, Paul wrote instructions in a letter. This proves that Tongues were commonplace in church, and at Corinth people had fallen into error – emotionalism, discourteous behavior, and over-use. Error should not be a good reason to discontinue speaking a language God instituted. Paul says, *"forbid not speaking in tongues...and I would that ye all speak in tongues, even as I do."* The denomination of my youth did not promote or practice Tongues in any form. After a thorough search of the Scriptures, I had to conclude, "Well, God, if you have a gift for me, I'll receive it." So I prayed "God, if Tongues are not for us today, then Father forgive me and protect me, but if it is a gift to go along with salvation, I yield to the Holy Spirit and believe to receive." There soon followed an undeniable Holy Spirit experience (Baptism of the Holy Spirit) that moved me deeper into a more fruitful relationship with a supernatural God. So now I speak Christianese and Tongues as well.

Finally, I would not ask an unmarried person if I should pursue marriage, or an atheist if I should seek God. So I recommend as you learn Christianese you should ask God concerning this language, search the *Bible* and pray. Find

someone you respect who has years of experience speaking in Tongues and have them discuss this area of spiritual communication. Then have them pray with you to receive the Holy Spirit with evidence of Tongues. Read Luke 11:9-13 until you are sure that by Faith you are asking, knocking, and seeking all the Holy Spirit has for you. Open your mouth, speak gibberish and the Holy Spirit is faithful...He will give you ***utterance***. The Holy Spirit will help you increase your unintelligible vocabulary, interpretation and power. Signs and wonders will follow.

Better Way to Unity

Disrespect, intolerance, and prejudice violates Jesus' command for "Love of the brethren". Our Lord prayed for "unity" in the Body (of Christ). Somewhere over the past 2000 years, we somehow thought He said, "be unified in all spiritual activity". I believe spiritual languages benefit each believer and have great support in the *Bible*, but I still cooperate with and respect any believer who is determined to be loyal to Jesus as Lord. Some feel a mandate and calling to participate in all spiritual activity, i.e., fasting, prayer, tithing, kneeling, feet washing, missionary work, communion, etc. Others do some or very little. I say, as Paul did concerning food and sacred days, "...each man should be fully convinced in his own mind." (Romans 14:5, NIV) Spiritual Tongues is an activity of Faith. We must all have Faith for salvation, but may stop short in various areas – healing, miracles, and signs and wonders. For me the bottom line is: are you willing to live and die for the cause of Christ? If so, we have unity. ***Tongues*** is a sign and wonder, and should not divide believers. It is the one language that truly unites believers around the world. Thousands of people from all over the world gathered at Madison Square Garden to hear Minister Paul Yonggi Cho. There were people with interpreters speaking and singing in many languages. When the minister told us all to pray in our ***heavenly language***, (Tongues) a sound was raised that had a unity and force that was powerful and very moving. As if with one voice, we all talked to our God in unity. That evening my heart leaped as thousands from different

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nations, prayed in Tongues together. My mind flashed to Revelation 19:6 (King James): “*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 thunderings...*”

Men – Women... Who can Speak?

It is obvious and undeniable that preference has been given to men, yet God has effectively spoken through and used women in powerful ways. Years of debate have not proven a concise answer to the question of who may speak in church. Our language is biased by our cultural and religious framework. In some churches, women have been given little or no freedom and still sit in balconies or in the rear of the sanctuary. They wear very long dresses, napkins on their heads, and would never dare to speak out in church. Is this the vestige of Judaism and the early Greek-Mesopotamian church? The truth clearly lies in knowing the heart and plan of God. The Spirit and the Word must agree (I John 5:6-8). Paul states in I Corinthians 15 that the law and common sense say women can't speak; if they do so it brings “shame”. This would surely mean they cannot speak out in Tongues or give interpretation, for speaking is prophesying, and they must remain silent. Yet in Galatians 3:28 he states “*in Christ there is no male nor female...*” Either he forgot what he wrote to Corinth (women cannot speak), and Titus (women cannot teach, etc.) or he contradicted himself. The heart of God calls for peace and order.

Therefore, cultural customs must be given some consideration if we are to solve the problem. In parts of India, the men and women sit separately. In America they sit together, except in a few sects. Therefore, if Paul were preaching in India today he would say women are not permitted to sit in the men's section for it is “shameful”. To disregard this custom would be disruptive and disrespectful to the position of men in their culture. This would not “bring shame” in our American culture, where men and women sit together. In Paul's warning against “speaking”,

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he is specifically addressing married women, for he says, “*let them ask their husbands at home*”. Isn’t he addressing an adherence to God’s plan for the family inside the church? Women of Paul’s day were uneducated and ignorant of many spiritual things. Their reliance and respect was toward men, and the preservation of the family roles. Widows and virgins (unmarried) were not prohibited from speaking. This prohibition in Timothy and Titus is the same: women cannot teach or be over men. To do so then would be an insult to Jewish and Greek custom. Yet in Acts, under the New Covenant, Paul commends Priscilla and Phoebe as teachers, tutors and outstanding workers who should be listened to, along with himself. Acts 18:26: “*So he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they took him (Apollos, the great preacher) aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately.*” It is clear in the Scriptures that Priscilla is directly involved in teaching a man. Romans 16:1-3: “*I commend to you Phoebe, our sister, who is a servant of the church in Cenchrea, that you may receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and assist her in whatever business she has need of you; for indeed she has been a helper of many and of myself also. Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus.*” It appears that Phoebe is being commended to the church as one in authority as Paul tells them to assist her.

God is not static. The Gentiles were not included or active in God’s program at first. Yet we have Scriptures that promised they would be included. The early church (all Jews) balked at including the Gentiles. I am sure many quoted Scripture to keep the Gentiles out. Even Peter erred in reverting into the old ways that separated Jew and Gentile. Paul corrected him in Galatians for this refusal to remember that the Word did express their inclusion and the Spirit did demonstrate their inclusion. Notice in Acts 21:9 that Philip the Evangelist had four daughters who prophesied and were being used by the Spirit. The word “prophesied” has broad meaning: to preach, proclaim, tell forth the Word of God, etc. Obviously, they did not prophesy in a closet but were well known to do it at the home church meeting

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at Caesarea, and with the approval of the apostles. Did not Peter quote Joel in Acts 2:17, 18 and state: “*And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams. And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy”.* If the end days were declared then and customs have released women, then their participation is no longer “shameful”. We have one, only one thing left to examine - what is the Spirit saying?

Amy McPherson, Kathryn Kuhlman, Marilyn Hickey, Joyce Meyer...the list is endless of women who said the Spirit called them to preach, teach, heal the sick, start a church, go on the mission field, live and die for the name of Christ. Maybe God is not as prejudiced as we are - Indira Ghandi, Margaret Thatcher, Golda Meir were permitted to administer great nations. Romans 13:1: “*...and the authorities that exist have been established by God.*”

Is it possible that the latter day harvest can only come in with all Christians functioning, not as male or female, but as members of the body under the direction of the Holy Spirit? If God can speak through a donkey (Numbers 22), He can surely speak through anyone.

God continually operates spiritual gifts like Tongues through women. Churches and Sunday schools grow due to the work and often the leadership of women. Pastor Paul Yonggi Cho uses women to pastor and lead most of his cell churches in Korea. His church is the largest in the world, 750,000 - 1,000,000 strong, growing and impacting his nation. Therefore, the Bible indicates man is the head of his household, but Jesus functions as the Head of the Church by the Spirit. At home and in the church, the women must respect the man in the role of head of household. Yet where spiritual work is concerned we all must honor Christ as our head and the Spirit as our commander.

Ancient women were ignorant and uneducated; that is not the case today. I would rather hear an anointed educated woman than an ignorant, uneducated man. In the church the women must be

sensitive to speak as neither male nor female, but as a voice of prophecy, as the Spirit gives utterance.

Harvest - The End Days

Most of church growth in the twentieth century has actually been inter-church growth; (where families expand or members change churches). Only a small percentage of church growth comes from new converts. During the last ten years a great harvest has begun. The previous pattern is changing. New people from all strata of culture are being added to the church; sadly, most of this growth has been outside the USA. As prophesied in the Old (Hosea 6:3) and New (James 5:7) Testament, God would send the ***former and the latter rain***, meaning an outpouring of the Spirit that would cause a great ***harvest of souls*** - new people coming to God. The ***rain*** is a picture of God bringing a blessing, an outpouring of the power and presence of His Spirit upon people. The former rain refers to 2,000 years ago at Pentecost, and the latter rain refers to this present day; meaning that more and more people would see, feel, and be exposed to supernatural experiences as in the Book of Acts. From about 1992 – 1996, many prophetic words foretold of a coming revival in the church and an increased harvest of souls from outside the church. There was talk in church circles of increases in spiritual gifts and healings. By the mid – nineties, this was the case. Churches and pastors were divided theologically as things picked up worldwide. Some people were claiming that God was moving in a new way and others said, “these things are of the devil”. The list of activities is varied but included: being physically immobilized, falling down, running, laughing, crying, screaming, roaring, seeing visions, shaking, extended silences, etc. You name it, we’ve seen it, including minute gold or silver dust flakes appearing along with other jewels, gold fillings, and gold teeth. We must pray for discernment of spirits, for I have seen true manifestations of God but also manifestations of unbridled emotionalism. We must test the spirits (I John 3:1) and examine

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the fruit. The Apostle Paul commends the people of Berea in Acts 17:11 as being *“fair minded and they searched the Scriptures to find out whether these things were so”*; can we do any less? The pilgrims in Jerusalem in Acts 2 declared that Peter and the 120 saints *“were drunk”*- probably laughing, falling down, speaking in Tongues, etc., yet God was at work. Very strange *“goings on”* but the fruit was *“3000 saved that day”*. *“Then those who gladly received His word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.”* (Acts 2:41-43). If what we are seeing is of God, then nothing will stop it but God. If this move is of man, then it will come to nothing. This is the same sentiment that Gamaliel (respected Jewish Sanhedrin teacher) stated in Acts 5:38-39 concerning Peter, the early apostles, and signs and wonders during the *“former rain.”*

This present time period has been given many names, but if it is of God, then we are seeing the beginning of the ***latter rain.*** Joel Chapter 2 reveals these key verses: *“Be glad then, you children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God; for He has given you the former rain faithfully, and He will cause the rain to come down for you - The former rain, and the latter rain in the first month.”* (Joel 2:23) Verse 24 tells of the harvest: *“The threshing floors shall be full of wheat, and the vats shall overflow with new wine and oil.”* This is a picture of people being gathered as a harvester gathers wheat. Jesus uses Himself as an illustration in John 12:24: *“Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.”* Therefore, His death caused a harvest of wheat (people) to come forth. John the Baptizer tells us how this harvest will begin with Jesus in Matthew 3:12, and in Luke 3:16-17: *“John answered, saying to all, ‘I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fan is*

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in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather the wheat into His barn; but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire.” So wheat is used as a harvest term for new converts. Wine and oil are used as terms for the Holy Spirit, gifts, revelations, and signs and wonders that will accompany the harvest. God’s provision for the harvest is an outpouring of Holy Spirit power and manifestations. Consider this warning – “Woe unto those that curse the harvest because they could not embrace the manifestations of the Holy Spirit”. (This statement is not in the Bible, yet the spirit of it is.) Blindness due to the customs and teachings of men is not a valid excuse for the churches’ disobedience.

In Christianese, revival means to bring life to that which was dead, ineffective and tired. The purpose of revival is to establish Zoë, the God kind of life, to a formerly dead thing. Restoration is the fulfillment of revival. God breathes new life into something, causing revival. After it is alive God’s restoration is not of the old but to restore to His original vision and plan.

*****God’s restoration is to make something
into the image that He had for it.***

Romans 4:17 says “...God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did”. Before time began, God saw what you could become. When He gives us Zoë, the God life, what was only a spark becomes a flame never seen before. We do not return to an old self, but spring forth in new life - moving toward God’s restoration. Therefore, God is not bringing us to a revival and restoration of any by-gone day. He is bringing us into a restoration beyond our vision, into His vision. This is why every move of God is so different from every other revival. Therefore, the latter rain will contain elements that are a surprise to the mind of man. Notice in Joel 2, verses 28 and 29: “And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams; your young men shall see visions. And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days.” The outpouring will be for all flesh, regardless of sex, with blessing for young and old.

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During the former rain, the blessing was especially to the old and to men. The rest of the passage shows that God is allowing the world to be touched, that all will have equal opportunity to receive Him. After this outpouring, judgment from God will come. Verse 31: “...*Before the great (terrible) and awesome Day of the Lord ...*” (a phrase used to describe judgment and punishment). We have always been under the wrath of satan, since Adam and Eve sinned. Genesis 3 declares that woman and satan will be at enmity (enemies); satan’s offspring against Eve’s offspring. So the devil has always been our enemy, causing us pain and strife. The wrath of satan has always been in force. In the ***latter days*** though, God will unleash His wrath against the ungodly. The Harvest is a sure sign that the wrath of God is soon to follow.

Most Christians believe we are in the ***last days, end days***; the time of the ***latter rain***. Christians vary greatly on just where we are in this time, but most accept that we must be nearer the end than the beginning. People may not agree on the source of certain phenomena (strange supernatural events, false teachers-prophets, persecution, weird weather, increased disease, increased strife, wars and rebellion, etc.), but it is undeniable they have been increasing as the Harvest has increased. Jesus stated that these are the signs and phenomena that would mark the end of days (Matthew 24:5-14, 29-31).

I believe these ***Last Days*** Scriptures are being fulfilled now, and we are in the period of the latter rain, where God's Spirit is being poured out. A greater number of unsaved people are being disciplined than ever before. This will be followed by the wrath of God against His ***enemies***. Especially due to T.V., radio and satellite communications, the message is reaching far and wide. This spread of the gospel of a carpenter from the small village of Nazareth is the key to knowing that the end is near (Matt. 24:14) “*And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.*”

A great time of trouble, “The ***Great Tribulation***”, has been prophesied. As God moves upon the earth, satan will move against God and God’s people. This will cause a great increase in

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persecution before and during the Great Tribulation. Already in India, China and Arabic-speaking countries, the church has been forced underground. This pressure forces the church to unite, and Christianese words and phrases are a way to identify our brothers and sisters. A person standing on a grocery line need only say, “boy I’m glad I had my morning devotion”. If the response is “devotion to what?” we know it’s a Christian speaking to a Non-Christian, as morning devotion means “in the morning I took time to communicate with God by prayer, praise, or reading”.

In the future, Christianese will be the language that identifies the saints in a world controlled by antichrist. Doctrine and theology can be confusing in a culture that is continually changing, but to a saint the Word of God will never be changed. I believe that as the end days progress and as satan increases persecution against the church, Christianese will be the language of the persecuted. Christianese words, phrases, and Scriptures will be quietly spoken to convey messages and greetings.

The interpreter was away from the platform as I sat next to a non-English speaking Indian pastor. I desired to share with him what I was thinking. Then, as if by divine revelation I said “2 Corinthians 4:11...” *For we are delivered to death for Jesus’ sake...* This pastor looked it up in his Hindi Bible and immediately knew who I was referring to on the platform. I was using Scripture to convey my thoughts. Mutual tears confirmed that he agreed. This form of communication does work. For example, two saints discussing a group of people: the first saint says, “Are they Ezekiel 27?” The other saint responds, “No, they are definitely 1 John 4”. Translation of this is; “Are they spiritually dead but with the potential to come to life? No, they are anti-christ, don’t attempt to evangelize here!” The saint is not relying on language alone, for the Spirit of God leads us by His Spirit and will confirm the message. Non-believers may attempt to speak Christianese but the Holy Spirit will expose them to the saint.

In order to gain greater influence and acceptability, practitioners of the occult and new agers use Christian terms,

but redefine them. Cults and some religions do the same for similar ends. Jesus said in Matthew 12:36-37, *“But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”* Also Revelation 22:19 – *“and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life,...”* Revelation 20:12 – *“and the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the Books...”* Revelation 20:15 – *“and anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the Lake of Fire.”* Malachi 3:16 – *“So a book of remembrances was written”* Daniel 12:1 – *“Everyone who is found written in the book...”* Revelation 21:27 – *“Those who are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life...”* So, there are many books, whether physical or spiritual we can’t be sure, but it seems they are spiritual. God, angels and the spirits of dead saints can read them. There are books of recorded words, deeds (actions), acceptances of salvation (The Lamb’s Book), and a final judgment book that lists those permitted into Heaven. If one’s name is absent or blotted out, then eternal death (separation from God) is the final fate of the spirit.

Therefore, changing God’s definitions can have disastrous results. Those involved in antichrist religions and cults will be judged for misusing God’s language. A clear example of this is the term ***“Christ consciousness.”*** This use of the term “Christ” by new agers includes the concept of progressive evolution and reincarnation, meaning they are becoming “Christ.” This definition of Christ is totally foreign to the Christ of the *Bible*. Romans 12:12 tells us to have the ***“mind of Christ”*** as a sacrificial act of worship, maybe; yield and direct your mind to think as Christ would. Christians are changing and improving in their “Christ-likeness”, but are not becoming Christ or joining a mind melt of Christ’s. This example shows the slick way words can seem Biblical, but are redefinitions.

Words are power and we need to use them carefully.

God

The *Bible* tells us that God is a Spirit, a supernatural being who is whole and complete in Himself, is the sustainer and giver of all life. All Wisdom, all Power and all Truth are embodied in Him. His nature as the Creator is Love. So much so, that the *Bible* describes Him as "*GOD IS LOVE*" (I John 4:8). He is all-powerful and all capable, except where He has limited His power or His capability. Two things immediately come to mind. The first is that God cannot lie (Hebrews 6:18), and the second is that He has set His Word above Himself (Psalm 138:2). This means that He must always adhere to what He has spoken and decreed. Another important characteristic is that He never changes (Malachi 3:6). God exists and dwells in the eternal now. He is in the present but He can enter into the realm of time. It should be remembered that God created time (Genesis 1:4), i.e., the passing of days, weeks, hours, years, millennia, for man's existence. God Himself is not subject to time, although He has created it and can enter it or even interrupt it. The *Bible* tells us we're made in God's image; since God is a Spirit, He has created us as spirit beings that live in bodies. His likeness is that of Spirit, but has a form or a shape that is similar to our human shape. God has a face, God has eyes, God has hands, and we know God has a back. *"But He said, "You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me and live." And the Lord said, "Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock. So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by. Then I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back; but My face shall not be seen.""* (Exodus 33:20-23). The exact size and proportions are unknown to us, and His splendor is indescribable, even though many that have seen Him attempt to describe Him. But, for us to look upon His form while we're in human form could cause our death. Therefore, when God appears to man, God hides within a cloud, or in a shadow, in order that man is not destroyed. This is probably due to the greatness of God's holiness

and purity, which would just destroy man who is in a fleshy sinful state. God is manifested in His “**Glory**”. When God is present or is working, His Glory can be seen, felt or experienced. Glory is the splendor, magnificent heaviness or weightiness that accompanies the presence of God. It may be a cloud, mist, formed of white, gold, or dark hue. People fall down when the Glory is present; weep, laugh, shake, shiver, or are frozen speechless, etc. The stronger the Glory the less people will do, for the flesh is subject to and not unaffected by God’s Glory, for it is part of who God is.

God is never out of control, even though He has the full range of emotions - just like us humans. Matthew 3:17: “*And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, ““This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.””*” God experiences love as well as other emotions: anger, as in Exodus 32:10: “*“Now therefore, let Me alone, that My wrath (anger) may burn hot against them and I may consume them.”*” Ephesians 4:30: “*and do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God.”* Nehemiah 8:10: “*for the joy of the Lord is your strength.*” Psalm 135:6: “*Whatever the Lord pleases He does.”*”

In this we can see the meaning of “being made in His image”. We have the capacity to feel and act, as our Creator does. Though we are like God in many ways, we differ greatly in magnitude and range of power, for we are also capable of great sin and God is not. God is above sin, and not subject to it as humans are. All honor and praise to the Great One, The Father - God. Isaiah 6:1: “*...I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the Temple.*”

In Christianese, it is unacceptable to call **God** "the Big Guy up there, the Heavy, my Man in the sky"...references to God as an ambiguous force or just "the Creator" are sometimes frowned upon by born-again believers, as a cop-out to worldly jargon. Failing to actually identify who the Creator is by name makes serious Christians wonder if you really know God. God is never an impersonal force without face or identity, meaning or purpose, i.e. a tree, a rock, the Force, the Energy, Life Power, etc. We are not God, nor will we ever be God. Acceptable references are that

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we can be "in God" and "of God", and are "His children", "His friends", "Bride" and "virgins" and "saints of God". We are individual spirit entities, and therefore, will never evolve or advance to any type of God nature equal to the Father, the Son, or the Holy Spirit. The Names of God are considered Holy, and therefore they should not be associated with any vulgar talk, or used as curse words in any form.

The actual pronunciation of God's Name as given to the Jews has been lost over the ages. Due to the fear of God, the ancient Jews would not speak His Name. Even today, many Jews will spell God as G-d in reverence to His Name. Jehovah is used to mean The Lord and is often used in combination with a descriptive adjective, i.e. Jehovah Nissi – The Lord my banner. JAH is also used for a Name of God and is ancient and Jewish. "El" is also used to reference God and is associated with early Canaanite language. The most ancient name for God is YHWH (Yahweh), which is seldom used. Jehovah is an English version of Yahweh, which is a version of YHWH, which is all we have left of the real name of God. "I Am" is the name expressed by God Himself to Moses in answer to the question Moses spoke in Exodus 3:13 "What is His Name?" And the answer in verse 14: "God said I Am that I Am... say unto the children of Israel, I Am hath sent me unto you, "Verse 15: "The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham. The God of Isaac and the God of Jacob has sent me unto you: This is My name forever." He is the same Lord God of Jesus of Nazareth. He is the same God now as then. But knowing this Name without knowing Him will not help you.

The Trinity

One of the greatest mysteries of the *Bible* is that in Hebrew God describes Himself as an "Us", a composition that is singular in nature but plural in expression and manifestation; in the sense that as a man I am a father, for I have children, I am a son, for I have a father, and I am myself. In that sense, I am a triune being

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as to function and definition, though singular in nature. The *Bible* describes us as triune in that we are spirit, soul (mind and emotions) and body (I Thessalonians 5:13, Hebrews 4:13). God is also a Triune Being in these same ways - God also is unified as One but is able to separate and exist as three. The three entities are called the Father, Holy Spirit, and the Son, also called the Word of God. The three are somehow connected as one, having like mind, like goals, like feelings and like attitudes, but are different expressions (manifestations) of the same God. This is a mystery to us, simply because the created thing cannot comprehend the Creator. We can only know this mystery through the Word of God displayed in the *Bible* and by experience with the many facets of this Great Being. This Great Being appears to have three main expressions of Himself; therefore we call Him a singular Trinity. Not three Gods but One expressed as three. At this point you may be thinking, "I don't understand God!" Well, would you really want a God that you, as the created being, could understand? An amen goes right there! (This is a phrase made popular by my father. See pg. 71)

Jesus of Nazareth was a manifestation of the Son of God in a flesh body, who for 33 or so years lived on earth as a complete human being. *"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name,..."* (Philippians 2:5-9). He is described as the ***Christ, the Christo, the Anointed One of God, the Messiah***, who, in order to fulfill the plan of God, came to earth to live as a man filled with the Holy Spirit. His purpose was to demonstrate to us how to live, and how to be reconciled into relationship with the Father. Somehow God, (that is described as the Father), remained in Heaven, while the presence of the Holy Spirit worked through the Messiah (God on earth) to accomplish what the triune God (Father, God Spirit, God Son

had deemed necessary to restore man's relationship with Himself. The **Son of God** would become a **Son of Man** and would be a redeemer of man by paying the debt of man – (sin). Sin caused a separation from God, and the Son of Man would be the bridge back to a right relationship with God. The penalty for sin is death. **Blood** is the life force in living beings. Blood, therefore, is the currency that pays for sin. Blood that has sin in it causes death. Only sin-free blood can bring life. Man needs a blood transfusion in order to gain new life on earth and eternal life. So the Son of Man would have to live a sin-free life and then pay the debt for all sinners, or they also would have to die.

Biblical death is two-fold:

1. Physical death. 2. Spiritual death = separation from God. (More on this later.)

After Jesus rose from the dead, He once again resumed His full power and position as **Son of God**, full deity, with all of His powers intact and His authority expanded. Since He had sacrificed Himself to pay man's debt for man's sins, He now is also well qualified, having lived as a man, to judge man - (John 5:22) *“For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son.”*

Jesus has not been, nor will He ever be, Gabriel, Michael, an archangel, or any other supernatural being. While Jesus was on earth, He was bonafide 100% Jew in tradition and culture. He has been, and will always be, a lover of the children of the tribes of Israel and their descendants. Jesus never has been, nor will He ever be any other person or spirit-being than who He is. He is not a celestial being of a different domain, nor is He fully embodied in any other human, past, present or future. He is the **Christos**, the **Anointed One**, the **Son of God**, the **Logos**, the **Word of God**. Many believe that He is described in the Old Testament as the **Angel of the Lord**, which means message or messenger of God in the Old and New Testaments. *“And the Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush.”* (Exodus 3:2). *“After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision...”* (Genesis 15:1) *“When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to him and*

The Trinity

said to him, “I am almighty God; walk before Me and be blameless.” (Genesis 17:1) “Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.” (John 8:58) “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last...” (Revelation 1:11) He speaks as God and acts as Deity, but He is not any of the other angels. When He returns, He will return as Himself, glorified.

In Christianese, God, the Holy Spirit, and Jesus are not interchangeable with any other deities. **Allah** is not seen in Christianity as being God Yahweh. He is seen as a pagan deity, since Allah was worshiped as the moon god with goddesses and concubines for hundreds of years before Mohammed spoke about “one god”. Therefore, he could not be identified as the exact same God as God Yahweh, **Jesus** or the Holy Spirit. Mohammed came about 600 years after Christ and attempted to redefine Yahweh as Allah, a pagan deity.

Below are some of the names used in Scripture to identify the persons of the **Trinity**. As we believe in the equality of the Trinity, we can use any and all names with each person of the Trinity. Some names have more associations with a specific person of The **Godhead**.

Father: I Am, I Am that I Am, All Sufficient One, El Shaddai (the God that is more than enough), Yahweh, Mighty God, Abba (Father), Adonai, Elohim, Jehovah Tsidkenu - Righteousness, Jehovah Jirah - my Provider, Jehovah Rapha - my Healer, Jehovah Shalom - my Peace, Jehovah Nissi - my Banner, Jehovah Shamah - The All Mighty is there, El Elyon.

Son: My Shepherd, Adonai (Lord, as a substitute for Yahweh), Elohim (old Hebrew name for Lord God), Wonderful Counselor, Angel of God, Yeshua, Prince of Peace, Waymaker, the Holy One, Lord of Hosts, Lord Adonai, Anointed One, Messiah, **Son of God**, Son of Man, The Logos – (The Word), Rose of Sharon, Lamb of God, Holy One of God, Alpha and Omega, Beginning and the End, Sacrificial Lamb, Saviour, Son of David, High Priest, High Priest in the Order Melchizedek, The Bright Morning Star, Day Star, The Rock, Lord God, King of Kings, Lord of Lords, King of Israel –***Light of the World***.

Holy Spirit: Holy Ghost, Breath of God, Hand of God, Presence of God, Spirit of God, (Isaiah 11:2 lists the Spirits of God: “*The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord*”). Wind of God, Comforter, Counsel of God, Truth, the Anointing...yes, of course there are more.

Brother Kenneth Hagin uses this definition, and I feel it’s a good one: the *Bible* defines **man** as a spirit who lives in a body and becomes a living soul; therefore, the spirit never dies and the soul, (the mind, the will and the emotions) only exist in the physical body when the spirit is present. The spirit of man never sleeps, nor does it die as the physical body does; the spirit does not cease to exist. Death to the human spirit is to be eternally separated from God. In Genesis, we see God that makes a body, but it has no life until God breathes the breath of life into man. This breath puts a living spirit into the man. If the breath of life (spirit) leaves a man’s body, then life has also left. The **Breath of God** is a reference to the Spirit power of God. When the breath of man leaves his body, the spirit of man is released to the spirit realm. The eternal self of man is spirit, not flesh. Flesh is temporal, and will pass away, returning only at the resurrection. The **flesh** is earthy, carnal. The **spirit** is eternal and spiritual. Therefore, the Christian struggle is to become more spirit-aware and spirit-guided rather than flesh-led.

Spirit and soul are **not interchangeable**. **Spirit** is called the inner man, the real man, inner man of the heart, inner conscience. **Soul** is mind, will, emotions, heart, personality; the natural man. In any case the body will die, but will be changed at resurrection into a resurrection body similar to that of the resurrected Lord. Our spirit will continue on in heaven or in hell. The spirit without the flesh is said to be opaque with human form and shape. The spirit has a mind, will and emotions (soul of the spirit), but without the cravings of the body and carnal soul. The **Holy Spirit** seems to always stay in the form of Spirit. He has the ability to be one place or every place. This is beyond our understanding. The Holy Spirit can send His presence around the globe,

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touching, leading and ministering to the Father and to created beings at the same time. The Holy Spirit takes no glory Himself but is worthy of praise and honor as part of the God-head. The Holy Spirit leads man to the Son and the Son shows us the Father. He also convicts the world of sin – so He affects the conscience of men - blessing them or bringing them to conviction or condemnation. The Holy Spirit's Power is unlimited, and the ability to do anything natural or supernatural belongs to the Holy Spirit. He acts in cooperation with the Father and the Son as a supporting actor, but stars in a leading role.

Reincarnation

Reincarnation is a foreign concept to the *Bible* with no Scriptural basis. "*It is appointed once for man to die, and then the judgment.*" (Hebrews 9:27). "*...to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord,*" (2 Corinthians 5:8). Therefore, Jesus, John the Baptist and the rest of the apostles have not had nor will they have, incarnations. No one is a reincarnation of any of the above in any way, shape, or form. Scripture does speak of someone **coming in the spirit** of someone else. There are references in Scripture of John the Baptist **coming in the spirit** of Elijah. This does not mean that the spirit of Elijah came into the spirit of John the Baptist, but it identifies spiritual likeness; in that Elijah was a wilderness prophet calling the people to repentance, and John the Baptist was also a wilderness prophet, calling the people to repentance. To say "in the spirit of" is to say "like father like son", or "he has the same attitude, personality, or type of inner spirit of a previously known person". This, of course, is not reincarnation (which is to die and return as something or someone else). The *Bible* is silent and does not endorse this Eastern teaching. Your place in Heaven or hell will be decided in this life; there is no karma wheel of life. You have one chance to get it right, and you'll not be coming back as anyone else. You are not a monkey's nephew as in **Darwinism**; nor will you be coming back as your own great, great, great

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grandchild. Gene studies have proven there is one race, the human race, and all came from the same mother. We call her “Eve.” There are now over 6 billion of us and we are all here for the first time.

Definition of a Christian

“I’m a Christian, a person who has a reason to live and a reason to die. I live on the earth, but Heaven is my home.” When a worldly person says, “I’m a Christian”, they mean that their forefathers may have practiced some facet or form of Christianity. To say, “I’m a Christian”, in this case, has no meaning as to conviction, commitment or activity. The born-again Christian calls this person a “**nominal**”, meaning you are a Christian in name only. Nominal status is only changed by a further confession of Faith. The real Christian means, “I have a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, have invited Him into my life, and have publicly and privately declared that His sacrifice of coming down from Heaven to the earth to live then die and then rise from the dead was for me”. One must acknowledge that Jesus’ sacrifice was sufficient to eradicate their sin, reconcile them to God, so that they may be with Him in Heaven when they die. “...if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.” (Romans 10:9) The born-again believer who says he or she is a true “Christian” means that they acknowledge that Christ died for them and they are willing to live for Christ as well as die for Christ. So when a person says “Are you a Christian?” one could respond by saying, “**I’m born again**”, “I’m **saved**”, “I’m **sanctified**”, “I’m **delivered**”, “I’m **washed in the Blood**”, “I’m **Blood-bought**”, “I’m **on fire for God**”, “I’ve worked out my **soul salvation**”, “I’ve **received Jesus**”, “I’m **Spirit filled**”, “I’m a **child of God**”, “I’m **sold out** to Christ,” “I’m a card-carrying, tape-playin’, Tongue- talkin’, devil-chasin’ prayer warrior for the Lord”. It isn’t sufficient to just say, “I’m a Christian”. Many people who call themselves Christian do

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not attend church, nor do they seek to be disciples (followers-imitators of Christ). Therefore, in Christianese, the term Christian requires further definition and explanation.

A disciple of Christ is a very descriptive term, for in Christianese, a disciple is defined as a follower of Christ, a student, a person who models his behavior and actions after the likeness of Christ. To be a disciple means that you identify Jesus as the Lord, and you have made Him Lord (Overseer, Master, Boss, Director, CEO in charge) of your life. This should also include that you are willing to go "the full distance" for the Name of Christ. Yes, that's right, meaning, "lay down your life", if necessary, to defend your Lord and your Faith.

He's a Believer

To say that one is a believer means that you give mental assent (agreement), you accept as true the existence of, the knowledge of, the historical record of God, the Holy Ghost, and Jesus as portrayed in the *Bible*. A believer has arrived at a certain level of assurance that the Gospel is true. It means that a work has been done in his head but not necessarily in his heart. Believers have some level of commitment, but to state that one is a believer does not identify their actions or level of conviction. Some believers will describe themselves as "sold out". This means that they believe to the level of forsaking worldly behavior and possessions for the cause of Christ. They are true disciples and are fully persuaded and totally convinced that any sacrifice that is needed will be worthwhile if required by the Lord. There are some believers who only acknowledge the *Bible* as true but place no trust or reliance upon the person of God or His Word. These people are believers but not disciples. A believer may only go as far as "I believe Jesus is the Son of God".

There is some confusion surrounding the words "saint of God", but the Bible definition is clear. A saint is a believer who is sold out, and is actively participating in the Faith. To be a saint means that you have a testimony that would describe your conversion and baptism as well as your activities in a local church body. A true saint is sanctified, meaning "set apart by

God". A saint has accepted the Lord and the Lord has accepted them. It actually has little to do with accomplishing great works. The "great work" is that the Lord extends mercy and grace to a sinner, and then by their repentance they become **a saint**. Jesus called them, "*in the world...but not of the world*" (John 17:11 and 16). The Amplified Bible says in Ephesians 4:12, "*the perfecting and equipping of the saints*" (His consecrated people), in the Greek - *hagios* and *hagnos* = blameless, religious, consecrated, clean, innocent (**Strong's Concordance**). Jesus declared us clean by receiving the word in John 15:3 "*you are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you*". Therefore, having received the word, we are all **saints**. Churches and denominations elevate people to special status and call these people **saints**. Yet, since only God can judge the heart, we should all treat and view each other as equal saints. Consider Matt. 23:8-10: "*But you, do not be called 'Rabbi'; for One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren. Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven. And do not be called teachers; for One is your Teacher, the Christ.*" Notice verse 8 especially, "*you are all brethren*". Many go beyond Scripture to give special recognition to "men" by calling some saints, but all deserve this distinction in the **Body of Christ**, for all true believers are "saints".

Speaking of bodies, another term is "**the Body of Christ**". All Christians should be united as one and working for a common goal - advancing the message of the Gospel of Christ. Therefore, the term **Body of Christ** is a reference to all the many different churches, denominations and believers doing different jobs and carrying out different functions within this great mass of billions of people. For example, at a football game you might see a group of people in the booster club, with one fan holding up a plain red card. It would appear to be totally meaningless by itself. But were you to have a bird's eye view from a TV camera, you would see that the one little red card mixed with all the other boosters holding up cards could form a word, a complete message, or a picture of something. This then, is like the body of Christ. "*For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of*

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that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ." (1 Corinthians 12:12). "*But now indeed there are many members, yet one body.*" (1 Corinthians 12:20). When we look at one little home group or church by itself, it may not have much significance; but when we look at thousands and thousands of churches, or thousands and thousands of Christians, all praying and moving by the Spirit of God, it becomes a completed picture. This could be described as the "macro" body of Christ. The "micro" body of Christ is each individual group of Christians. These groups of Christians are organized as churches, home groups or cells. A **cell group** usually refers to a small group of people (4 to 20) that meet **under a covering** (supervision, financial and spiritual support) of a ministry, pastor or larger organization. They do all things a larger church would do but meet in houses, usually during the week. Then, at appointed times they rejoin the larger group for mass fellowship. They have a cell pastor or group leader as well as a senior pastor who is over all the cells and pastors.

The human body is an illustration of the church. Each part, whether it be a hand, eye, or stomach, has a specific part to play in the efficient and harmonious working of the whole. We see clearly how important each part is, and therefore, how we should function and treat each other in God's organization. Once we receive Jesus, and join the Body of Christ, we then must look for our function within it. Everyone is not called to preach or teach, nor is everyone called to cook or to work with children. Churches also may have different missions and functions: Mission work, evangelism, training, charity, etc. Therefore we must pray and train until we are able to be plugged into our rightful place in the **Body of Christ.**

Born Again

In John, Chapter 3, Nicodemus says, "*can man enter the womb a second time, and be born?*" The phrase "**born again**" has caused great trouble in the Body of Christ as well as in the world. Some people wear it as an exclusive badge, or use it as a hammer to condemn the unsaved. To be **born again** simply means that you have heard the Gospel, and from the hearing of

the Gospel, the revelation of its truths affected not just your hearing but also your heart. Being ***born again*** is a function of receiving information, knowledge and revelation which, as a result, opens your mind (as well as your emotions) to a new spiritual awareness. The Book of John, Chapter 1:13 tells us that we are born of God. And in John, Chapter 3, Jesus says that Spirit gives birth to spirit. The Spirit of God gives birth to the spirit of man.

Jesus says we must be ***born of water***. Let us use the Bible to define this term...***water***. Water is a very spiritual term, and we see in many places that it is used to describe words, communication, and people. He tells Nicodemus you must be ***born of water***. He could not be speaking of water in the womb, the (amniotic fluid), for that is physical, and only gives birth to the physical. Remember, being born again is spiritual. He could not be speaking of water in baptism, for that also affects the natural, the outside of the man. The water cleanses the physical aspect of man, as a representation of the spiritual cleansing that the ***Word of God*** has done. Therefore, this water Jesus is speaking of is revealed as the ***Word of God; water = Word***.

******Having gained entrance into the heart of a man,
the Word of God is spiritual water.***

The ***Water*** (Word) has already accomplished a change on the inside while the water of Baptism affects the outside of the body. Therefore, when we look at Ephesians 5:26, "*that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,*" and when we look at the words of 1 Peter chapter 1:23, "*having been born again, not of corruptible seed, but incorruptible, through the imperishable word of God which lives and abides forever,*" we see that the ***water is the Word of God***. Also, 2 Peter 2:17 describes the evil as "*These are wells without water carried by a tempest, for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.*" Therefore, it makes sense when Jesus says "*out of your belly will flow rivers of 'living water'*". We now see that He is talking about being born again...we hear the ***Gospel*** words. The ***Gospel*** is understood as "good news, good tidings" as described in Isaiah 61. These are the teachings (words) of Jesus which

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cause the hearer to want to be born again. The living water (Word –Gospel) goes in and comes out of us. Therefore, we who were spiritually dead are now born again. We meet other people who were spiritually dead, they hear the word, and they become born again because of the living water, the Word of God. Paul and Peter tell us that we are born again by the imperishable washing of the Word, (or the water), by God. So we see once again that the Bible is its own dictionary, defining terms and giving us a different meaning for words that we use every day.

*****The Word of God is the water that is sent by God at the right time, to cause the new birth experience.**

This ties in beautifully with the parable of the Sower, where Jesus describes the Word as both the seed and then the water. The Sower (the preacher, the disciple, the evangelist, etc.) is sowing the Word of God into the hearing of a person. The Spirit of God is contained in that Word, and that Word begins to bubble up in the spirit of the hearer, causing the seed (Word) that was planted to begin to grow, and causing the water (Word) to begin to multiply. From the seed (Word) that was planted, the water (Word) itself begins to spring forth, and in time and with nurturing, we arrive at that blessed place that Jesus described... *“out of your belly will flow rivers of living water”* (Words). To be born again is to hear the Word of God, to receive it in the mind, go beyond mental ascent, and have that Word come into your heart. Supernaturally, God gives you a new view of life, a new view of the world, and a new relationship with Him. You have now been born of the spirit through the Word (Water) of God. This experience can be instantaneous or over time, and people will refer to it as “newborn, reborn, enlightened, awakened, saved”.

Now there’s a term that really causes trouble, “SAVED”. The response is “saved from what, to what, for what and by what?” The term “saved” comes from the word salvation. In Hebrew Yeshua (deliverance, aid, victory, prosperity, health, welfare, and in the Greek Soteria, which has the same meaning). Since Jesus the Messiah is the Savior, it means that Jesus has provided salvation for us. All Christians will agree that the word salvation

means that, upon physical death, your spirit will be allowed into paradise where God is, but that is the bare minimum; you go to Heaven when you die. The apostles and the Jews of Jesus' day expected more of salvation, as do full Gospel and Bible believing people. They use the broader definition of salvation, which in this case, means ***wholeness*** (deliverance, safety, covering, protection, healing, and a complete state of wellness). In other words, to receive salvation from the Savior means that you will go to Heaven when you die, but you also are entitled to some heavenly gifts while you are on earth. When Jesus said "***the Kingdom of God is at hand***", He meant the power, presence and blessing of God's Kingdom are "now" and "available". They are as close as reaching out your hand and "Touching Me" (Jesus). He also meant that the salvation that is available in Heaven is now by the power of God, available on earth. Since in Heaven there is "salvation" (wholeness, wellness, and deliverance from satanic power), then there also is "salvation" for a believer on the earth. Salvation cannot be acquired on the basis of "good works" (charity, self sacrifice, academic or earned achievements). Salvation is a condition of the body, soul and spirit. Salvation is the reward of Faith in which God, who is merciful, provides forgiveness and grace. The Bible says, "***ye are saved by grace***" (***grace*** is empowering ability of God bestowed upon the believer as unmerited favor of the goodness and the kindness of God) "*through faith, lest any man should boast*". (Ephesians 2:8).

Grace: In the church "unmerited favor" is the most common definition, but further clarification is needed. It is God's pleasure to empower us, show us favor and give us exceedingly wonderful gifts. Holy Ghost power is a demonstration of ***grace*** in the life of the believer. The church would be much stronger if it would realize that unmerited favor is mercy but grace is the ability to access and demonstrate the Holy Spirit's empowerment. In 2 Corinthians 12:9, Jesus told the apostle Paul, "***My grace is sufficient for you***". Therefore, grace is not just favor but is the bestowed blessing that is given due to favored status. Jesus was telling Paul to use his own Faith to bear up under the attacks of satan's messenger and go on to defeat his enemy.

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Mercy: is defined as God's kindness and favor to the undeserving. Well, this is no different than "unmerited favor". This error (of using the same meaning for grace and mercy) has been overlooked for years; probably because another definition for grace would force a change in theology and thinking. Many denominations teach a Gospel of suffering and salvation through poverty, illness, weakness. So we end up with "God is merciful and gives grace to suffer through to a Heaven we don't deserve. Paul's "thorn in the flesh" is often cited as evidence of God's reluctance to heal and the suffering fate of believers. A careful reading of the passage, 2 Corinthians 12:7-12, shows that Paul was troubled, tormented, afflicted and opposed by a demonic spirit that influenced the people in the places he went to preach. There is no evidence that his "thorn" was physical illness. In verse 9 the Lord tells him, "*My grace is sufficient for you.*" The Lord says is sufficient. In the Strong's Concordance, we see the word grace is 5485 "Charis... the divine influence upon the heart and its reflection in the life including gratitude, acceptable, benefit, favor, gift". God affects man's heart by giving him grace as defined above and this is then reflected in the man's life. This grace comes with gifts and benefits – empowerment, not suffering. True grace can impart to one a supernatural ability to be longsuffering, but one can also be an overcomer. Paul states in 2 Timothy 3:10,11 "*But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at (Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra) – what persecutions I endured. And out of them all the Lord delivered me*". We see that Paul was delivered, showing that God's grace was sufficient once Paul received it and acted upon it. God's grace empowered Paul and God's mercy qualified Paul to receive the power.

Salvation is based upon receiving the gift of God. Salvation is acquired by believing that Jesus' sacrifice (death) on Calvary was sufficient to pay the sin debt, and therefore one is given good-standing with God. God counts the person's believing (Faith) as an act much greater than any good work. Faith is greater than feeding the poor, healing the sick, etc. Trusting in

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and relying upon Christ by Faith is counted as righteousness by God. (Romans 4:24, 5:1 and John 6:29). As a result of Faith, a person will do good works, but as a by-product of Faith; so Faith is greater than good works.

Salvation: to be saved is to have accepted God's gifts and the blessings that accompany this status. To be saved is to believe that no matter what may happen you are still in God's care. This is the ultimate trusting in God. A saved person is turning over to God their past, present and future. Sickness, poverty and even death may come, but our saved status determines that through it all, God is still sovereign (God is in charge, with the final say and perfect judgment). There will be no outcome that is not ultimately to His purpose. Since we hold that God is Love, we therefore do not fear. We are in the hands of a loving, just and merciful Father and He has saved us and will not fail us. "*yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me...*" (Psalm 23). Some Christians have Faith to believe they are saved to go to Heaven but on earth they are left to their own means; "God will be with you in your suffering but will not deliver you (save you) from it". I prefer the Hebrew definition of salvation. We may suffer, but God is with us to bring us through suffering to victory in all areas of life. The sick cried out to Jesus, "*Son of David, have mercy upon us.*" By this they expected that God's mercy meant "salvation" – they would be made whole and they would be shown compassion, (Mercy and compassion are interchangeable in Christianese.) All who believed this were healed. The exception to healing is clearly delineated in Matthew 13:58, "*He could do no mighty works here because of their unbelief*". Salvation includes healing, wholeness, deliverance available to us; it is a binding covenant and eternal promise from our God.

*****By Faith we can expand this covenant of salvation to include not just Heaven upon physical death but salvation (wholeness, health, deliverance) while on the earth.**

Healing, dominion, and authority over body and soul are available to us by Faith. We need only believe that Jesus' blood and His beaten Body paid for sin, sickness, poverty and provided

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everything we need until we get to Heaven. An Amen goes right there! God the Creator is a holy, sinless, and righteous Judge. Sin causes destruction and death and must be paid for – this is called atonement.

When sin is committed and goes unchecked, it grows worse until it destroys everything. History tells of many civilizations which fell into wasteful decadence, human sacrifice and then disintegration. They were conquered or destroyed by seemingly “natural disasters” or as some say, the Hand of God (the Spirit or power of God). God’s justice requires that sin must be paid for by blood, for blood is the life force in a being. Sin debt is the Christianese term for this. Sin causes death and death is destruction, both physical and spiritual, so blood (life force) is the payment when life force is damaged. *“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.”* (Leviticus 17:11) *“for it is the life of all flesh. Its blood sustains its life.”* (Leviticus 11:14). The law allows for the payment to be made by anyone willing to pay the “sin debt”, with the provision that they can qualify as a legal debt payer. For example, I can pay my taxes and with the remainder of my surplus cash I can pay others taxes if I have the proper currency. If I am a sinner my blood is tainted with sin and cannot pay my sin debt, as it is the wrong currency. Pure blood (sin free) is needed to pay for sin. Yet, a sinless man can pay for the sins of others. Romans 5:8 – *“while we were yet sinners Christ died (paid sin debt) for us”*. Another expression is “we are redeemed”. This means that by sin we were lost, or sold into slavery (habitual sinning) under the control of the devil. Christ by His Blood payment has bought us back – redeemed us from death (sin) to life.

Galatians 3:13-14

“Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”, that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.”

Therefore, Christ's sacrificial death also can be used by Faith to break ***generational curses***. This is a curse that passes through the family due to sins unpaid for: poverty, sickness, insanity, fornication, etc. The curse is declared in Deuteronomy 5:9- "visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation". God amends this law in Ezekiel 18:4, "The soul that sins shall die" and in verse 14, "But if a man begets a son who sees all the sins which his father has done, and fears but does not do likewise..." verse 17: "and observes My ordinances, and walks in My statutes; he shall not die for his fathers iniquity; he shall surely live" (RSV- Nelson). This is a good deal, and Christ's death will remove the curse, even if the law has been violated. Acceptance that Jesus' taking of the curse was "***debt-paid***" will free a soul from the ***sins of the fathers*** and themselves. WOW! (For more on generational curse see page 61).

One of the promises of the Spirit is ***salvation*** - freedom from the death that is due us for our ***sin-debt***. Salvation is achieved not by your works and activity, but by your Faith and believing. One has to believe that he has received the promise of eternal life because he recognizes Jesus as his Savior, and he accepts Jesus' sacrifice on the cross by dying as "***the Sacrificial Lamb***".

What in the world does that mean? The term ***Lamb of God, Sacrificial Lamb***, the ***Pascal Lamb***, the ***Passover Lamb*** are all derived from the Old Testament tradition of the Jews by which God provided a way to atone for sins by allowing them to sacrifice an unblemished lamb.

Brief History Leading up to the Lamb

Five hundred years or so before Passover in the land of Egypt, there was a man named Abraham, who had a special relationship with God. This relationship was based on Abraham's Faith, (trusting and believing in God's promise and God's Word). Abraham had many sons, the first two sons are noteworthy – Ishmael, born of Hagar, his Egyptian concubine, and Isaac, born

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of his wife Sarah. Abraham had left Turkey and settled in Canaan land, and had his sons Ishmael and Isaac. Isaac had Jacob (whose spiritual name became or was Israel). Jacob, Abraham's grandson through Isaac, had twelve sons. These twelve sons are the patriarchs of the tribes of Israel. Ishmael also had twelve sons, which according to Scripture, also settled in Canaan land. Many people believe that these are the patriarchs of the Arabs. I feel this is in error as the Arabs were indigenous to Arabia, the lands to the east before and during the time of Abraham. How can Arabs descend from a man whose offspring settled and died in Canaan land. This includes the children of Jacob (Israel) and the children of Ishmael. Genesis 25:18: *"They dwelt from Havilah as far as Shur, which is east of Egypt as you go toward Assyria."* The Arabia of Mohammed is hundreds of miles southeast of the lands settled by the direct descendants of Abraham. The Arabic counterparts of Abraham were the people that were descendants of Nimrod and the people who had built the Tower of Babel. God told Abraham to get away from this land (Turkey), where his fathers had settled which was dominated by sun god, moon god, and goddess worshipers who practiced pagan rites of animal and nature worship. These people later called Arabs, worshiped Allah and hundreds of other gods. Allah is the moon god and should not be confused with Yahweh. I believe it is a false claim that came through Islam that the Arabs are descendants of Abraham and therefore are cousins of the Jews. This myth and others have been fostered to support false claims of Islam upon the Holy Land of the Jews.

Israel, ***Hebrew*** and ***Jewish*** are used interchangeably in Christianese. Hebrew is both the language spoken by the sons of Abraham and a name used for their tribe. Israel is the name of the people of Jacob that identifies the same tribe. It also describes locality – the area of Canaan land. The term Jewish appears later than Hebrew and is more closely identified with the city of Jerusalem. This is because the tribe of Judah (from which the term "Jew" comes) and the tribes of Benjamin remained in the area of Jerusalem when the nation was divided into two parts

after King Solomon. The northern kingdom was called Israel and the southern, Judah. Much later the term “Jews” began to be used to describe all Hebrews-Israelites. All three names - Jews, Hebrews, and Israelites refer to the same group of people – the descendants of Abraham by Sarah his wife, who are heirs to the covenant of Abraham. This first covenant includes circumcision and righteousness by Faith. Years later God added the Laws of Moses. One of Jacob’s twelve sons, Joseph, was sold into slavery by his brothers, to Ishmaelite slave traders, who were on their way to trade in Egypt. He was taken to Egypt and sold. After a series of strange and miraculous events, he became prime minister to the Pharaoh. During a famine, his brothers were forced to reunite with Joseph who forgave them for having sold him. He sent for his father Jacob, and the rest of his brothers, sisters, nephews and nieces. They all arrived in Egypt and for four hundred years lived in Egypt, swelling their numbers toward a million.

The Egyptians disliked the Hebrews for many reasons. Here are three main ones:

1) They had a different religion 2) They raised sheep instead of cattle 3) Their population growth was threatening Egyptian control. Therefore, many years after Joseph’s death, the Pharaoh enslaved the Hebrews. Slavery was hard and the people cried out to God for help. God appointed Moses, a Hebrew baby that was adopted by one of the princesses of Egypt. She raised him as one of Pharaoh’s family. God selected Moses and his brother Aaron to lead the people out of Egypt and to return them to the Promised Land, the land of Canaan. Pharaoh refused to let the children of *Israel* go; therefore God caused a series of plagues to be brought upon the Pharaoh and his people. Each plague is a direct assault upon a pagan god –a disease is put upon the cows and the cow god is defeated. The sun is blotted out overpowering the sun god, etc., etc., all to demonstrate that the Jews’ God *Is* God.

The last plague is that the angel of death would pass over all of Egypt and destroy the first born of every family and the first born of all animals.

Brief History Leading up to the Lamb

This last plague finally causes Pharaoh to relent and release the Hebrews. This last drastic event is central to understanding Judaism and Christianity.

Sacrificial Lamb - God tells the children of Israel that His desire is not to destroy them and provides a sign so that the angel of the death will “pass over” them. They are told to take a lamb that is unblemished, no broken bones, no disease, and to live with this lamb for three days and three nights, to thoroughly examine the lamb to be sure it is a worthy sacrifice. At the end of this time, they are to kill this lamb, drain the blood of the lamb at their door, take a sponge, and place blood on the top and the sides of the lintel of the door (this makes the sign of the cross in the doorway). They are then to go inside and roast the lamb and have a Passover meal. At this meal they are to make unleavened bread (no yeast), and quickly prepare to leave Egypt. This event is symbolic of the sacrificial **Lamb of Christ**, the Lamb without spot or blemish, which is slain to cover the sins of the people.

In Christianese, the imagery of Moses and the Lamb in Egypt hold many hidden meanings. Christians will speak of **Moses** as a type of Savior – a Christ figure. **Pharaoh** is a type of satan - an evil slave master. **Egypt** is a place of sin and worldly temptation. **Egypt-land** is a condition of the unsaved or the saved in a backslidden state. Canaan land is a place of promise = The **Promised land** where there are evil giants and problems, but greater rewards than Egypt could ever offer. The Promised Land -Israel, (Canaan land) is where God’s Spirit is and therefore victory is guaranteed. The trip from Egypt to the Promised Land is only possible because the debt of sin was paid by the Sacrificial Lamb. Also, Pharaoh’s power and control have been broken. The death of the Lamb brought life to those dead in sin, freeing the way out of Egypt (sin). This victory over satan assures us of Heaven and provides the believer with the power of the Holy Spirit, which makes life in Canaan land possible. So the theme of the Passover Lamb is essential in our language.

Passover Lamb

More serious Christians focus on Passover and try to avoid saying “Easter”. Passover and Easter usually fall close together. The Jewish calendar has 360 days and the Gregorian calendar has 365¼ days. This is because they pertain to the same holiday. The early church celebrated Passover - commemorating the Pascal Lamb. The modern church commemorates the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ, and many believers don’t realize that Jesus’ activities are perfectly timed with the Jewish Passover. Jesus (the Lamb) enters the House of God (The Temple) after the triumphant entry on Palm Sunday and is examined for three days to see if He has any blemish (sin). Deuteronomy 16:6, Numbers 9:3: “*on the fourteenth day of this month*”, Numbers 12:12: “*nor break one bone*”, etc. We must stress here that Jesus as the **Passover Lamb** had to fulfill everything in accordance with Jewish law. **The lamb must be without blemish, without flaw, without sin**, a year old lamb; this poses problems for some theologians that set His ministry as 3 years in duration. But a careful examination of the book of John seems to show Jesus’ ministry going from Passover to Passover, therefore one year in duration – a one-year lamb. None of the lamb’s bones were to be broken (men’s legs were broken during crucifixion to hasten death). This occurred to the two thieves but not Jesus, for He gave up the Ghost (passed away) before the others. Jesus’ death was verified by piercing His side and observing the separated water and blood. The Passover lamb had to be killed and his blood placed on the door in the sign of a cross over each household. When the angel of death saw the blood of the sacrificial lamb, he would “Pass-over” that house sparing the lives of the inhabitants. Jesus’ death and Blood provides protection and salvation to all who place His sacrificial death over the door to their heart. The lamb was to be killed, blood drained and eaten all in the same night. Therefore, the Passover meal, arrest, trial and death of Jesus all had to occur in one 24-hour period; and at the same time that the Jewish Nation would

Brief History Leading up to the Lamb

be carrying out their Passover activities with their lambs. Jesus said He would be three days and nights in the earth as Jonah was in the belly of a big fish (Matthew 12:40). Jewish law sets Friday night as the beginning of the regular Sabbath.

All holy days are referred to as Sabbaths and all begin at sundown. If Jesus were crucified on a Friday and had to be off the cross at Friday sundown, we cannot get three days and three nights for Him to be in the grave. So let's think Jewish. John 19:31 & 42 gives us a possible answer. This Passover falls in line with the regular Friday Sabbath so it is called a high Sabbath; therefore the festival begins sundown Thursday therefore making Wednesday the day of preparation. This can be confusing since a day begins at sundown not at sunrise. Teachers and Rabbis had a pre-Passover meal with their students as a tradition. So much debate swirls around the question of when was Jesus crucified (on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday or Friday). This work is not the place to resolve this question, but there is little solid evidence for a Friday crucifixion or a Sunday Resurrection. The most likely scenario seems to be that Jesus entered Jerusalem on Sunday, was examined Sunday, Monday and Tuesday, arrested Tuesday night and put on the cross Wednesday, entombed Wednesday night (Jewish Thursday) and Thursday night, Friday day and night and Saturday day and night, and that He rose while it was still dark, very early before Sunday morning (John 20:1), but was the Jews Sunday which is our Saturday night...whew! It seems that pagan influences on the Catholic Church opened the door to the destruction of Judaism in the Christian Faith (see pages 92, 93). As a result Christians don't usually celebrate the Passover, they eat pork on Easter Sunday, ignore the Friday night/Saturday Sabbath. The fertility goddess called Eastre, Astre, and Artemis (see Acts) and her symbols dominate and replace Jewish traditions and names.

This information has greatly impacted our language, for now the Pagan origins of Easter have been exposed and the Jewish significance stands forth. We now acknowledge Passover as central to our Faith and declare Sunday as "Resurrection Sunday" rather than Easter Sunday. Easter bunnies, bonnets, and

eggs are all pagan fertility goddess symbols and are losing their place in churches and in our language. Slowly, but surely, we are returning to the Truth. We should keep all seven Jewish festivals in some form, as well as honor the Sabbath while keeping Sunday to celebrate the Resurrection. Yet we cannot ignore what has been changed to force Easter and the sun god upon us.

This drama in the Old Testament is symbolic, but it is acted out in reality in the New Testament, where Jesus Christ lived a life as a man without sin. His blood was spilled when He received the scourging, beating, wore a thorny crown, and was crucified. Jesus laid down His life for the sins of man and became the **Sacrificial Lamb**, thus bringing salvation to mankind. Mankind is free to accept or reject this sacrifice. Accepting by Faith and believing that Christ's beating, death and Blood were a substitute for your sin; God, who is merciful and kind, over looks your sin, and you can declare you are therefore **washed in the Blood of the Lamb, saved.**

As a result of this cleansing by the **Blood of the Lamb**, the word **atonement** will spring into conversations. We receive atonement by the Blood. In other words, the Blood has put us at one with God, has paid the price for us, the same way that we have been bought back, purchased, delivered and saved. Believers will pray for non-believers to become ***born again***, and therefore ***saved, washed in the Blood.*** We hear a strange phrase sometimes..."Lord, put a **hook in his jaw** and **bring him to the altar.**" This strange graphic picture is Christianese for "Lord, do whatever is necessary to get this person to hear and receive the Gospel message." Quite often it is necessary for a person to go through a difficult time in order to realize he needs God...that he needs a Savior. If the unsaved person is hardheaded or stubborn, then the Christian will often pray "**put a hook in his jaw**, and God, please bring him to the throne forcibly." This of course is not possible, as salvation is by Faith, and is only for volunteers. It does though, effectively call to mind a picture of a fisherman pulling in a fish, which is the believer's hope that the unsaved will be placed into a situation that will cause them to turn to God. Christianese has many, many references to the Lamb and Blood

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in word and in songs. This is a central theme and always points to Jesus as the Lamb of God being slain for the sins of the world. “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.” (John 1:29)

*****The angel of death cannot destroy or have dominion over the people who have the Sacrificial Lamb’s Blood over the doors of their lives.**

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Angels

An interesting topic is that of *angels* and their role in ministering, helping, guiding, directing and assisting the saints of God. The Book of Hebrews, Chapter 1, verse 13 states that “are they not (angels) all ministering spirits sent to minister to those who are called unto salvation?” *Angels* are powerful celestial beings, created by God, described as sons of God, and servants who work alongside the saints of God to accomplish God's will. *Angels* are *not* deity. I repeat...they are *not* deity. In the spiritual realm they are more powerful than us because of their nature, and because they have an understanding of the operation and power of Faith. We arrive at an understanding of God by Faith, whereas *angels* see the Throne of God and know God; therefore, they function in the supernatural realm with greater ease and familiarity than we do. *Angels* are not all-knowing nor are they all-powerful. Most of the time they are undetected in the normal course of events, but some *angels* can take human form and become visible. While in prayer or in a heightened spiritual moment, one may actually perceive or sense the presence of *angels*. Some people may see into the spiritual realm and observe them with the physical eye. This capability appears to occur as God determines it to be necessary. According to Scripture, *angels* are not to be worshiped (Revelation.2:10 or 12) and they appear to have different ranks, as in an army with different responsibilities...some have wings, some are without wings. They are neither male nor female, and are not given in

marriage as Jesus points out in Scripture - “*For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven.*”(Matthew 22:30). There are millions and millions, possibly billions of them, as the Scripture points out that all saints have angels who are assigned to guide, help and protect us; to see to it that we have supernatural help in this realm.

Fallen angels are angels who rebelled against God along with satan and determined that they would no longer serve God. It is interesting at this point to note that angels and men have free will. They can make choices for their own benefit or for their own destruction. The angels that chose to rebel against God have also chosen to be an enemy to God's creation as well as God's created beings...man. Fallen angels are also spirit beings that cannot die, but will eventually be placed in the ***Lake of Fire*** at the end of time, where they will be eternally separated from God. The *Bible* calls this separation from God ***death***. The ***Lake of Fire*** is described as a fire and brimstone, burning place of punishment (Revelation 20:10). This is called the ***second death***. ***The first death*** is physical death. The second death affects both human spirits and angelic spirits, causing torment. This is also the final resting place of the souls of humans who hate and reject God.

******The Truth needs to be told loud and clear – God doesn't send man to hell. Man chooses hell.***

There are only two eventual realities - Heaven or hell. God is in Heaven, so if we choose God we go to where He is. To reject God is to not want to be with or under God. The only place you can do that is in hell, so to be separated from God is to be in death, for God is life. So, after the first death you enter eternal life or eternal second death.

The leader of the fallen angels, satan, is a very powerful angel, also described as a “cherub”. ***Cherubim*** and ***seraphim*** are large and powerful angelic creatures. Some ***cherubim*** actually guard the Throne of God, and stand in His presence. ***satan, lucifer, the devil, the dragon, the serpent, the evil one, father of lies, king of tyre, prince of darkness,*** (various names

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for the evil one) lucifer was also in Heaven near the Throne of God, in Ezekiel 28, and Isaiah 14. In these Scriptures it appears he was a powerful musical/worship leader who used his great beauty and power to turn other angels against God in a desire to elevate himself and take over the Throne of God. satan lost this battle and was thrown down to the earth, where by subterfuge, lying and deceit, he was able to make himself the ***god of this (age) world***". "Whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them." (2 Corinthians 4:4) It appears that following the fall of Adam and Eve, many men and women were born on the earth. Most had earthly parents, but not all. satan and some of the very powerful fallen angels were able to materialize and mate with some of the women on the earth. How this was done, we are not told. They could have possessed humans or taken humanlike form. (Genesis 6 and Jude 1, 2 Peter 2). The offspring from these unions were an abomination to God, and did produce some great and powerful beings. Many of these beings were giants and man was perverted by these evil angels. They were unacceptable in Heaven and therefore their spirits are still on the earth as demon spirits. Their final judgment will not come until the end of all things. Jesus, when faced with them, did not condemn them to hell but drove them out of their hosts or out of their regions. The demons ask Him in Matthew 8:29 "have You come to torment us before the time?" Many of the stories called mythology and folk tales may be a history of these unclean offspring. I believe these are what ***demons, ghouls, poltergeists, familiar spirits, ghosts of dead relatives, phantoms*** and ***UFO characters*** are. All of these express varying degrees of evil, and satan is over them all. To summarize, these would be ***spirits of evil men, fallen angels, demons, the forces of darkness.***

There is a Paradise called Heaven, a place where God, His angels, and spirits of deceased saints dwell. There are heavens, the outer space of the galaxies. There is also ***hell, hades, gehenna, sheol, a burning place, a holding place, a dwelling place of evil, a holding place of captive souls, a pit, the grave.***

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These names are all generally synonymous for a place of torment where demons, fallen angels, and spirits of people that have rejected God dwell.

The Flood - Because sin was so great, God brought a flood upon the earth; a cataclysmic event that destroyed the bodies of men as well as the bodies of the offspring of men and fallen angels. If satan and the fallen angels could pollute all of mankind, then of course, Messiah could not be born; except as an offspring of evil, with evil blood in His lineage. The world and mankind would never be free of the dominance of satan. satan and his fallen angels would rule and reign on the earth as their domain forever and ever. It appears that Noah and his family were the only ones left on the earth who did not have the polluted heritage of the fallen angels in their lineage. We see this because the Hebrew words used in Genesis 6:9 say Noah was a righteous man, blameless (Heb. *tamiym* - without blemish, complete, full, unpolluted, perfect, undefiled) in his generations among the people of his time, and he walked with God. The Scripture is telling us that his bloodline was the last undefiled line. Noah was a good man but was not perfect; however, his lineage was. So God **flooded** the earth, to destroy satan's seed and to preserve a path for Messiah to come.

According to Peter, these fallen angels and the spirits of the men that died during Noah's time were placed in the center of the earth in a place called hell; a holding place for evil. This place called hell was divided in half and also had a holding place for the good. This place is called Abraham's bosom, according to Jesus in Luke Chapter 16:19-31. Jesus' sacrifice on Calvary made salvation available to all men, thereby allowing the spirits of men to be pardoned, so that they could go into the presence of God (the Father). All who died before the time of Jesus of Nazareth, if they were good, dwelt in Abraham's bosom. Ephesians 4:9,10 and 2 Peter 2:4,5 appear to point out that Jesus, after His death on the cross, went to hell bearing the sins of the world. Anyone with sin upon them would have to go to hell. Upon arriving at hell with the sins of the world upon Him, satan would discover that none of the sin belonged to Jesus; for He

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truly was a Lamb without spot, wrinkle, or blemish. He took our sins to hell but had no sin of His own, and therefore could not be kept in hell. Jesus in this way conquered sin, death and hell. Jesus did not die from sickness nor did the devil take His life. Jesus conquered sickness by taking upon His body 39 stripes – one for each of the 39 categories of sickness described by medicine. Jesus conquered death, for death did not “take Him”, but He chose the moment to give up “the ghost” (See Luke 23:46, Matthew 27:50, Mark 15:37, John 19:30).

He preached to the souls who were in the bosom of Abraham and those in hell. In Luke 16 Jesus says, “*There was a certain rich man...*” He then describes Hades (hell) with two compartments - one of torment, (hell); the other of comfort (Abraham’s bosom). Jesus deposits sins in hell and takes away the captives in Abraham’s bosom. Those who were in the bosom of Abraham could now receive the full truth and revelation of the Gospel. They accepted the grace and mercy of God, and as the Scripture said, “*He led captivity captive*”. Those captive in Abraham’s bosom that lived good lives before the law of Moses and during the law were led out of the bosom compartment to Heaven. (Ephesians 4:8) Since Christ's sacrifice, all who die and have received and believe on Christ, go immediately to Heaven. “*to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord*”. (2 Corinthians 5:8) Believers do not go to Abraham’s bosom in Hades, but now they go to be with the Lord in Heaven. All who die without Christ are placed in hell with many of the fallen angels and all the spirits of evil men and women from Adam until the present. They will remain there until Judgment Day. Judgment Day will be after all end time events are concluded. All humans, good and bad, will be resurrected from the dead and all will go before the Lord and be judged for the works they did while alive (Revelation 20:12,13). Satan, fallen angels, death and hell will be judged, found guilty, and placed in the lake of fire to be tormented forever. (Revelation 21) The evil hell that’s opposite Abraham’s bosom will be cast into the lake of fire along with human spirits, angels and death itself.

Purgatory/Sleep/Rapture

The concept of **purgatory** is non-existent in Scripture as an actual place. The concept in the Bible comes to us from Catholicism. In the Bible we see no place clearly defined where a sinner is in a holding pattern after death. The story in Luke 16 of the rich man and Lazarus is referred to as a purgatory-type experience, but we see that Abraham says, “*the gulf is fixed and no one can pass from here to there*”. Judgment occurs at death and is immutable. Neither the living nor the dead can, by prayer, petition or payment; move already dead souls from one place to another. There is nothing a spirit can do in hell that would merit its moving up to Heaven. We are judged for what we did while in the body on earth.

Life, as defined by the *Bible*, falls into three categories: physical life on the earth, and spiritual life on the earth as well as spiritual life in Heaven with God.

Death is divided into three categories: physical death of your body on the earth, spiritual death (having your spirit go to hell), which is separation from God, and then the final death at the end of all time after the final judgment, being thrown into the lake of burning fire. This death is total separation from God, with no reprieve, no return.

Sleep is defined as physical sleep, resting of the body for a period of time; but also the sleep of the saints in which the physical body is clinically dead, but the spirit is still alive. 1Thessalonians 4:13,14: “*But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.*” Saints who have died (sleep) on earth are alive as spirits with the Lord. The Bible says, “*Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed...*” (1 Corinthians 15:51). In other words, mankind will experience physical death as the body rests and decays in a tomb or in a grave, while your spirit is either in hell awaiting judgment, or is present with the Lord. Those whose bodies sleep in the earth who have been evil, will be awakened (their bodies rejoined to their

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spirits), only to be judged and then re-condemned to the lake of fire. The saints of God who passed away will have their bodies dormant and decaying - asleep in the earth. But they will be resurrected, changed, reunited with their spirits. These bodies are called *resurrection bodies*. Jesus' body after the tomb was and is a *glorified resurrection body*. This body is a supernatural body, yet natural in image, but changed. Paul calls it "imperishable". Jesus could eat food with this body, be touched, and could also walk through walls. A supernatural body... Wow.

This experience of being reunited - body to spirit, will occur two times, once at Judgment Day and near The Great Tribulation. The latter experience is called, *The Rapture, quickening, or catching away*. Jesus speaks of it in the Gospels as, "*I tell you, in that night there will be two men in one bed; the one will be taken and the other will be left. Two women will be grinding together; the one will be taken and the other left*" (Luke 17:34, 35). In Matthew 25 Jesus talks about ten *virgins*. Five wise that make the rapture and go to the wedding in Heaven and five foolish that are left on earth to go through further tribulation. They are saved (saints) but were not ready when the Groom (Jesus) came for His Bride. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15:51, "*Behold I show you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.*" (verse 52), "*the dead shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed*". Jesus will come in the clouds with the spirits of saints and in a supernatural moment, physical bodies will be remade and joined to their spirits. People who are alive will instantly die and be reborn in *resurrection body form*. Paul calls it a "twinkling of an eye", approximately 1/1100th of a second. They will die and be reborn in an instant but not sleep as in 1 Corinthians 15:51. Wow, now that's a real miracle. Old timers call it that "*great gettin' up day or morning*". Then the saints will eternally be with God, in the new Heaven, and on the new earth, for this present earth and the present heavens will also be judged at the end of time and will pass away (Revelation 19-22).

Familiar spirits

In Christianese you will hear the phrase "*familiar spirits*".

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This is a spirit that is a **demonic entity** that has knowledge and information concerning a person, a group of persons or a family's history. Familiar spirits are contacted through demonic activities such as channeling, deep meditation, psychics, séances, ouija boards, worshiping and talking to the dead, spiritual broadcasting, and other occult activities. While under the influence of drugs many people have opened doors to the spirit realm. They have been deceived into thinking that the kingdom they are experiencing is from God. God's laws and His protective system does not allow your dead grandmother to come to visit you on earth, so you can be sure that a ghost is not from Heaven but is from hell. Ghosts have knowledge and information and are **familiar** with the people that they haunt, but it must be remembered they are demonic. They are liars, they are tricksters; they can take different forms and stimulate visions and dreams. Their ultimate purpose is to destroy, disable and eventually send people to hell.

One occult activity, called "**meditation**", has a totally different meaning for Christians. The meaning of **meditation** for Christians is to quietly mutter, concentrate and focus upon the Word of God. With **Transcendental Meditation** and occult meditation the focus is upon emptying the mind and stilling the body. **Meditation** techniques of the Buddhists, Hindus, Yoga practitioners, New Agers and the occult are unacceptable to Christians. In these forms of meditation, supernatural spirits that are not of God can gain entrance, information and influence. We have a saying that, "if you will empty your mind, something or someone will fill it". A Christian is to actively fill his mind with the Word and the thoughts of God... "*and on His law I meditate day and night*" (Psalm 1). The Christian can gain access to the supernatural by meditating on God, prayer and fasting, Tongues (praying in the spirit – see pages 6-19, 72, 74, & 92), worship and proper WORD meditation. These are the tools of the Master builder and He has placed safeguards on these techniques. Considering Yoga, Tai Chi, acupuncture, acupressure, and reflexology, etc. etc. etc. the Master (Jesus) has **not** protected these techniques, though they may have validity as exercise or

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therapy, yet the dangers outweigh the possible benefits. Pray right, love right, eat right, exercise and the Holy Spirit will lead you. I know a Pastor who felt the Holy Spirit was leading him to yoga; he lost his mind and ministry, so beware.

Demonic possession is when a spiritual entity, a familiar spirit or a demon, gains significant control over a human being, whether by suggestion, stimulation, or mind control. We call a person ***possessed*** when they have lost control over their will. In this state a person has allowed or has been deprived of his or her will by a spiritual entity. God has given man free will; but sometimes, through sin, a demonic force may gain a legal right to attack and gain influence over a person. Satan and his demons are bullies; therefore, if they get a toe-hold in a person's life, they seek to dominate the individual's will to the point that they can make the person think, feel and do whatever they desire. It should be noted that, as Lester Summerall says in his book, 'Alien Entities', very few people are ever totally possessed of a demon and there is usually always some residual willpower that is left. The person, though they are "possessed" can, from time to time, exert their willpower and step out of the influence of the demonic. The demoniac of the Gadarenes used his will to run to Jesus and worship Him in spite of the influence of a whole legion (hundreds) of demons which controlled him.

Demons have no respect or regard for the weak or the innocent. If a person is ignorant, practices idol worship or other violations of God's laws, he/she can come under attack. Without a spiritual defense they can become overwhelmed. The demonic presence, which came to visit, then comes to reside. So we see that young unprotected children can become possessed, especially if the parents are unsaved and involved in sin.

Most people only experience ***demonic oppression***. This may be periodic disturbances in specific areas of life. From time to time they may exhibit irrational or disruptive behavior. They may be troubled in mind or emotions, and usually fear is a part of their irrational thinking. A bad habit or addiction may have a more than normal compulsion. For example, when stressed, a person experiences an overwhelming desire to injure themselves.

A person may only struggle with a demonic influence for an episode, months or years.

Oppression is often associated with a trauma that has caused a person to allow doors to the demonic to be opened. The death of a loved one, divorce, illness, emotional or sexual abuse, or turning to occult practices, may precipitate an attack. Demons look for bad habits or areas of weak character. The surest area of attack is “pride” - rejecting God and turning to satan for power, pleasure and status. The demon may promise you power, wealth, pleasure, etc. but he will exact a very high price in return.

Oppressed or possessed - it’s just a matter of degree. Both conditions mean the person’s will has been compromised to his or her own detriment, and the cause is supernatural evil. This can be due to the direct sin of the individual, (unforgiveness, hate, anger, lust, etc), but it could also be due to the sins of the parents. Demonic forces can be transferred to children. Environments can be created that invite and perpetuate demonic influences.

Whether a person is possessed or oppressed, it is difficult to remove the demonic influence without the cooperation of the will of the host. In the Name of Jesus we can stop, bind up and limit the acting out or the effectiveness of the demon; but to cast him out from the host, some cooperation from the host is desirable, and in many cases, necessary. Words like casting out and exorcism refer to the process of gaining control of the demon and forcing it to abandon the host. Modern psychiatry struggles to address this area, for they can only sedate the host so the demon is limited, or over years of counseling hope to resurrect the host’s will to rise up and cast off the abnormal (demonic) behavior. By the Name of Jesus and the Power of that Name, a person can be loosed forever, in a moment. Thank God that there is a Way of Escape. This term means that by repenting of sin and turning to God He will show us a path to freedom. A person may have to reap some of what has been sown, but the outcome will be determined by God rather than the devil.

Sow & Reap

Often this is confused with the eastern concept of karma and reincarnation. Man has free will and our actions result in consequences. Jesus uses agricultural terminology **to sow** - to plant. **To reap** means to prepare for or take in what was planted (sown). This gathering in of what was sown is called **gathering The Harvest** or just **The Harvest**. The substance gathered in, whether material or souls (new converts or experiences), is called **Fruit**. There is no past life to present life sowing and reaping. We do inherit certain genes and biological traits but not due to having been reincarnated. The cycle of sowing and reaping will always prove out; Jesus taught it as a spiritual law “*God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap...*” (Galatians 6:7). Whatever is done in the dark will be brought to the light. “What goes around, comes around” is a fitting adage for sow & reap. You may hurt or rob ‘person A’ but this evil will be repaid to you by ‘person A’ or ‘person Q’ two years from now. Life is not always fair and bad things do happen to good people. You can be assured that the scale will always be balanced out, for God is a fair Judge in the end. This **end** may come in this life, hell or Heaven, but cannot pass on beyond the person who committed the acts. We are all held responsible for our actions; therefore, **we** will receive our just due. Trouble comes to us all. God said, “*My rain falls on the just and the unjust*”. God blesses all, but man’s **free will** causes great inequity. Therefore, an evil man can bring great harm to innocent people. We have the responsibility on earth to exercise free will and dominate those who use their free will irresponsibly. It is our moral right and duty to stand against and fight evil. Calling upon God to stop evil is misdirected; we are to call upon God to guide us as to how to stop evil. The work of Christ’s grace has empowered us to take authority over evil. “*I give you the authority to trample on **serpents and scorpions**.*” (Luke 10:19) We have dominion over the forces of evil. Jesus told us “*in My name they shall cast out devils;*” (Mark 16:17) Consider this - how far would Hitler have

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gotten if the Christian world would have used their free will to stop Hitler's evil free will rather than crying out, "if there is a God why doesn't He do something?" God's answer: "I put you on the earth to do something and you keep letting the devil do what he wants." Hitler sowed great evil for which he will reap eternal torment. The world was slow to stop him and reaped some of what he sowed. We must be aware that action as well as inaction has consequences. It is a sin to commit an evil act, but it is also a sin to fail to do what one knows is right. We call this sins of commission and omission, respectively. Commission = you did it. Omission = you failed to do what you knew was right. The believer is to use his free will to attack the demonic powers in the heavenlies and on the earth. The believer is also to be building the Kingdom of God on the earth. In summary, the believer must use their free will to trample on snakes and scorpions, but can only succeed by confessing all sin and not habitually committing sin or omitting to do the right thing. We call this lining up. Comply with God's laws, obey God, His prophets and pastors, etc.

*****Prayer is a powerful tool. Faith is a great workshop,
our hands a productive carpenter.**

Generational Curse

When a family sins against God habitually, and demonic forces claim a right to influence this family, we call that a generational curse. It proceeds from one generation to the next and to the next. Biblical definitions of a generation vary - 40 years, approximately 27.4 years, or a life span generation, 70-80 years, the time it takes for a generation to be established or the time it takes for a generation to pass from the scene. Generational curses run from father to son or daughter, son to grandchildren, for approximately three or four generations. These curses are broken by spiritual activity, receiving salvation, or in some cases, exorcism and deliverance. Grandpa is an alcoholic, the son is an alcoholic, and the grandchildren are alcoholics. The

Generational Curse

behavior of an alcoholic will cause pain to the next generation even if they never become addicted. So the sins of Dad affect his children. The Bible says these sins will run to the third, “*yea even to the fourth generation*”. Thanks be to God, these cycles can be supernaturally broken and put to an end. Wrong thinking, bad habits, and evil practices must be “**turned over to God**” so that a **generational curse** cycle can be broken. “**Turned over to God,**” means by prayers, oaths, and spiritual action (i.e. fasting) you give a problem to God for Him to handle. By Faith one releases his worries and fears, and trusts God for the outcome. Unlike “karma”, it is not some past life that’s affecting you, but your present life influences, i.e. parents’ bad habits being passed down. The individual does not have to accept these sins.

Praise God for Jesus...our Way out!

Finally, it should be noted that the curse is not caused by God; it is the habits of the individual, and a rejection of the Word of God, along with satan taking advantage of his legal right to bring persistent attack upon a family. satan will use familiar spirits to keep the cycle going, and to bring as much destruction as he can upon the families. **Spiritual warfare** (fasting, prayer, repentance, anointing, etc.), as well as Biblical counseling is a must. Pastors and elders with understanding should be called upon to assist with removing and overcoming curses.

Bitter Root

This refers to a person retaining a judgment concerning a person or events in which they feel they have been wronged, harmed, or treated unfairly. This perception of ill treatment has not been resolved in their minds and their emotions. These unresolved emotions go deep down into their very nature to the point that they develop anger, hostility, loathing, hate, disdain, or resentment for themselves or the person who caused the situation. They may hold these emotions against whomever they felt should have resolved or prevented its occurrence. Consider the child whose parents failed to protect them from abuse. A

The Authority of the Name of Jesus

child could develop a bitter, deep-rooted hatred for their parents, such that even the sound of their names could cause physical sickness or outbreaks of rage. Therefore, the root of the problem gets down into the being of a person, and great bitterness is formed. Bitter roots manifest as bad attitudes, irrational thinking, isolationism; and cause illness such as cancer, heart disease and even violent behavior. Demonic activity, voices and influence may direct or sustain a bitter root. A bitter root judgment may be real or imagined, fact or fiction. The problem is that the act perpetrated may be a sin but holding on to the root is also a sin. In Mark 11:25, “*And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone forgive them that your heavenly Father may forgive you.*” (NIV) Forgiveness is required in order to receive blessings from God. These evil emotions must be removed, released or put in God’s perspective.

The Authority of the Name of Jesus

Exorcism:

A specific event or encounter to accomplish *deliverance* through spiritual warfare; prayer of binding and loosing, casting out, removal of curses, forgiveness, salvation, recommitment to Christ and *covering* in the Blood and Name of Jesus. *Covering* someone means to pray a prayer that dedicates, protects or commits their person to a protector; i.e. Jesus and good angels.

In all of the Gospels, Jesus gives the born again believer the authority and the ability to do spiritual *warfare*, to deliver people from demonic presences, as well as fight against the forces of darkness. In the Bible this is described as *defeating satan, stepping on scorpions, combating the dominion of darkness in high places, prayer warfare, binding and loosing of demons, casting out of demons*. All of these terms refer to using prayer and Faith to overcome the actions and work of evil. The book of James tells us, “*resist the devil and he will flee*”. Further Scriptures point us to the fact that we have been given dominion over the forces of evil. That does not mean us individually, but

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that the Name of Jesus, His authority, His power, and His angels work in our behalf against evil. His Name brings the absence of fear when confronted with supernatural forces. The Name, coupled with Faith in God's Word and His promises to us, causes the demonic forces to be defeated. It is a bold statement, but nonetheless true. Demonic forces only have authority over the believer who will yield to their authority and allow himself to be dominated.

The Name of Jesus and the belief in the gifts that Jesus has given to believers is sufficient to withstand the onslaught of the evil one. The Name of Jesus means in the authority, purpose and Person of the Messiah, the Anointed One and His Anointing. The Name used without relationship will not result in a demonstration of power.

******The use of the Name of Jesus identifies a person as having a right to access the Power of God and be a part of what the Spirit of God wants to do.***

Therefore, training and detailed study of the Word is necessary to raise a believer's experience and Faith to the point that he knows how to use the Name of Jesus to protect himself and do spiritual warfare.

This requires learning to hear the voice of the Holy Spirit and to move in cooperation with Him. If a believer has his personal sin confessed and the power of the Holy Spirit is present and is moving through him, a demonic force will always be dominated by the believer. Faith in the Name, the power, and the promises of God will not be held hostage to familiar spirits or demonic presence; whether oppressed or possessed.

Anointing

Let's go on to another Christianese word, anointing. The word anointing comes from the word "christos", Messiah, the Christ. Christ is identified as the Anointed One. He is the Chosen One, the Consecrated One; the One that is empowered as a representative of God. The Anointed One is the Chosen One

Anointing

who is set apart into a special office and commissioned for service. Jesus describes His anointing by quoting the Book of Isaiah, Chapter 61. He declares to the people of His hometown, (and I believe He declared this everywhere that He preached). He ministered to the people that *"the Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, for He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn, to console those who mourn in Zion, To give them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; That they may be called trees of righteousness, The planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified."*

When He says, *"the Spirit of the Lord is upon Me"*, He is using that to describe the spiritual act, wherein the unseen power of the Holy Spirit and presence of the Holy Spirit has supernaturally made contact with His body physically and spiritually. The Holy Spirit is choosing Him to serve with this supernatural anointing. The illustration that is given to us in Scripture is of one person pouring oil upon another. Therefore, throughout Scripture and in Christianese we talk about anointing, often with oil, or the anointing of the oil of the Holy Spirit, or with the Holy Spirit through oil. This is a picture of the physical and also of what is happening in the "spirit realm". When we speak of the "anointing," we are talking about when the power, presence, and purpose of the Holy Spirit comes upon a person or group (congregation). When an anointing is in manifestation, the person will usually be directed by the Holy Spirit to do something. The anointing is usually for a special purpose or work: to do a miracle, to enhance worship, or to commune with the presence of God. People are anointed to do things and if used to provide the same service often, we then recognize that God has ***called*** and placed this person into a specific office (i.e., teacher, preacher, singer, prayer, etc.). A supernatural ability will "come upon" the person and they will begin to do the work of the Holy Spirit. When the anointing is present, the supernatural can

be felt and spiritual gifts manifested. When a person is ***baptized***, we see them whelmed, surrounded, immersed in water. This picture works for the ***anointing*** - one is whelmed, surrounded, immersed in the power, presence, and purpose of the Holy Spirit. The anointed office is always present but the “anointing” is when the Spirit shows up. Sincere, humble, repentant worship often creates an atmosphere that pleases God and can bring the anointing. We find it most often when we seek the ***face of God*** (His intimate presence) rather than ***God’s hand*** (His provisions). Hundreds of books have been written about how man can cause God to bring the anointing. If the truth be told, it can be “better felt than telt”. Try all the strategies you like, but the natural cannot dictate to the supernatural. Jesus said in John 3:8: “*The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.*” And so it is with the anointing. When we learn how to feel it, we also learn how to follow it, transfer it, operate in it, and learn to love it. In the anointing, you feel more alive and closer to Jesus. You’re more compassionate, more powerful, more focused, because the Holy Spirit is leading. You will say and do things that normally you would not dare to do.

******You are in the spiritual realm, or as I call it,
“The Zone”. In this zone fear, embarrassment,
and social protocol are set aside.***

This explains why so many strange things happen in the Bible, i.e., David dancing before the Lord without proper clothes (2 Samuel 6:14); King Saul, with no clothes, pinned to the ground and prophesying all day (1 Samuel 19:24); 120 men and women acting drunk, laughing, crying, stumbling, strange speech, etc. on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2); prophets seeing visions, hearing a voice, dealing with demons, etc., etc., etc. When the anointing of the Anointed One is upon people, they become supernatural.

This is acted out in the physical realm. Whether you are doing something special, ***slain in the spirit*** (the power and presence of God weakens the body and it falls, usually backward to the floor), or ***soaking***, (lying or sitting on the floor or frozen standing

in place, absorbing the presence of the Holy Spirit; or one doing **carpet time** on their face – lying prostrate on the floor face down in prayer). The Holy Spirit is in charge. We can yield or resist (better to yield): **let go and let God**. This phrase means to cease to labor, rest in the Lord; cast your cares upon Him. In other words, chill out and trust God. Wait on the Lord. Human striving, without the anointing, will accomplish little...so be patient, while actively looking for God and His plan.

When we recognize what God is doing in someone's life, and we see they are to be "anointed" into an office (like ministry), we do something in the physical to reflect what the Holy Spirit is doing in the spiritual. This is called an **ordination**. The proper Biblical order is this: 1) this person operates by an anointing, 2) people realize that only God could be doing this, 3) so we give a title, and acknowledge what God is doing. In the *Bible*, this is done by actually anointing them (putting oil upon a person) or **laying on of hands** (placing the hand upon the head). Both actions are also used for healing. 1 Samuel 16:13: "*Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward.*" This points out how David was placed into the office of king and that the "anointing" presence of God came upon him from time to time to do the Holy Spirit's work. Before this anointing ceremony, while he was only a boy, David had slain a lion and a bear through trusting in God. In the life of David, we see God sending the prophet to identify and anoint him. About 17 years of trials, training, and preparation put David into position to be recognized by men as "God's anointed." God anoints by the Holy Spirit and man ordains what God has anointed. **Ordination** without signs and wonders is usually man's recognition of academic achievement, personality, or talent. True success in spiritual work is going to require more than these things. Most people that enter ministry do not remain. Some statistics show a 60-70% drop-out rate. Most often discouragement is cited as the reason for failure. The anointing does not come by academic achievement, personality or talent. It's the supernatural ability of God (grace) that empowers one for success.

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The traditional choice of anointing oil is **olive oil**, because historically in Jewish ceremonies the purest and best virgin oil was used (although it should be noted that in some countries, such as India, where olive oil is extremely expensive, other oils, such as palm or coconut oil will be substituted). **Anointing oil** would be lightly applied to the head, or the forehead, or it would be applied so generously that it would actually pour down the face and drip off the beard. This is a picture from Psalm 23: *“Thou anointest my head with oil...”* The Psalm was referring to a technique used by the shepherds to protect the sheep. Oil would be applied to the sheep to prevent insects from entering their ear and eye cavities and nesting there. Oil was helpful in protecting the sheep’s health. As Jesus is the Good Shepherd, who sends the Holy Spirit as an anointing oil, we see how we, as sheep, are covered for health also. Anointing Oil was used as an aid to stimulate Faith. This is demonstrated in fulfilling James 5:14: *“Is anyone among you sick? He should call for the church elders (the spiritual leaders and guides), and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.”* This serves to identify a **point of contact** wherein the person desiring healing and the leader would both release their Faith (see page 70) at the point oil was applied for healing. Often, no oil will be used, only **laying on of hands** for transference of power to drive out illness.

Prayer

There are many types of prayer and ways to pray. Below are a few, with some terms that relate to this activity. **Prayer**: talking to or communicating with a deity, meditating upon the Word of God, individual or group praise by speaking aloud or silently to God. Prayer may be silent, spoken, sung, or in Tongues.

Types of prayer -

1. Repentance or Renunciation (rejecting former acts or association).
2. Dedication (Consecration)
3. Binding and Loosing

4. Intercession (on behalf of others)
5. Praise and Worship
6. Prayer of Faith and Declaration
7. Deliverance and Casting Out

These prayers can be offered in public or private. A person may refer to praying in a ***prayer closet***. This means in a very private place, usually alone. The Biblical meaning of the prayer closet comes from Jesus saying, “*when thou prayest enter into thy closet...*” Matthew 6:16 – This has been taken to mean a four walled place for storage of clothing, but really has a Jewish meaning. All Jewish males had prayer shawls, which could be pulled over the head and face, thereby creating a small private place - a prayer closet. This further explains why Jews believed they could be healed just by touching Jesus’ garment (fringe of His prayer shawl). Since Jesus prayed in His shawl, as the Jewish men did, the people felt the shawl, and the tassels on the end held divine power. This was based upon Messianic Scripture, Malachi 4:2, “*But to you who fear My name The Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings; and you shall go out and grow fat like stall-fed calves.*” The great healings that occurred were due to a release of Faith upon touching the prayer shawl (His wings); not because His shawl, in and of itself, held power. Mark 5:34 shows Jesus confirming this, for He says, “*Daughter thy **Faith** has made thee whole.*” This touching of Jesus’ clothes has been misunderstood. The touch of Faith is what heals, not the garments or the shawl. Jesus did not walk around with His body or His clothes exuding healing, but the touch of Faith would bring the anointing and power would be drawn out of Him. Mark 5:30: “*And Jesus immediately knowing in Himself that power had gone out of Him, turned around in the crowd and said, “Who touched My clothes?”*” The misunderstanding of this has caused some to return to sins of early Israel idol worship. God doesn’t want us to use inanimate, man-created articles as religious amulets or holy tokens. The anointing brings the miracles. The presence of Faith brings the anointing as God wills. When the Apostle Paul prayed over handkerchiefs, aprons, and such, the anointing was released as people in Faith placed them upon the

sick.

Release of Faith

Release of Faith is another Christianese term. To release Faith is to point expectant hope at a specific goal at a specific moment, thereby calling Faith evidence and substance. Hebrews 11:1, “*Now Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*” Faith must be released from the head and heart simultaneously, in real time to be actualized. Unbelief holds back Faith and keeps Faith from working. Picture a jockey holding back a thoroughbred horse that could really run if he’d just let it go. A simple change in declaration will begin to allow Faith to be released. Sometimes we feel it, and other times it’s gradual, but we notice that we arrive at a state of really believing for, before it’s done. This actually means the point at which you believe that what you are praying for is accomplished, completed and done. It means that in the heart and in the mind of a person prior to receiving prayer or anointing oil, they are saying to themselves, “it’s going to be done, it’s going to be done, it’s going to be done...I believe it, I believe it’s gonna happen...” then at the point that they are anointed with oil they declare with soul and spirit - “I’m healed”- “I have what we are here praying for”. “It’s done, it’s done; I know it’s done!” This is the release of Faith, and the manifestation must appear instantly or in a short while. Though the full manifestation may take time, a true release of Faith will not be denied. **A point of contact** is often needed to release Faith –“let it go”, “believe it now!!”

In 2 Corinthians, chapter 1:20...it says, “*For all the promises of God in Him are yes and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us*”. This is a great promise in the *Bible*, for it tells us that -

******anything we can find in Scripture
that God has promised us, we can lay claim to.***

We can lay hold of it because God has said it; and since He has set His Word above Himself (Psalm 138:2), He must do it.

Release of Faith

Anything God has promised us, the answer will always be yes. We must understand that the timing is always a factor. God, for example, has promised us prosperity; the answer is always yes, but the timing on that prosperity may cause us to have to wait for a period of time. But since we are trusting in God, since we are waiting upon the Lord, we can wait in confidence knowing that prosperity will come to us as God said it; therefore the answer is yes and amen. The "amen" is interesting, for the translation of the amen (also said as "Aamin" or "Aahmin") is "so be it." Amen is used by Christians and Jews as 1) oral exclamation points 2) statements of approval and agreement 3) responsive cheer 4) statement of Faith or assent 5) a closing for prayers.

At conservative churches, an amen is used at the end of a prayer. At more charismatic churches, it will be given spontaneously during the service. My father (the late Pastor Ivor Moore of New York City) became well known for saying, "An amen goes right there!", when he said or heard a strong statement. Amen is used as a term of agreement - we agree it, and then we say amen, speaking it into Faith, saying "let it be so done," therefore all the promises of God are "yes, and so be it", calling it into Faith, calling it into reality - what a wonderful promise from God!

Get Fed

To get fed means to spiritually spend time in the Word and become edified (built up) through the Word of God. A person can get fed through prayer and meditation. "Getting fed" usually means going to a Bible study, or hearing a sermon that is edifying, encouraging, stimulating or revitalizing. The blessing of spiritual things is that a person can be fed by the Spirit of God through an unqualified or unlikely source. For example, a parent could be watching a children's puppet show and hear a simple rendering of the Gospel that encourages or blesses them greatly. They could be shopping in a mall and hear a line from a secular song that answers a spiritual question. God can reach us and feed us in many different ways. Most often, we go to church and receive spiritual food; but since God is everywhere, we should be prepared to get fed anytime He is putting food on the table.

Supernatural

In this section, we want to talk about a major area of confusion: dealing with the Spirit or spiritual things. Since God is a Spirit, He does "*the supernatural*". When we call something *supernatural*, we are saying that the natural realm has been interrupted by the supernatural. There is a manifestation or a change that has been caused, not by the natural, but by the supernatural (for example, a miracle, healing, supernatural strength, or a surprising answer to prayer). *A miracle*, for example, is a *supernatural* interruption or alteration of the state or condition of something that exists in the natural. As we previously discussed, man is a spirit who lives in a body, and becomes a soul; this is our basic Biblical definition of man. Therefore, when we talk about *spiritual things*, *spiritual endowments*, *anointings*, *spiritual sense*, *spiritual actions*, *spiritual enemies*, *spiritual awareness*, all of these terms are references to something that has occurred in the spiritual realm, that has manifested or has been sensed in the natural realm. When a Christian says that someone is a *spiritual person*, they generally mean that the person is sensitive to the spiritual realm, and therefore is more knowledgeable and cognizant of things that spirits are doing. Everyone has a spiritual side, but some people make themselves more available to it, through study, prayer and through training.

We will spend eternity in the spiritual realm, but here on earth we are in fleshy bodies, which make it more difficult to be aware of our spiritual nature. When someone is more cognizant of the spiritual realm, we tend to say he is more *spiritually gifted*, as if somehow Heaven or hell just brought them a box called "spiritual sensitivity", which they opened on their birthday. A more careful examination of their lives shows that this endowment was actually achieved, and in many cases sought after, through prayer, meditation and hard spiritual work. Sometimes it's as simple a thing as this: Grandma spent a lot of time in prayer, talking about spiritual things or going to church

two times a day. This, then, creates an environment where the children and the grandchildren think more often about spiritual things. The fact that I am a pastor is due to the action of God, and my upbringing. I was raised in a spiritual home with spiritual people, where I developed an interest in the things of God at an early age. A person raised in the painful reality of child abuse would be likely to be exposed to demon spirits. They would either embrace this evil realm or reject it and search for a good God. The spirit realm is waiting to be found even by those with no spiritual upbringing, and in the end God awaits us all. The devil is a spirit being and he seeks to enter our realm through sin, pain, disappointment, generational curses, and occult activity.

Spiritual Gifts

Hebrews 11:6 says that "*God is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him*". Therefore, if due to family upbringing or curiosity, one begins to seek the Lord, God rewards his/her with spiritual things. The word that is used to describe these spiritual things is *gifts*; but lack of understanding of this term can cause great confusion. When a person receives a gift (let's say for a birthday or at Christmas time), that present is 100% totally theirs. They can wear it, return it, sell it, burn it, or put it on the shelf...whatever they choose to do with it. Spiritual gifts, i.e. anointing and power, are not that way. In 1 Corinthians Chapter 12, the apostle Paul delineates and discusses spiritual gifts. He talks about the *gifts of prophecy, Wisdom, Word of Knowledge, Faith, gifts of healings, gift of Tongues, different kinds of Tongues, interpretation of Tongues, discerning of spirits, working of miracles*. It clearly says that these gifts are given to an individual for the benefit of the Body, therefore, it would not be correctly defined as a present that we get to keep and use for our own purpose or desire. Only Christ had all gifts (anointings and abilities) without measure. If you hear about miracles, you develop Faith for miracles, and when that gift is needed the Spirit will choose you to work a miracle. Some people have special

success with healing deaf people, some with words of knowledge, etc. So the Spirit will operate with us where we have Faith and obedience. Faith releases the Holy Spirit power, and obedience to follow the Holy Spirit's leading is the action that is needed. None of this will work if one rejects what they "hear", refuses to believe and obey. A lack of Faith is often because self talk (thinking) causes Faith to turn into doubt, therefore -

*****Negative faith also comes by hearing.**

All people have been given a measure of **Faith** "for I say, 'through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith'." (Romans 12:3) So everyone starts with some Faith. Then Romans 10:17 says, "So then faith comes by hearing..." So our capacity to hear affects our amount of Faith; it grows or dies, which determines our readiness to operate by spiritual gifts.

Gifts defined:

Prophecy is the ability to 1.) Speak the word. 2.) Tell the possible future. This encompasses preaching, declaring, or announcing what "Thus says the Lord". It may be quoting or expounding upon Scripture. The second meaning deals with future events. In the early 1980's, I struggled with a life-threatening lung disease. One day (by chance), I stumbled into a **divine appointment**. A divine appointment is an event where, after reflecting upon the circumstances of the event, one realizes that supernatural forces engineered or were present in a seemingly casual fashion. Therefore, the event was not "by chance."

On the above-mentioned day I had a compelling urge to read Psalm 118. As I read the chapter, I got to verse 17 - "I shall not die, but live and declare the works of the Lord." I immediately felt the presence of the Holy Spirit and knew that this was a prophecy for me. In spite of my doctor's prognosis, I fully recovered and have been **prophesying** (declaring) the works of the Lord for over 20 years.

The **Word of Wisdom** is a supernatural understanding and or revelation of information. The **Word of Knowledge** is when a

person prophecies and tells information that they could not know in the natural. *Knowledge* is knowing things, *wisdom* is knowing what to do with information or understanding the deeper meaning in knowledge.

He read my mail. This is a response to having someone accurately tell something by a Word of Knowledge. For example, two people that are strangers are praying together and one says, “Don’t marry that girl until she gives up strip dancing and is saved!” Only the supernatural could have revealed their secret. So a Word of Knowledge was given to help that person. “He read my mail”, “he touched my heart”, “he revealed my secret”; all refer to prophecy in action uncovering hidden things.

Faith, Healings, and Miracles

These gifts come from above to the individual. Think of them as **Special Faith and Special Healings**. This type of Faith and healing are beyond what we normally would believe; but, like a lightning bolt, they show up for a specific moment for a special work. I heard about a 90 lb., 4’9” tall woman who got a special miracle. A car collapsed on a mechanic’s chest, pinning him underneath. She prayed and instantly felt “I will lift this car and get him out.” She told him, “you won’t be hurt,” and lifted the car and he crawled out unhurt. She later stated she couldn’t believe it then or now, but it happened. Where did the Faith and power come from? Surely not from the lady; it was a gift. **Special Faith, Special Healings** work the same way. We are not the source or the originator of the plan; the Holy Spirit uses us to accomplish His will for a great good.

Gifts of Tongues

These are the supernatural manifestations as described in Acts 2 and Acts 14, i.e. the ability to utter known or unknown languages with supernatural results or as prophecy.

Discerning Spirits

This is being aware of and/or identifying an alien presence or activity.

The Language of Separation

The Apostle Paul in the Book of Corinthians (2 Corinthians 10:7 NIV), says that once we are born-again and come out of carnality, we no longer see the world in the same way. *"However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory,"* (1 Corinthians 2:6, 7). We no longer speak in the same way. We no longer view other religions and faiths in the same way. Satan is clearly defined as our enemy; therefore, we have no agreement with him. As the Scripture states, *"Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial?"* (Belial is a name for the demonic, i.e. the devil). *"Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever?"* (2 Corinthians 6:14, 15). It actually is in this context that a Christianese term, **unequally yoked**, has great significance. The Scriptures are telling us we cannot be in deep association and relationship with the spirits of antichrist or with people who have formed a union with him (the devil), or are aligned with antichrist philosophy. **Antichrist** means against Christ and the things of Christ. Antichrist is a future personage, but also a spiritual force or way of thinking that has existed since the creation of man. We are taught to walk in love with all people, and to be tolerant, but tolerance does not include agreement, close association, involvement, and social relationship with antichrist. Somehow this term "unequally-yoked" has most often been used in the area of marriage and dating, but has a much wider range of application. The Lord said, *"Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?"* (Amos 3:3). This concept has to do with general cooperation and acceptance, a sense of mutual agreement, team goals and group interest. Being in business with a partner who believes the "end justifies the means" is a plan for disaster for a believer who is

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commanded to deal honestly at all times. A Christian wife married to a man who is a voodoo high priest is in serious trouble. The yoke is a picture of two oxen with a wooden apparatus over their necks that forces them to face the same way. Together they can work as a team. Unequally yoked means that the governing force over them causes them to work against one another. Jesus said, "Take My yoke upon you... for My yoke is easy and My burden light..." (Matthew 11: 29, 30). Our mutual relationships need to have both people under Jesus' yoke (government, rules, lifestyle, regulations). There must be a basic agreement on all-important issues: belief in God, Biblical moral standards, mutual respect; or the odds of failure are very high. Details such as dogma, church, worship style can be worked out if people are not unequally yoked in the basics. Another Biblical phrase is "in the world, but not of the world". This fits in here perfectly, for we will have business (political and social dealings) with people who believe differently from us. Our goal and desire should be to lead these people to the Lord. To be in the world means to participate in government activities, be a good citizen, be active in the educational system, and do commerce in the world. But we are not to be of the world, meaning a product of the world fully participating in its carnality, and immoral social behaviors. The believer is called to be a light to the world, salt of the earth, meaning a reflection of God's love and a "preserving seasoning" of kindness, wisdom, and a living example of Christ. Light causes growth and shows a clear path. Salt is a preserver, adds flavor and aids the retention of water (the Word), which gives life. The New Age phrase, "there are many paths to God" is not acceptable in the Christian language. It is not a phrase that the born-again believer accepts as truth. "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it... Because narrow is the gate and difficult the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it." (Matthew 7:13, 14). The Lord Jesus distinguishes Himself by stating that He is "The Way, The Truth, and The Life, and that no man comes to the Father except by Me." (John 14:6).

The meaning of this phrase, “***I Am The Way, The Truth, The Life***” is this: there is only one path to the Father, and that path is through Christ. This has a dual meaning. The first meaning is that Jesus Christ is the *only One* who has come down from the Father. Only He spoke *only* the Words of the Father, and has returned to the Father. Only He opened the way of reconciliation, which allows us to enter into the presence of Father God when we pass on from the earth. This is a claim that no guru, no teacher, or other human being has ever made with a demonstration of power. Great is the volume of historical evidence that Jesus of Nazareth lived and died. We have the message He brought: that He alone came down from above, walked the earth; only Jesus has given us a living example of God in the flesh. He alone lived a sinless life. We can, through Faith, receive His sacrifice and therefore achieve holiness and sanctification. No other human being can provide this, or has ever claimed to be able to provide it, until Jesus appeared on the scene. Therefore He stated, “*All who came before Me, are thieves and robbers...*” (John 10:8). God (The Word), became man (Jesus), saved man and returned to His Godness.

The second meaning to this phrase, “***I Am The Way, The Truth, The Life***” and the exclusivity of it, is also expressed in the fact that Jesus stated that the Father had appointed Him to be Judge. So if you wish to get to the Father, you must come before the Son. (John 5:22). Therefore, when the Judgment Day comes, *all flesh* will stand before Jesus and be judged according to the content of their heart and the quality of their life. The Father is pure Holiness, and pure Justice, but it is the Son who came to the earth and lived as a Man. Therefore, the Father has appointed Him on the basis of His experience. He alone has been given the privilege as well as the awesome responsibility of determining who is acceptable to come into the presence of this pure and Holy God. Hebrew 4:15 says this: “*For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin*”. From this verse we see that Jesus as High Priest has experienced our pains and understands our lives and therefore can identify with us and can

The Judge

judge us since He was tempted. Jesus did not sin, and passed the tests that qualify Him to be Judge.

So in summary: Christ is the Way (direction) to go as a model, yet, He is also the Path (door) and Judge to Heaven. Christ is the measure of Truth, for in Him there is no error or falsehood. Finally, He lived the God kind of life (Zoë), gives eternal life, and sustains earthly life. Whoever fears God and does good is acceptable. This verse points out that God may let many people into Heaven that Christians will be surprised to see. Those that hear the Gospel and then reject it are assured of condemnation.

Here Comes the Judge

“...In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality. But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him.” (Acts 10:34, 35). The Body of Christ is in agreement that Jesus is the Way to the Father, but exactly what that “Way” looks like is cluttered by many opposing opinions. People wonder as to the criteria by which Jesus will make these calls. The Lord Himself admonishes us clearly in Scripture that we are not called to judge. After all, the job of ***judging*** has been given by the Father to the Son. Therefore, the ultimate determination as to where a human being will spend eternity is actually beyond the scope of our ability to see. No human being can see into the heart.

Jesus came against the mindset of the Jews, who discriminated against Samaritans, calling them dogs, and of course believing that no “dogs” could be saved. Jesus used the example of the Good Samaritan, a man from the area called Samaria, (Luke 10:25-37) who showed mercy, kindness, and righteousness. In His ***parable*** (a story with a theological lesson) Jesus uses a priest and a pharisee, both keepers of the Law and righteousness, as examples of people who fall short of God’s standard. He tells of a man who falls into the hands of robbers and is left for dead. The pharisee and the priest shamefully cross

the road, leaving the man beaten and dying. But the rejected Samaritan comes to the man's aid, takes him to an inn, pays the innkeeper to take care of him, and assures the innkeeper that he will pay the bill on his return from his business. What a lovely picture this is: that the Jews are now faced with a dilemma – Jesus has presented them a picture of righteousness and truth coming from a rejected person that in their thinking has no chance of salvation. This also tells of the redemptive act of the lowly, rejected Christ paying the cost of our salvation, without prejudice.

Scripture gives us another example. The apostles become aware of a group of men using the Name of Jesus to do good works. (Luke 9:49, 50) The apostles want to stop these men, but Jesus corrects them, saying, "*Do not forbid them, for he who is not against us is on our side*". He also states that He has other sheep that are not of this fold (John 10:16), meaning that He has other people who will be saved who are not of the group known to the disciples. Some groups and cults try to use this Scripture to qualify themselves as "Christian," or "Christ followers", but they arrive at theological conclusions that disagree with the rest of Scripture. You cannot be a follower of Christ and define Him as different or less than how He defines Himself, "The I Am, The Son of The Living God!"

Jesus speaks very clearly about separating the goats from the sheep. In this case it is a picture of those who are compliant with the Gospel and yield to His rulership – Shepherdhood. Sheep obediently follow Christ. Those who are stubborn and go their own way and in a sense are hardheaded are the goats. Therefore, they are not in His fold. He also goes on to say in Matthew 25 and Luke 13 that in the Last Day there will be many who will cry out, "*Lord! Lord!*" but He will declare, "*I never knew you.*" Furthermore, He states that He will send the great angels to the north, south, east and west and they will gather in the saints; those that have been called by the Lord Himself.

In other words, He moves and touches people of different cultures, nationalities, ethnic backgrounds, in different places according to His sovereign will. It is God's will to save, and

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therefore He teaches, molds, and advances the knowledge of Himself.

Many people assume, because of their own religious carnality that they have a special closeness to God, and that “only me and we are going to get in”. Once again we see that human flaw of pride creating a theology of exclusivity. It sort of goes like this: I’m saved, I’m a good guy, I do good things, if you therefore do things the way I do, believe the way I believe, then of course you are also saved. But if you do not, your salvation is questionable. We are not called to judge a person’s heart as to salvation but we are called to judge people’s behavior to see if it lines up with Scripture and their testimony. Paul tells us that we are going to judge angels and sit on thrones on the earth during the thousand-year reign and have to make serious decisions (judgments). But in this present dispensation,

******we should limit our judging to where it can be considered constructive criticism, administered in love.***

Our judging should build up, not tear down. Our judging should point the way to line up with Scripture, and therefore be a better example of Christ in the earth. Judgment as to eventual condemnation is the domain of the Lord, but we can and must identify behavior that leads to Heaven and warn against hell.

Cults and False Religion

Another term used in association with cults is “false religion”. Cult and false religion are often used interchangeably, and sometimes used in association with “occult”. The occult may very well be false religion and it is organized into clubs, groups, private and secret societies. Sorcery, witchcraft, astrology, mysticism, black arts, black magic, white magic, green magic, transcendental meditation, channeling, broadcasting, tarot cards, fortune telling, crystal balls, and new age all fall into the area of occult activities. Practitioners of these “dark arts” are in direct violation of Scripture, for God forbids and labels these activities as abominations. “*There shall*

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not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, or one who practices witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. For all who do these things are an abomination to the Lord, and because of these abominations the Lord your God drives them out from before you.” (Deuteronomy 18:10-12) “But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.” (Revelation 21:8)

Misguided people are divided into two groups...the ignorant and the willful participant. Some people are looking for God in all the wrong places, and dark arts would surely be the wrong place. The devil has the ability to make people believe they are enlightened, while they are thoroughly deceived; and so many people that have good hearts and could become saints, get detoured for a time into occult activity. There are others, who with full knowledge that God has forbidden these activities have given themselves over to the dark side, usually due to curiosity, a desire for power, or a truly cold and bitter heart. The apostle Peter describes them in 2 Peter 2:17 as “*wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest to whom the mist of darkness is reserved forever*”.

False teachers will focus on a dictum or a point of Scripture with which they comply, and elevate it to the position of a special commandment of greater importance than the others. From this position they move to establish a teaching of **exclusivity**. “If you hold to this teaching, you are in my group, if you’re in my group, you and I alone are saved.” A cult has a false teacher as its leader, whose foundation is himself or a false teaching. Cults usually rely upon exclusivity to draw the fearful and the prideful. **A cult** can be identified according to its definition of 1) where Jesus came from, and 2) who He is. In the Book of 1 John he tells us clearly that the **antichrist** (the one who works against the Christ) and the teaching of the antichrist can be identified, for they teach and preach a different Jesus from the

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One the apostles taught. In addition to this, anyone teaching that Jesus did not come in the flesh is antichrist (1 John 4:2, 3). Simply put, Jesus told us that He was with the Father and came down from above, lived and returned to the Father. This criterion identifies the true Christ as Deity and of supernatural origin. John states further that we are to have nothing to do with these people, who teach a different Jesus (2 John 1:10), for they are devious in the way that they twist Scripture. They will take a verse and pull it out of its setting, and then support it by their thinking, rather than support it by Scripture.

****We must remember that the Spirit of God and the Word of Scripture must agree.*

In 1 John, Chapter 5:6: *“This is He who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ. Not only by water, but by water and blood, and it is the Spirit who bears witness, because the Spirit is truth.”* In Christianese, this is expressed as *“the Spirit and the Word must agree”*. It should be noted that this exact quote is not found in Scripture, but it is derived from the passages of Scripture mentioned above. However, it is accurate to reduce these passages to “the Spirit and the Word agree”, being that we cannot have the Word of God and the Spirit of God without also having the Father present....Amen. John gives us safeguards, in that a born-again believer, having the Spirit of God, is taught by the Spirit of God, and should come to see when someone is teaching error. In this passage (1 John 5:6), we see that the water refers to baptism, but more importantly refers to the water being the Word of God, and that Jesus came by the Word (water) of God, and also was baptized in water. The Blood is a reference to the sacrifice that He made on Calvary, by shedding His own Blood for the remission of our sins. The latter part of this verse points out that the Spirit of God bears witness to the fact of the coming of Christ. The Spirit of God testifies that Christ did come and accomplish His work on the earth. Therefore the verse concludes, because the Spirit is Truth, and since the Spirit of God cannot lie, then His witness to the reality of Jesus’ achievements is truth. In verse 7: *“For there are three that bear witness in heaven; the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit, and these*

three are One.” This is saying that you cannot separate the Father, the Word (the Christ) and the Holy Spirit; they function as One God. Then verse 7 is confirmed in verse 8: “*the three bear witness on earth, the Spirit, the water, and the blood, and these three agree as One.*” Verse 8 is telling us that verse 7 is true; that the Father, the Word and the Spirit are One, and also are in agreement. Therefore, it stands to reason that anything that violates the Spirit of God, Word of God, the purpose and meanings of the baptisms, and the atoning power of the Blood of Christ, is in error and is falsehood.

We have a test that we can apply to ascertain the truth concerning any matter. We can ask the question, “What does the Spirit of God say? What does the Word (the words that Jesus spoke) say concerning the issue, and then does the issue conflict with the story of the atonement and the Blood of Jesus?” It may be and should be examined by this spiritual method; it may feel good, but if it violates the Word of God, it’s not God. Since the believer has the Spirit through the baptism and in-filling of the Holy Spirit, he therefore can consult the Spirit of God who comes to reside in him. This is accomplished through prayer, waiting on the Lord, searching the heart, prophecy, dreams and visions. It may feel good, but if it violates the Word of God, it’s not God. Simply stated, any issue or question that we are pursuing on the earth can be and should be examined by this spiritual method of investigation; does the Spirit and the Word agree? Since the believer has the Spirit through the baptism and in-filling of the Holy Spirit, he therefore can consult the Spirit of God who comes to reside in him.

As a little side note, in Christianese believers refer to ***dreams and visions*** as a method of hearing from God, or spending time with God in the supernatural. Believers are called to examine *all* dreams and *all* visions, whether it is a vision in a dream or a waking vision. There are different types of visions. A person may actually have their eyes closed and see a picture or a scene unfold inside the eye of the mind. Another person may have a waking vision, where their eyes are open, but their consciousness is temporarily suspended and they see a picture, a series of events

or words unfolding right before them. A prophet I know has waking visions. He sees a series of events as a TV screen, which shows the caption words passing by, and he sees the words that God would be speaking to him.

Whether in a dream or a vision, eyes open or closed, the believer is required to examine the content, or the implied meaning of the message against the Word of God, the Old and New Testament. For example, a dream or a vision of dead relatives coming to us and giving us instructions as to what house to buy, or what job to take, should be evaluated in light of the Word of God. The Old Testament clearly prohibits ***communication with the dead***, and points out that even speaking to the dead is an abomination to God. Therefore, one could ascertain this dream or vision was not sent by God, for He would not violate His written Word. So, even if the human spirit was receiving pleasure or even comfort from this vision or dream, one would have to conclude that it is a false vision or dream sent by a demonic force, or projected by the spirit of the person themselves. In any case, it is not being sent from God. This is the type of reasoning and soul-searching a believer must do concerning all dreams and visions. When we say, ***“the Spirit and the Word agree”***, we are taking the passages of 1 John 5:6-8, which demonstrate to us the singularity of God and therefore the agreement between the Spirit and the Word. In the 4th Chapter of 1 John, he gives us additional information on what the believer is required to do when he desires to know the truth. In verses 1-3 he says: *“Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not from God. And this is the spirit of antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world.”* The assurance of the accuracy of this test unfolds in verse 6: *“we are of God; he who knows God hears us. He who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error.”* He is telling us that imbedded in

the believer is a spiritual antenna that can identify when God is speaking. This identification initially occurs in the spirit of a man, then registers on the mind of the man. This is a necessary test, because the intellect of man can be fooled, for we have truly eaten of the ***tree of the knowledge of good and evil***. Eating from this tree of knowledge was ***man's fall into sin***. Therefore, we must not trust everything that passes the test of our intellect, but it must also be put against the test of the Spirit. Does the concept, the idea, or the question at hand conflict with the coming Messiah Who was with the Father, came to earth, bled and died, and then ascended back to the Father? Does what we are considering come in conflict with that testimony, and does it conflict with the written Word of God? If it does, in any case and at any point, then we must reject it as falsehood and turn away from it. Because something feels good or sounds good is not enough. It must line up with the Father, the Spirit and the Son (the Word of God).

The way to Heaven is clearly pointed out in Ephesians 2:8, 9. *"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast."* Therefore anyone bringing a teaching that the only way to Heaven is by them or by our group, our church, our teaching, or a program of "works" (good deeds alone) is in doctrinal error. Good works are required and will occur, but they are *a manifestation of what the Spirit has done*; they are not the way to *achieve* salvation; they are a *manifestation* of salvation.

The opposite of exclusivity is ***universality***. This is a false doctrine also, for it teaches that everyone is acceptable to God at all times. We see no support in the Scriptures for this teaching, even though it has been adopted by many. Love is often used as the rationale for universality; but it is because of love that God sets apart His children. He identifies those who love Him, so He can express His love by blessing them. Love causes God to separate good from evil for the sake of ultimate good.

Another cult teaching is ***ultimate reconciliation***. In this false doctrine, the devil himself will be forgiven for the evil he has done and he will be reconciled to God. We can easily see the

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great danger in accepting this teaching, for there would be no limit to the outpouring of sinful behavior. When evil is not held accountable, it will run unabated, for furthering destruction is its nature. I have found it very helpful when trying to determine whether an idea is truth, or a group is a cult, by taking their basic teaching and stretching it to its ultimate conclusion. In other words, if what they taught was universally accepted and implemented in the world, what would the world look like?

The teachings of a cult will not be based on the whole counsel of God, but will be based on a partial or distorted theology taken from Scripture. Their theology is based in the teachings of the founder of the cult which will sound Scriptural, but if taken in the full light of the Gospels, will not hold up. The end result usually is disaster and opposition to God's Law.

Since satan, ***the god of this world*** (2 Corinthians 4:4) is the ***father of lies*** (John 8:44), we see that his method of creating cults is based on causing people to feel they've been enlightened, that they've discovered a very special truth no one else has. They are the sole custodians of this truth; therefore you must come to them for definition, application, and ultimate salvation. The Bible says *"be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."* (2 Timothy 2:15). This is not the case with cults, for they give you the materials to study. They interpret the Bible for you, but the Bible is not used as a centerpiece for study. The Bible says not ***one jot or tittle*** (a small punctuation mark used in Ancient Hebrew) can be changed or altered; that the Word of God is not to be manipulated in translation or have words substituted, and that anyone who changes Scripture *"God shall add unto him the plagues written in this book and God shall take them out of the Book of life..."* (Revelation 22:18, 19). Therefore, any group that has its own translation of the Bible should be very carefully examined. Usually cults and people in error use their own translation of the Bible in order to manipulate words and terms to support their point of view. Nowadays, due to the wealth of information that is available about the ancient Hebrew and Greek texts, we can easily ascertain if an interpretation is

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accurate, just by careful examination of a concordance or a lexicon.

They also use the “hop” technique to establish doctrine and support their propaganda. This is where one verse is tied to another verse somewhere else in the Bible, then tied to another verse somewhere else in the Bible, etc. Verses are pulled out of their settings and are twisted to hide or rationalize error and protect cult teachings. When they omit words or alter words in a passage they are *editing* and *rewriting*, not *translating*. The motive is seldom good scholarship but is usually self-preservation by supporting false theological doctrine. Some groups will also challenge the Bible by elevating other books that fit their needs to equal or superior status. Certain Bible passages threaten their law of exclusivity, control, and power; so these are ignored. They will also attempt to re-write the Truth by changing the Christianese language. This is most obvious in the area of redefining the words of Jesus.

Following are a few groups that have very strong organizations that teach their own exclusivity. These groups are only occasionally open to inter-church interaction. They will cooperate with and tolerate others, but have doctrines that raise some serious questions.

For example, Catholic doctrine teaches that the Catholic Church alone is the gateway to Heaven and that Christ is actually literally sacrificed during the Eucharist. They teach that a real miracle of “transubstantiation” occurs, changing the wafer and wine to real body and blood. Furthermore, they teach that Peter is the Rock upon which the church is built. The papal authority and lineage was established with Peter as the first pope, and the line of succession leads up to the present pope. Many Catholics pray to Mary and have elevated her to co-redeemer status with Jesus the Christ. We would argue that “*by grace you have been saved through faith*”, as did Martin Luther (Ephesians 2:8). Yet the Catholics promote salvation through their church and its sacraments, and permit the use of icons, idols and candles, and jewelry (beads) in worship.

Protestants take issue with these practices and doctrines,

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citing the following Scriptures: (Deut. 5:8, 9) “*You shall not make for yourself a carved image – any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them...*”; Christ was sacrificed once, (Hebrews 10:12) “*But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God*”- communion is a remembrance, not real blood and body (Luke 22:19 and 1Corinthians 11:24). The church is built upon the Truth of who Christ is, not upon Peter - (Matthew 16:18, Matthew 4:24, 25), the revelation of who Christ is, is the Rock on which the church is built. These doctrinal questions are a few problem areas that cause some to view Catholics as just a very large cult, and the fulfillment of Revelation 17:5, the woman who rides the beast - a pawn of mystery Babylon, the religion of antichrist and idol worshipers. This does not condemn all Catholics, but God will surely judge the teachers of false doctrines. The Protestants are divided as to whether Catholics are to be shunned or embraced.

In the last 20 years there has been an increase in charismatic Catholics – these are considered “*Spirit filled*” and have a more modern worship style, and therefore are more acceptable to some Protestants. These are also called Penta-Catholics – Pentecostal Catholics.

Eastern religions, new age, Muslims, non-Messianic Jews, Jehovah Witnesses and many others redefine the name Jesus/Messiah to mean an enlightened individual who was a prophet and teacher. His teachings are too profound to be fully discredited, but since so much of what He said was about Himself, they are faced with a great dilemma. They must find a way to take the teachings and reject the Teacher. Jesus clearly taught and demonstrated that He was on a mission from God, with the authority of God, and would return to His position as Deity. And an Amen goes right there. Some people and cults call Jesus a prophet, a wise-man, miracle worker, healer, sage, teacher, forerunner, angel, etc., etc. They ignore and by-pass what Jesus said Himself, “*I am the Son of God*” (Luke 22:70 and John 10:36). If He was a great teacher, we should believe what

He taught, i.e. He is the Messiah (the Anointed One sent down from the Father to save us from our sin and reconcile us to the Father). Jesus Christ sits at the right hand of the Father awaiting the time of His return as King of kings and Lord of lords.

The word “god” is redefined by some to mean a superhuman minor deity, a reincarnated being that can be attained by some process of study or evolution. Cults teach that “Christ Status” will be achieved by good works, karma or reincarnation. So God is redefined as a combination of little gods or a non-being force in nature, the universe, mankind, etc. The Bible calls this worshiping the created thing ***idolatry***. “*Who exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.*” (Romans 1:25) Remember, we are called to judge doctrine and moral behavior; we are not called to condemn people to hell.

That said, let’s take a look at some interesting teachings, and draw your own conclusions: (The Book of John Chapter 1:1 comparing the New World Translation done by Jehovah’s Witnesses with the King James, the NIV, and Revised Standard, or any other translation). The New World translation states, “*the Word was a god.*” Notice the addition of a and a lower case g in god. King James, NIV, RSV, and all other Bible translations read, “*The Word was God*”. The New World Translation by the Jehovah’s Witnesses is the only version with a god. This reduces Jesus’ deity and opens the possibility for more gods of equal or parallel status. This greatly affects language, for it challenges the Christian declaration that there is only one God in an equal, triune relationship. This small manipulation of Scripture has big implications. It attacks the Trinity, reduces Jesus, and establishes other gods as viable entities. The Jehovah’s Witnesses would declare that this change was necessary to reflect that there is one Jehovah, one God. Well then who is The Word – Jesus, The Christ? Remember, to change one dot, one word of the Bible is to bring condemnation on oneself. Jehovah’s Witnesses teach mostly from the Watchtower publication and believe they are the sole witnesses for Jehovah God. Throughout Scripture, God identifies Himself by using many descriptive names; for

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example: I Am, El Shaddai, Jehovah Jireh, Jehovah Tsidkenu, and Jesus refers to God as Father. God Himself spoke the Name Yahweh to the ancient Hebrews, a name that they feared to write or to speak aloud; therefore the correct spelling and pronunciation have been lost to us. They substituted the names Adonai, Elohim, and Jehovah. The Jehovah Witnesses use the Name of God as a pillar and a tenet of Faith, a basis upon which stands their exclusivity and their righteousness. This is not to mention the fact that they believe Jesus is also Michael the archangel. We must realize, then, that they are definitely not speaking Christianese.

The Unification church under “Rev.” Sun Yung Moon uses his writings as the standard for interpretation of Scripture. In his book, “The Divine Principle”, Sun Yung Moon states: “Consequently the origin of human sin is not that the first human ancestors ate a literal fruit but that they had an illicit love relationship.”(Pg. 8, par.2). “However, by Eve’s engaging in illicit love with an angel before reaching perfection, and falling, and moreover by her leading Adam to fall as well, a false family was formed within which God could not dwell. Therefore, fallen Eve was likened to an evil tree and her love to an evil fruit.” (Pg. 9 par. 3) “Christians have traditionally believed that Jesus’ death on the cross was the original plan of God. No! This is absolutely false.” (Pg. 10, par. 2) “The Crucifixion was not God’s original will for Jesus, the Son of God; rather, it became God’s painful alternative caused by the distrust of the people of Israel.” (Pg. 11, par.3) “To put it clearly, Jesus’ Crucifixion was a secondary course of salvation and provided only spiritual salvation.” (Pg. 11, par.4). The *Bible* does not support any of these conclusions, but nonetheless Moon teaches that Eve's sin in the garden was sexual, and that Jesus Christ failed in His mission. He was supposed to come to earth and be married and demonstrate correct family values. Scripture states that the Messiah came to suffer and die for our sins (Isaiah 53). Christ rebuked Peter (Mark 8), for implying that Jesus should change the prophesied plan. The Father planned this confrontation before there was an Israel in Genesis 3:15. There are many, many other texts that

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conflict with Moon's teachings. Moon's worldwide organization seeks to unify all "good people" of all faiths around the theme of "family values". They speak a different version of Christianese: "Moonese". Rev. Moon is considered by some to be the second advent of Christ, but neither he, nor his family value movement are mentioned in Scripture. Christ's second coming is mentioned and He's coming in the clouds and all shall see Him (Matthew 24). Jesus Christ will not get married except to the ***Bride of Christ*** - the spiritual composite of all souls who prepared for His second coming. There will be no family or children physically born in Heaven. Sun Yung Moon is leading people down a rabbit trail. His ecumenical "Family Values" program is a call to unity under himself. People that have bought into his program are calling him and his wife – Mother and Father Moon. The family is important, but in Christianese the central themes are Father, Spirit, Son and Bride. Jesus remarked that in Heaven we are like the angels and are not married. Illicit love is the result of disobedience, pride and idolatry; these are original sin. God, upon creating man, knew what they would do and He already had "the plan". After all, He's God!

The New Age Course of Miracles, Mormonism, Buddhism, and Hinduism, all teach man's progressive evolution toward "god-ness". Christ is easily confused with the "***Christ consciousness***" that they claim is in all of us. Jesus Christ is accepted as a great teacher and prophet, "Light" in contrast with darkness. Sin, guilt, devils and organized religion are to be ignored or denied. The incarnation or reincarnation of various personas and personalities is accepted as truth. Eastern religions recognize Christ only as one of many gods; life is a cycle of birth/rebirth through reincarnation, and therefore there is no need for salvation, repentance, or reconciliation to God. "There is no need to be reconciled to God, since you're on your way to being one", some teachers would say. We must always ask people of these persuasions what they mean when they speak to us. They will use Christian terms but change the meanings. For example, Jesus is a teacher, spirit guide, a light. In Christianese, Jesus is ***The Light*** and the Son of God with no past lives or incarnations.

Cults/False Religions

The writings of Mary Baker Eddy, not the Bible, control the theology and doctrine of the Christian Scientists. Haile Selassie is the second advent of Jesus (god) to the Rastafarians. Born-again believers would identify all of the above, or at least some of the above as cults or in Scriptural error concerning Jesus. This determination is made on an individual basis according to ones' familiarity with the practices of the group, and ones' understanding of the Scriptures. 1 John 4:1, 2 and 3: "*Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world.*" This means that true doctrine believes that Jesus of Nazareth was God who became a man and returned to Heaven as God. Any other variation on this is heresy. These verses are to be used to test for false doctrine.

Cult Summary

***** *Cults appeal to exclusivity and pride in their members. They redefine words, terms, and persons, on the basis of pulling Scriptures out of context and rely upon non-Bible texts for foundational teachings. If these fail, then guilt and fear are usually prime motivators. Techniques of brainwashing and physical and mental isolation are used to control people and make them dependent upon the leaders of the organization.***

If you point out the cultic characteristics of a group, you will most likely be labeled as ignorant, a bigot, or intolerant. The use of labels and stereotypes can lead to prejudice. We should be careful and sensitive to the reality that each and every group, cult or church, contains some wonderful people who may need help finding the Lord. These people are seriously looking for the Lord, though they may be looking in the wrong place at a particular time in their life. When a cult uses the Bible, we must try to get them to compare what they believe to what the Bible says. Where there are contradictions, try to get people to be

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logical and honest. Demonstrations of power, i.e. laying on of hands, Word of Knowledge, etc. are powerful tools to counter false religion. Remember that using Christian terms doesn't mean that they are speaking "Christianese". Avoid insult, attack or emotional appeals and pray Ephesians 1:15-23 for enlightenment to come to them in Jesus' Name. Amen.

Music Language

Praise and **Worship** songs are songs of adoration that sing about the characteristics and attributes of God, the Holy Ghost, and Jesus. These songs tell of the wonder of God and His importance to us. Recently, people have been singing songs directly to God. Previously, most praise and worship was singing about God. For example, the hymns of old, "A Mighty Fortress is our God", in this day and age might be changed to "A Mighty Fortress are You, God". "Oh, how I love Jesus" would become, "Jesus, oh how I love You". This reflects the modern day desire to come closer into the presence of God and establish a deeper personal relationship with Him. At present these types of changes are suggestions, but in time singing directly to God may become standard Christianese.

Sing in the Spirit – Tongues

Paul encourages us to sing with our understanding (1 Corinthians 14:15), but also to **sing in the Spirit**. We can praise God by singing in "Tongues"; yes, making up both melody and words instantaneously. As the Spirit gives us utterance (supernatural help), we can pray in the spirit by singing in Tongues both privately or in the assembly. No interpretation is needed as we are praising God, not ministering to men. God receives this praise from our spirits as we speak mysteries to Him from our hearts. It's like singing in the shower when we are happy with no particular song in mind, or when we have a song in mind, but can't remember the words, so we hum or go la la la, ho dum dee. Totally Scriptural, and totally a blessing to us and to God.

Praise and Worship

It is very powerful when a large number of believers step out of their comfort zones and ***praise*** God with a spirit song. This is ***worship*** to God with a side benefit of self-edification (1 Corinthians 14:2 and 14:14-19).

Contemporary Christianese Music

The Gospel Travelers were invited to sing on the afternoon program. The founding mothers of the church were not pleased, as the young man strapped on a guitar. Piano always, organ usually, but guitar - "too worldly, they should be ashamed." The lead singer said all the right words, but these northern middle-upper-class Baptist folk refused to be put at ease. The cloud of discomfort lingered, even though the five voices and the guitar attacked the stillness as one. The beat pulsated as they chimed "Jesus, be a fence all around me everyday". "Didn't they know? Weren't they told? Pastor will surely *get them told*." All eyes were fixed on Pastor as if awaiting instructions or permission. Though Pastor was solidly dignified and always politically correct, the guitar shattered his demeanor. The beat untied his dignity, their sincerity loosened his hands. Pastor was swaying and clapping his hands! The cloud of disdain was blown away, giving the congregants permission to enjoy. Score it one for the Spirit, none for tradition. Yet as the Gospel fire ebbed, one sister could be heard saying, "But they didn't need that unholy guitar". Oh well, some people just don't seem to get it. If King David had been there, he would have asked if he could join in on his electric lyre-harp. The power of tradition will cause Bible experts to tell King David: "No stringed instruments, and go sit down, we don't allow dancing in here", and David would respond: "You ***worship*** well, but I know the glory of the Lord and the power of the Holy Spirit, and He wants us to worship with not just voice and fingers but whole heart and whole body. Does not the Word say: "*Let them praise Him with the dance; Let them sing praises to Him with the timbrel and harp.*" (Psalm 149:3) "*Praise Him with the timbrel and dance; Praise Him with stringed instruments and flutes!*" (Psalm 150:4) "*We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; We mourned to you and you did not lament.*" (Matt. 11:17). "Let's go Holy Ghost; we

welcome You.”

Contemporary music uses all of the electronic devices and sounds that are also heard in popular secular music. **Traditional music** focuses upon using the sounds of the organ and piano, and hold as sacred the hymns and anthems that were written from the late 1700's through the 1800's. **Spirituals** refer to early period material written also from the time of slavery to present that have an Afro-American cultural flavor. Spirituals do sometimes include secular songs that have been re-written to fit a religious setting. Minor keys and solemn moods usually characterize what is termed spiritual music, whereas **gospel music** usually means high-spirited, up-tempo music that carries a positive message that is Biblically based. **Gospel music** does include personal songs, about personal troubles, trials, triumphs, and failures in Christian life. The following words are associated with gospel music and are used to describe the contemporary sound: pop-gospel, gospel rock, r&b or rhythm and blues gospel, country gospel, easy listening gospel.

A careful examination of Scripture, especially Psalms 148, 149 and 150, shows us that ancient Jewish worship included every known instrument that they could find. If it could make noise, it was used in worship. As previously discussed, man has an interesting way of being prideful and egocentric. When something suits him or moves him, he determines that it alone should be the accepted standard. Therefore, what is acceptable music **worship** style depends on who you are speaking to. The music of Handel and Bach and the songs through the 1800's, which are considered more spiritual and acceptable in traditional **worship**, were written and performed in their day as contemporary music. Handel and Mozart wrote contemporary music, which had spiritual content in the lyrics. Contemporary music of their day had a spiritual theme, whereas today sex, romance and struggle identify our culture. Many of the songs in the 1800's were popular bar songs that were also given spiritual lyrics. It is ignorance or man's egocentric nature that places one style of **worship** music as more "spiritual" than another. Some modern religious groups feel that using instruments is unholy.

Unity in the Body

Others allow only organ and piano. Northern Baptists use piano while Southern Baptists use guitar. Methodists sit, while Charismatics stand to sing. So who's right, who's wrong? **Music** on any instrument or in any style should be acceptable to God, if the musician and the listener are true worshipers "in Spirit and in Truth" - sincerity, humbleness and honesty from the heart. When someone says that the worship was "**anointed**", or that the song was "anointed", they are not giving a description of the beauty or the melodic nature of the piece. What they are saying is that they feel God supernaturally imparted His presence or power to the setting or to the song, and therefore people are **touched spiritually**. Anointing is therefore subject to the Spirit of God as well as the receptivity of the people. A song could have more or less anointing depending upon the singer, the musicians or the situation in which it's performed. This is because some people are more experienced at creating a worshipful atmosphere. God appreciates skill and talent, for they are His gifts to mankind. Skill and talent aren't sufficient by themselves, for humility, sincerity, and holy living are strong qualifiers. Yet, as in all things spiritual, God can anoint anyone at anytime if He so chooses. The presence of God alone determines the presence of anointing. Amen!

Unity in the Body

Most Christians mean that we all as believers should work together and get along. People want churches, regardless of denominations, to attend various affairs together, have social contact and political force. Some movements have seen temporary success, such as March for Jesus, Promise Keepers, Women of Faith, Women's Aglow, Kairos, National Day of Prayer, etc. After a while, division occurs over doctrinal issues: Tongues, Holy Spirit Baptism, works, women in church, etc. Attempts to unite the Body have seen temporary splendor, or fizzled quickly. Styles of worship and tradition usually creep in and overshadow the "Common love of the Lord". Racial

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prejudice destroyed the Azusa St. Revival, causing the wedge of Southern Pentecostal, Church of God in Christ, Assembly of God, etc., etc., etc. to divide by color. The Jesus movement of the 70's was surely divided generationally. Now the battle between dance - no dance, rap - no rappers is replacing the previous division of laugh - no laugh, fall - no fall, heal - no heal, claim - no claim, formal music vs. improvise, dress-up - go casual. Many believe the eventual goal is some form of acceptance and tolerance, establishing a common ground in Christ and overlooking all other divisive issues. This does sound good, and of course it will happen when Jesus returns. I see a unity of a different nature. During WWII, the Allied forces worked to overthrow Fascism. The Brits crossed the Channel, the French, American and Canadians moved east. The Soviets marched west. They were in different uniforms, different guns, different styles, but all claimed victory in the end. Is this not a form of unity? Everyone doing what they do well for the same Master. Maybe we are missing the grand design, i.e., different armies fighting on different fronts for the same cause against a common enemy. I sure hope so, or the Commander in Chief is truly displeased at all the disunity He sees.

Tear Down Walls

This phrase speaks of a move toward unity that emerged in the 80's and 90's, cheered by many, but embraced by few. Division and prejudice run deep in the body of Christians, so deep that many people feel if you're not of "my" denomination, you're not a "real Christian".

Names, labels, and various types of titles, when used in religion can be very damaging, for they limit our willingness to freely receive people who may be different from us. Once a group of people is labeled, they are often discriminated against, or biases are set up. This is unfortunate, as there should be tolerance, but also variety in the Body of Christ. Paul says that we are all not the same, and that we carry out different functions in the Body; therefore, this has to be observable not only in an individual congregation but also in the overall body. There would be churches that would be more "eyes" (seeing, vision-

Overcomer/Overcoming

type churches), there would be churches that would be more “hand” type churches (works oriented, very busy in helps ministries). Some churches are focused on teaching, many others on healing. Therefore, we need to have cooperation and communication among all of the various parts of the Body of Christ.

Labels sometimes work against what I believe is the plan of God. The churches should work in cooperation. Where one church is weak, it should call upon another church which is strong, and vice versa. Denominational labels and church names tend to separate the body. They cause people to identify with a group rather than with Christ. Loyalty is fostered and enforced toward a church or personalities. In John 17, Christ prayed for unity, and we should be united behind Christ with agreement as to the goal. Variations in ministry, worship style, and cultural differences should be overlooked for the greater good, (Matthew 28:19&20): *“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things which I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age. Amen”*. We should be making disciples of Christ, not disciples of denominations, conventions or churches. So ***“Tear down walls!”*** This Christianese term became popular during the “March for Jesus” and is still in use.

Overcomer – Overcoming

In 1 John 5:4, *“For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world - our faith.”* This term is used by Christians to mean that no matter what situation we are in, we will be victorious. All human beings are faced with the struggles of life, in terms of providing food and shelter, jobs, marriage, children, etc., but the Christian is also aware of spiritual warfare along with the destructive onslaught of demonic forces. These demonic forces use the natural world, and the supernatural world, to attack and overwhelm the believer as

he seeks to be a good citizen as well as a spiritual person. Jesus encourages us that we must, no matter what the problem in the natural or the supernatural, we must continue to press on. Even though the forces may appear to be overwhelming or the obstacle appears to be more than we can handle, the promise from God is that if we continue to press on and press in (these are Christianese for vigilance; relentless, persistent courage. The faithful say, “continue to pray ‘til something happens. Pray without ceasing and keep on believing”), God supernaturally assures us that we will win.

Jesus encourages us further in Scripture, in John 16, beginning in verse 33, “*these things I have spoken to you; that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.*” Since Jesus has been victorious, He has passed on to us His nature; therefore as we follow Christ, we also should overcome what the world has put in our path. This is also emphasized in Romans Chapter 8, beginning in verse 35: “*Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, ‘For Your sake we are killed all day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter’. Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.*” These two terms, more than conquerors and overcomers are tied so closely together that they mean the same thing, i.e., eventual victory. They point out that as Christians we are victorious because of the sacrificial acts of Christ and the power that He has passed on to us. We are victorious in life, even victorious in martyrdom, for the martyr may lose his physical life, but he does not renounce his Faith. The eternal victory is his because his physical death will result in his victorious entrance into the heavenly realm where he will eternally be with his Lord.

******The devil only wins if a believer, in the face of persecution or death, renounces his Faith.***

When a believer goes all the way to the grave for the sake of the cross, we win even then. Therefore, whether we are victorious in life, or in death, we are still overcomers and more

More Than a Conqueror

than conquerors. To get the full understanding of the term more than a conqueror, you need to grasp the image of the following story. A man was a prize fighter, a boxer, and though he was in the ring for a grueling 10 round championship fight, he won the contest at great cost - his body was brutally beaten, he was sore and bloody as he returned home, only to be greeted by his lovely wife, to whom he handed the prize money from the fight. She, therefore, did not fight in the battle, but received the prize money, making her more than a conqueror. This is the picture that we should have as believers. In Christianese, when we speak of being more than a conqueror, we are saying Christ paid the cost, took the beating, was victorious. According to the prophecy of Isaiah 53, He would be bruised and beaten for our transgressions and our sins, while we reap the benefits of His suffering, and His having been a conqueror, thereby making us more than a conqueror. This was prophesied in Genesis 3:15: "*He (the coming Messiah - seed of Eve) will bruise (crush) your (satan's) head (power and authority) and you (satan) shall bruise His (Christ's) heel*" (cause Christ to suffer). Christ then gives us the unmerited mercy of forgiveness and blessings, and victory over satan, making us more than a conqueror through Him (not more important than the Conqueror, but more in that we did not have to suffer the full rigors of the battle).

In Revelation 12:11, we receive a picture of being more than a conqueror, and being an overcomer, from the vantage point of martyrdom. In verse 11 it reads: "*...and they overcame him (him being satan) by the Blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.*" This passage is telling us that throughout time, as well at the end of the ages, satan will, in some cases, be able to obtain victory over the physical life of the believer. But the Blood of the Lamb, God's cleansing, washing righteousness, cannot be revoked by what satan may do to our physical bodies. satan's punishment cannot destroy or alter the Faith and the Faith statement of a true believer. This proves once again that by Faith and belief, the believer is sustained by God supernaturally in the hour of his testing. Therefore, even though his physical freedom is limited,

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and his physical body is tortured and punished, he still does not relent and has not abandoned the Faith, thereby giving satan no final victory. When a Christian says he is an overcomer, or more than a conqueror, he means that no matter what it looks like, no matter what it feels like, and no matter what you do to me, I will be victorious either now in the natural, or I will be victorious in the spiritual realm. In either case, we play until ***"I win"***. There is no "jihad" (holy war) to spread the message or destroy the infidel as in Islam. The Gospel is a Gospel of peace, and bringing hurt or harm to others for any reason other than self-defense is sinful and against the cause of Christ. Our battle is spiritual in nature and waged on two fronts – Heaven and earth.

In The Flesh

This term refers to a person who is acting out or thinking through his carnal mind or sinful nature. A person may be a believer, even a Spirit-filled believer, but when he is in the flesh, it means that he is acting, thinking or behaving just as someone in the world (who is not converted). It is most often used to describe the temporary state of being backslidden. The behavior that a person is exhibiting is an expression of their old habits, old ways, or reflects the thinking of a non-converted mind. We cannot always judge the content of the heart of a person, for that is the Scriptural domain of the Lord. Therefore, we are often forced to judge the outward behavior and appearance of people. When a person is acting the same as unsaved people act, we call this person acting in the flesh. This can also be a casual way of saying, "They are out of control emotionally" or they are acting ungodly or phony. In the church there are two phrases that we may hear that emerge as references to being in the flesh. They are "playing church" and "*It's not about me (or us).*" Religious people will use these phrases to criticize others or defend their own actions. The self-righteous or fleshy person will declare (with great) emotion, "I don't play church and it's not about me!", implying that their fleshy display is actually a sincere

In The Flesh

expression of the Holy Spirit and their ego is not involved. This false humility usually follows or precedes a display of talent, fleshy worship or flamboyant preaching. The motive is to appear spiritual and it often works. Usually the accusation is to condemn others of “playing church” – being fleshy in worship, etc., while “Its not about me!” is most often a cover. Someone can say, “don’t play church” and mean it; or declare “its not about me”, misdirecting you and be all about their flesh.

From Scripture we get a clear definition of this by careful examination of Galatians, chapter 5. The flesh of the believer should reflect the fruit of the spirit, but this term “in the flesh” is not often used to describe the fruits of the spirit, but is generally used to describe the works of the flesh.

Galatians 5:15: *“But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest ye be consumed by one another. I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”* Galatians 5:22-26 reads: *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.”* We can see from this passage in Galatians that our goal is to follow after Christ in our flesh. Our spirits, once converted, must yield to the unction and the leading of the Spirit of God, which then should come to dominate the lusts of the flesh, thereby causing our flesh also to be converted. As we mature in the Lord, we will have more and more success in

dominating the flesh and its desires. Therefore, the younger Christian should be ***in the flesh*** more often than the mature Christian. It is a sad thing when a person has been in the Lord, born-again for a number of years, but is still continually “in the flesh”. Our goal is to be “out of the flesh” as Christ was, for His Spirit dominated His flesh, causing Him to have excellent love, joy, peace, righteousness, self control, etc. Even though the term “***in the flesh***” is used in the negative, it can be expressed in the positive, in the sense that the Christian should, in his flesh, mirror the flesh of Christ. Since we are in the ***Body of Christ***, we should also be an expression of the ***flesh*** of Christ. This reference to the Body of Christ means the assembled but yet individual members of the church. 1 Corinthians 12:12, 27. “*For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ*”. “*Now you are the body of Christ and members individually*”. We should understand that the physical body of Christ, according to Isaiah 53, was beaten and bruised for our transgressions and our iniquities. His sacrifice of offering His body (flesh) on the cross should be recognized by us as a sacrifice for the healing of our flesh, as well as His Blood for our spiritual remission from sin. If someone says you’re “***in the flesh***”, you should hope they mean that your behavior is a reflection of your having become like Christ in your behavior; but usually they mean that you have demonstrated that you are still carnal and worldly, that there is more work to be done.

The Body of Christ

The true believers make up the church, the church makes up the Body of Christ. This Body of Christ also, in some theological circles, is referred to as the “***Bride of Christ***”

I believe that the Bride of Christ is a combination of the ***Messianic Jewish*** believers and the Gentile believers. Together they are called the ***Bride of Christ***. Revelation 21:2 shows the Bride as ***New Jerusalem*** -“a great city”, the holy Jerusalem

The Body of Christ

descending out of Heaven from God. Then John the apostle describes a city with high walls and fabulous stones. This city is the Bride made up of faithful ancients, apostles and the latter day Body of Christ as living stones. 1 Peter 2:5 “*You also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house...*” What a glorious picture, not a physical building or a physical body but an assembly of worshipers. This wonderful group will first be assembled as The Bride of Christ for a wedding feast during or after the period called – ***The Great Tribulation***.

Two thousand years ago Jesus promised to return. The period from Jesus’ leaving until now is called ***The Church Age***. We know the start of this time but not the end. We know it ends with the event called the Rapture and a seven year wedding feast. It will most likely occur at the beginning of the ***Great Tribulation***. During the church age, satan will accelerate evil as he takes more control over the earth. satan’s effort to destroy Israel and the True Church increase until God declares “enough.” God will begin to pour out His wrath called ***The Day of the Lord*** upon the earth and its inhabitants. God’s wrath is not for the believers (1 Thessalonians 5:9) therefore, the Rapture, the catching away to Heaven of the Bride. The removal of the Bride from the earth causes the antichrist to be revealed (2 Thessalonians 2:3) and he moves quickly to seize power. For seven years things intensify, until Jesus destroys all His enemies and saves Israel. It appears that during part or all of this awful time on earth the Bride is in Heaven at a feast. The wedding feast will occur when the Bride is raptured from the earth and taken to Heaven. This marriage of the Bride is described in Matthew chapter 19, which states “*for this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh*”, and in Ephesians 5:21-32, and Paul states in verse 32: “*This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.*”

Before culture established wedding ceremonies, i.e., parties, flowers, etc., whenever a man and woman joined sexually, they were considered married. The ceremonies came later to strengthen social customs. Jewish young people were betrothed by consent of the parents. The young man would go off and

establish a home for his bride. Often an extension would be built on the groom's parents' home. After construction was complete, the groom and his friends would go to the bride's home. A seven day party would begin during which the bride and groom would join sexually. The groom would verify that his bride had remained a chaste virgin and the marriage was now considered fully consummated. After the seven day festivities the couple would go to their new home. The groom was required to prepare and provide for his bride. The bride also had to prepare and train for her new life and maintain her virginity.

The bride must qualify for this great honor by fulfilling her responsibilities. Notice in Matthew 25, in the telling of the ten virgins, five were wise and five were foolish. When we examine them, we see that the wise ones were prepared, and the foolish were unprepared. The bride must act responsibly, and do what she can to prepare for the coming of the groom. Flaws in her character must not dominate what her responsibility is toward the groom. Jesus has proved responsible as He is doing everything to prepare Himself and create a home suitable for the Bride. Therefore, the Bride must dominate her flesh and not be lazy, out of control, or misdirected during this very important waiting time. Becoming one flesh is a picture of Jesus, the Head, coming together with His Body – the Church or the raptured Bride joining Christ in Heaven forever.

The Lord is gracious, merciful and kind, but He does expect a proper response to His graciousness. He has required that the Bride respond by a demonstration of love, Holy Spirit power, and self-control.

Types of Churches

The body of Christ is very complex and diverse. It is amazing that churches have the same Savior but serve Him in so many different ways. The main diversions are around the questions of leadership and traditions. I wish I could say that the main divider was theology or Scriptural interpretation but it's not. Stop three people and ask them what church they attend or what denomination they are and then ask them to define and defend their theology. "Well, I'm not sure but my mom and family have

always been that denomination”, is what will be meant by more than two out of three. Tradition is the greatest determinant, because few people do the work of examination and comparison in choosing a denomination. Sadly, few people have read and studied the world’s best seller, The Bible. Few priests and pastors preach the Word of God, most preach about it or editorialize from it. The Bible is widely-quoted; but a forty-five minute sermon once a week is not a meal, only a snack.

Leadership influences memberships because people will follow personality, charisma, money, etc., before they will follow conviction based on discovered truth. So all will say, “we are following Christ.” More often they are following someone who has convinced them that he is following Christ. Most were born into a family that was following a tradition, so they continued in it. Therefore, we have key players that determined their theology and passed it on.

Pick a denomination, and you will find a leader who started a tradition. Here is a list of a few: Catholic, Episcopal, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Methodist, Alliance, Nazarene, Baptist, Church of God in Christ, A.M.E. and A.M.E. Zion (African Methodist Episcopal), Pentecostal, Assemblies of God, Apostolic Holiness, Quakers, Mennonites, Latter Rain, Four Square, Vineyard, Word of Faith. ***“Mainstream Churches and denominations”***: the term means 100 – 200,000 or more followers world wide that embrace generally accepted doctrines.

There are groups that name Christ but set themselves apart – Seventh Day Adventist, Mormon, Jehovah Witnesses, Unification, and many more. Some churches attempt to replicate the 1st Century Church or the early Catholic Church of the 3rd – 5th Centuries, and others the Church after the Reformation. Churches take shape according to the power and order of their leadership. The Bible doesn’t clearly tell us the shape of leadership except to make it very clear that the Holy Spirit is to guide (see John Chapters 14, 15, 16, & 17). The early Church was lead by elders with deacons assisting. In Scripture a head bishop or shepherd seems to be present but not always identified. The elders (apostles) of the early Church of Jerusalem met to set

policy and direct the deacons, but their focus was prayer and the ministry of the Word; preaching (Acts 6). In Acts 13 we see prophets and teachers in the assembly at worship, receiving instructions from the Holy Spirit as how to lead. In Acts 15 we see apostles and elders with the whole assembly discussing and checking Scriptures to know what to do about the inclusion of the Gentiles. James (Christ's brother – not one of the 12 apostles) takes the lead and resolves the matter. History points toward James as the lead elder at Jerusalem. A few hundred years later the clergy appears. Then the clergy divides into Pope, cardinals, bishops, priests, brothers, etc. Then, the reformation reduces things to pastor as a professional with many variations of officers. Who's right? I don't know, but we must give the church back to God and the people.

The modern proactive – inclusive Churches seem to be experiencing a surge of growth, especially among the youth. “User Friendly”, “Seeker Sensitive” are the new labels; no dress codes, no formality, no threatening messages, big social programs (singles, divorcees), multi-self help and social program provider churches. The thought is “don't offend or turn them off before we turn them on”, or “catch 'um first, then clean them”. Some churches refuse this model as a weak compromise of the True Gospel and being “soft on sin”! The term is “**greasy grace**”. Some people come to the Lord through the “Fire & Brimstone”, “turn or burn” “you're going to hell” message while others came by a simple, “Jesus Loves You!” Only by being led by the Holy Spirit can a church preach and reach both sides and all in between.

The Move of the Spirit

The range of leadership styles goes from the Pope, as Vicar of Christ (which is Christ's representative on earth) to other groups who claim to have no earthly leader; the elders, clergy or the whole group is the “leader”. Theology ranges from “we can do what Christ did” to “no, we cannot do what Christ did”. On and on it goes. Jesus told us how to figure it out – “Know Jesus = Know the Father / No Jesus = No Father”, but people don't agree on this interpretation either. The Scripture says we must worship

“in Spirit and in Truth”; “the Spirit and Word agree” (see page 83, 84). However, if we interpret Scripture as though the Holy Spirit were non-existent or minimally active, we cannot expect Him to verify Truth. We end up following only the leader of our choice or our family’s tradition.

There is a group of churches that attribute their modern appearance to a move of the Spirit – action by God. At the turn of the century, there was Azusa Street Revival on the West Coast. This gave birth to signs and wonders and a resurgence of speaking in Tongues. This revival claimed similarities with the Day of Pentecost as found in the book of Acts. So, the label “Pentecost” was used, giving birth to Pentecostalism and the eventual formation of the Pentecostal church, Assemblies of God, Churches of God in Christ and many other denominations to follow. At this writing, we have crossed from the 90’s to the millennium. In the past ten years there has been another “move” that has affected The Body of Christ. This move has been called Neo-Pentecostalism. The response to this Neo-Pentecostalism has been quite varied. Some have expressed hostility and some have embraced it. Those who have embraced it have been labeled as Neo-Pentecostals, i.e., Baptist, Baptistcostals, Pentebaptist, etc. They generally state that, while they are remaining in the governing administrative structure of their denomination, they have had an experience with the Holy Spirit that has changed their style of worship and theological view point. This “neo” move has not yet reached its peak and seems to be spreading world-wide. This move is greater outside the United States due to evangelists using signs and wonders to promote the Gospel. (In order to combat supernatural evil the international church has seen a broad range of spiritual activity that many in the United States have been continually biased against).

Messianic Jews

People with a Jewish Heritage who come to accept Jesus as their Messiah are known as Messianic Jews. They can be broken up into three groups, but express their Faith in a number of ways. 1) The first group retains the Jewish culture as both secular and religious. They hold the revelation of “*The Christ*” as a private

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personal matter but remain in Jewish tradition, participating in very few church activities. They prefer to remain in their family's temple. I call them strong culture-minimal church Jews. 2) The next group is strong culture Messianic church Jews. These seek to reproduce a 1st Century "*Jewish*" experience and may even use old Jewish liturgy and prayers. Each group is different but will incorporate Jewish attire, symbols and as many customs as possible. They seem to be on a mission to educate secular Jews and Gentiles to the Jewish roots in the Faith. 3) The final group is weak culture - new church Messianic Jews; these acknowledge their Jewish roots but see the church as a blend of Jewish and Gentile believers, blended in worship into "one new man," as evangelist Sid Roth so aptly states. Strip away Gentile denominational controls and Jewish tradition controls and return to the early church model that was sought under Paul to blend Jews and Gentiles together. This issue is addressed in part by Paul in Galatians 2:14-16. Paul is saying we (the Jews) now, through grace, have the liberty of the Gentiles; and they now have the knowledge of the Jews but are not required to be Jews. Also, we are free to worship as we choose since none of our Jewish traditions have the ability to save us. Let us then be led by the Spirit of God. Galatians 3:3 sums it up, "*Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Holy Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?*" Therefore, the Messianic Jew must worship in the same manner as the Gentile must worship, "In Spirit and in Truth", whether the form is group 1,2,3, or none of the above; for no prayer shawl, shofar or liturgy can bring salvation.

Spirits and Sins

Jezebel - Jezebel spirit

There are two Jezebels in the Bible. One gives the great prophet Elijah a hard time, and the other gives the first century church a difficult time. In both instances, these women are outstanding for their evil ways. Both women are power hungry and are in great opposition to the prophets and the things of God.

They have a love of the practices that are forbidden for the children of Israel and the church. Both Jezebels are idol worshipers and, it appears, are involved in witchcraft or other occult arts. They are both false teachers, evil promoters and supporters of sinful practices. They both get elevated to positions of importance, and from these positions of importance, attack the people of God, as well as blaspheming against the very Name of God. Therefore, to be a **Jezebel** or have a **Jezebel spirit** would mean that a person's behavior can be identified with both of these Jezebels...idol worshipers, antichrist, witchcraft-occult activities, power-hungry, controlling personalities, and Prophet destroying enemies of God. In present day culture, people use the term **Jezebel** or **Jezebel spirit** to refer to a person who is engaging in a move to do combat or undermine the pastor and/ or elders of the congregation. Sometimes, in error, some people will use the phrase as a blanket expression for almost any type of sin that is found in the modern day church. Therefore you should ask them to describe exactly the behavior that is being exhibited. Jezebel is about destroying the work of God by attacking the head.

Spirit of Ahab

As with Jezebel, Ahab is an Old Testament character. This king is found in 1 Kings and his behavior describes the characteristics of this spirit. People make much ado about Jezebel and ignore Ahab – which is a lot like John 8, where a woman caught in adultery is about to be stoned, but the men make no mention of the man who was also guilty of fornicating with her. Jezebel is guilty, yes, and has willful tendencies; but **Ahab** is more guilty, for he does nothing to stop her evil ways. The Ahab spirit is cowardly, in a sense, with little or no backbone. A true godly person would not let another usurp so much power, or be used by them to commit evil without restraint. If we follow this nature in 1 Kings we see a picture of the Ahab spirit.

1 Kings 16:30 - Ahab trivializes sin, permits, and promotes evil. 1 Kings 18:17 - he places blame on others. Verse 20 shows me that the Ahab spirit folds under pressure. It joins the battle only after the brave have secured it, but...takes the credit for

victory. 1 Kings 20:21 - makes threats with evil people and operates by fear. 1 Kings 21:2 - covets others' possessions, is spoiled and resentful, a wimp. 2 Kings 21:21, 29 - ruins his posterity (future generations), leaves a worthless inheritance.

As in the Garden of Eden, the woman's error is compounded by a weak man. Ahab spirit is a picture of the carnal nature of a weak man, dominated by a hell bent woman.

Similar to, but contrasting with a Jezebel spirit, is a **spirit of Delilah**. Delilah was the one who pulled down the great prophet Samson in the book of Judges; but a reference to a **Delilah spirit** generally speaks of a male or female who is using sexual sin and attractiveness to come against a person of God. This can be done to influence them, captivate them, and/or distract them from the work of God. A **Delilah spirit** also relates to a **spirit of Mammon**. **Mammon** actually is the pagan god of avarice, greed, and different types of lust, with the emphasis being, of course, the love of money. We must remember that Delilah used sex to gain social and financial prominence. This is closely associated with another spirit that is identified with the church, and that is the **spirit of Baalam**. Baalam was an early prophet who encountered the children of Israel as they crossed into Canaanland. He was tempted repeatedly by the king to prophesy against Israel, and for a while he did resist, but eventually failed to obey God because of the temptation for gain.

Spirit of Religion

This is one of, if not *the* most dangerous spirit that satan uses against the church. A **spirit of religion** is behind every church split and pastor's heartache. Saints can stand against an open attack by satan, but when it comes from those **in the flock** (congregation) that we call friends, it is often too painful to bear. When the "righteous misguided" start shooting guided missiles at their fellow brethren, demons stand up and cheer. When satan cannot destroy from the outside, he will use good people on the inside to do it for him.

People set standards for themselves based on theology, morality and what they are willing to accept as lawful. This becomes religion - a way of worshiping and appearing spiritual.

Traditions get established based on what people are comfortable with and the limits are usually determined by what they are able to maintain within their sphere of influence, church and family. For example, the pharisees found that they could keep up with the laws they added to God's Sabbath laws. They then established as "good, righteous religion" a tradition that everyone "good" should do their Sabbath laws, along with God's. When Jesus didn't hold to their religious tradition they 1) labeled Him, 2) thought negative thoughts against Him, 3) justified themselves, 4) went on the attack and planned how to get their way, 5) practiced character assassination, 6) sought to destroy the opposing organism as well as the organization, 7) felt justified and missed God's best. These seven behaviors are repeated over and over again in the church. They will allow satan to divide us and wound us through a spirit of offense – causing people to shoot the wounded and destroy God's work, all the while feeling justified. This is the work of a spirit of religion. Paul's thorn in the flesh was a demon from satan that tormented him as he worked with and worried over the churches (see 2 Corinthians 12). The demon would stir up the religious fold against Paul in every city and church. Judaizers were a religious group that got upset over the new Gentile converts and caused the first church split by requiring that all converts have to become Jews. They had a problem because they thought that the Greek Jews and converted Gentiles were not Jewish enough. They wanted them circumcised and keeping the laws of Moses and the teachers of the Law.

******A spirit of religion takes hold of people who major in the minors.***

The spirit of religion always remembers what someone said that was wrong and cannot remember what someone said that was right. They are focused on the mess and not what's blessed. They are the self-appointed guardians of the Faith and protectors of what's holy; they seldom remember that God's people are holy. They place more weight on being right than on the love of the brethren. Also, to their great detriment, they will gladly "touch the anointed". David said "*I will not stretch out my hand*

against my lord (King Saul), for he is the Lord's anointed." (1 Samuel 24:10). "*Do not touch My anointed ones, and do My prophets no harm*" (1 Chronicles 16:22) is still a warning for today.

King Saul killed the priests of God and pursued David for years. Notice that he was tormented by demons even as he warred against idol worshipers and other evil people. Saul's family was divided and he had no peace. People with religious spirits are open to mental illness more than physical, but usually end up with both and die early. The reason is given in Scripture, Mark 11:25: "*And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses.*"

Since they will not forgive the list of violations that persons have made against their traditions, they themselves are *not* forgiven. This causes people with religious spirits to *not* have a covering against the works of the devil. They cry out to God for relief, but He is waiting for *them* to *give mercy*, for He desires mercy, not sacrifice, as we see in 1 Samuel 15:22: "*Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice*" and Hosea 6:6: "*For I desire mercy and not sacrifice*". Since they hold themselves righteous they 1) redefine godliness and God, 2) reinterpret the Word or 3) blame someone else.

They are looking for violators of their laws, so they spend little time in self-examination. Even when they do examine themselves, it's against the *laws that they have accepted as traditions*, which they have down to a science. Therefore, their self judgment always ends in "not guilty". They tend to always feel "you are talking to the other guy, not me".

Let's examine their error step by step. 1) Redefine godliness and God. They have met the standard they have set so they define godliness as "if you do according to my traditions and do what I'd do, then you are godly. Vote like I vote, feel like I feel on gun control, divorce, etc., and you are godly". In the church it becomes "preach like I preach, teach what I'd teach, move when I'd move, reward my traditions and punish anyone and anything that doesn't look like or act like us".

The pharisees set a trap for Jesus on the issue of the Romans and used paying taxes as the problem. They set a trap on the issue of sin, using the woman caught in adultery, eating with sinners, allowing a woman of questionable background to wash His feet, Jesus working (healing) on the Sabbath, He encouraged others to violate the Sabbath i.e. “pick up your bed and carry it and walk.” on and on, ‘til they had a verdict. Their verdict was this Man (Jesus) is a hypocrite, blasphemer, liar, lawbreaker, etc., a violator of tradition and an ungodly man. This was all to define godliness. They also had defined God - “God thinks and acts like us and we think and act like God...so we can speak for God. What other proof do we need?” they said!

A person with a *spirit of religion* does not seek God or His law for their proof. With blind confidence, they are assured by satan that they know how God feels about the issues and the ungodly. Paul said to the Athenians, “*I perceive that in all things you are very religious; for as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with the inscription ‘TO THE UNKNOWN GOD.’*” (Acts 17:22, 23). These people had defined many gods but none of them were the real true God.

The pharisees were so sure they knew God, but Jesus called them children of the devil. (John 8:44) Jesus purposely made a fatal move when dealing with the *spirit of religion: direct confrontation with truth*. People with a spirit of religion respond violently to being confronted with truth. Jesus didn’t hold back in John Chapter 8, but directly confronted the pharisees with the truth: “*You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do*” (John 8:44). Jesus also shared other truths, which caused a violent reaction in the pharisees: a determination to kill the Nazarene. Jesus knew they would be satan’s helpers in getting Him to the cross because He told them about themselves, drove the moneychangers out of the temple, and exposed their hypocrisy.

******Disagreement turns to blind rage when the “religious” are faced with TRUTH. When you hold up a mirror so that people can see Truth, they hate you***

*more than the image they see.
When you have redefined godliness and God,
it's hard to back up and accept criticism.*

Now let's look at the next one: 2) Re-interpret the Word. Once faced with a theology that doesn't fit the picture they have painted, the Word itself becomes subject to change. Scripture verses will be pulled out of their settings and mixed with verses on different subjects. This will be done with a cleverness that at first seems accurate and needs to be closely examined. Scripture will be stretched or shrunk to fit the need of the tradition. Examples: a) 'stretched' - God wants that none perish - equals: "everyone's gonna go to Heaven!" b) 'shrunk' - We must be holy - equals: "only people of my 'holiness faith' will be saved". The spirit of religion causes people to fixate upon their interpretation of the issues in the Bible. They establish "sacred cows", concepts that must be worshiped as absolutely correct even though they may not be clearly spelled out in the Bible.

Sometimes, for certain situations, there are different views to be considered. The woman caught in adultery (John 8:3-11) needed to be judged in the light of "*all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God*" (Romans 3:23). Jesus felt it was unjust to judge her strictly on the letter of the law, which demanded her death. We cannot "*rightly divide the Word of Truth*" (2 Timothy 2:15) without considering the whole counsel of God on each issue. And a look at the last: 3) Blame someone else. Satan uses the spirit of religion to produce victims. The religious "right" of Jesus' day spread the message that "Jesus must die for He transgresses the law." "He's stirring up the people." Yes, the people were stirred up, because they were seeing the Truth in action and contradictions were exposed. The leaders had to blame someone; therefore, Jesus.

Many a pastor has been driven out of a church, not due to error in his personal walk, but because of the Truth of the message, and the congregants' personal conflict with the message. Troubled churches change pastors when the pastors aren't the problem, but someone needs to be blamed and it's the pastor's turn. People with a religious spirit need to accept the

Name It and Claim It

blame, change or leave so the pastor can pastor. A religious spirit would rather stay and destroy than look at who is to blame - themselves and satan. Ironically, the spirit of religion is often the person speaking the most Christianese.

Pastors I have spoken to who have dealt with this spirit say, “Things were going along O.K., and then all of a sudden I was continually under the microscope. The pressure on my family was tremendous; fear, anger, and then depression hounded me.” If you are truly working for the Lord you must stay humble, stay sweet, and fight against self-righteousness, which opens the door to the spirit of religion. Sadly, true humility may be perceived as weakness and “Bang”, the sharks swarm for a blood feast.

If this demonic influence gets loose in your church, home group or class, remember Paul’s words: “*But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra - what persecutions I endured. And out of them all the Lord delivered me.*” (2 Timothy 3:10, 11). And pray, pray, bind and loose, pray and pray again. The spirit of religion has been very destructive because modern church structures are set up so that pastors are central – CEO’s, which is not the best (or Biblical) church structure. It is more difficult to destroy a church that is organized around a strong multiple eldership model. We somehow expect one man to be a great preacher, teacher, singer, financial genius, shepherd, planner, builder, flow in all the gifts and be a superman as well. He’s asked to do and be what very few men can do. When he fails or wavers the “fiery darts of the evil one” come.

Name It and Claim It

This is an extension of the “*Yes and Amen*” (I Corinthians 1:20). “*Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?*” Well yes, God has, for He has given great

“authority to the believers”. Whatever God has promised to us, we can “name it and claim it”.

The accurate meaning is that only what is found to be clearly provided by the cross and the resurrection can be named and claimed. The Bible is the will of God to all believers. Therefore, what Jesus has left us in His will is for His heirs. As His heir we have a right to what Jesus has provided according to His promises in the “yes and amen”. You can’t name and claim anything. There are prerequisites and conditions to be met. If you meet them then you will not be denied.

2 Corinthians 1:19-20: “*Brethren, do not be children in understanding; however, in malice be babes, but in understanding be mature*”. In John 14,15,16 and 17, Jesus tells us to ask anything in His Name (in the full authority of His will and person) and we can have it by Faith. We cannot “name and claim” for evil, selfish or lustful purposes, for that is not in His will. But if we name a good thing that lines up with the promises of the Old Testament or the New Covenant (by the Blood and Name of Jesus) it will be ours. Once we find something stated in the Bible as a promise to us, we can claim (or state by Faith) that it is ours, and we believe that in God’s time it will be manifested as ours. The stated prerequisites are these: Mark 10:30: “*who shall not receive a hundred fold now in this time - houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions - and in the age to come, eternal life.*” (with persecutions and abiding (remaining) in Christ, The Vine). John 15:7: “*If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you*”. Mark 11:22-24 tells us that the “authority of the believer” includes believing with the heart and saying with the mouth as the method to receive our desires. Mark 11:25 says to forgive others, which is a prerequisite to receiving from God. “**Name it and claim it**” works only by Faith and only for those who believe it. Unscrupulous people have twisted this Gospel beyond recognition and will be judged by God. Teachings against the “authority of the believer” have held God’s people in bondage to poverty, sickness and failure. One cannot name and claim

God's Law and Suggestions

anything for any purpose. It must be according to the above prerequisites and by Faith in the promises of God. Therefore, all of God's promises are – yes and amen.

God's Law & Suggestions

God has said that certain things are sinful, **abominations** (abhorrent, disgusting, loathed as filthy) to Him: idol worship, witchcraft, astrology, fortune telling, drunkenness, drugs (casting spells), homosexuality, bestiality, child/human sacrifice, fornication, etc. God hates these things for they give entrance to the devil and are a danger to His creatures - us. All of the above lead to bondage to evil forces, premature death, poor health and disease. To do them is to rebel against God and assign authority to the antichrist (that which opposes God and rejects His love and authority). Statistically a faithful, monogamous marriage has the highest rating for health, wealth and longevity. We are just now beginning to understand the wisdom of God's statutes concerning these things, as well as His hygiene and food regulations.

For example, germs were discovered in the last few hundred years, but Bible hygiene, if properly followed, kills germs and avoids their transmission. God gave this information to Moses, thousands of years in advance of man's scientific knowledge of these dangers. Only a supernatural designer, God, could have told Moses these things, for all the knowledge of Egypt did not include this scientific wisdom.

Leviticus 11:32: *“Anything on which any of them falls when they are dead shall be unclean, whether it is any item of wood or clothing or skin or sack, whatever item it is, in which any work is done, it must be put in water. And it shall be unclean until evening; then it shall be clean.”* Lev. 13:52: *“He shall therefore burn that garment in which is the plague, whether warp or woof, in woolen or in linen, or anything of leather, for it is an active leprosy; the garment shall be burned in the fire.”* Leviticus 15:2: *“When any man has a discharge from his body, his discharge is*

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unclean.” Leviticus 15:9: “Any saddle on which he who has the discharge rides shall be unclean.” Leviticus 15:19: “If a woman has a discharge, and the discharge from her body is blood, she shall be set apart seven days; and whoever touches her shall be unclean until evening.” Deuteronomy 23:12, 13: “Also you shall have a place outside the camp, where you may go out; and you shall have an implement among your equipment, and when you sit down outside, you shall dig with it and turn and cover your refuse.”

Before science knew these safeguards, the Bible was keeping people healthy. The Black Plague deaths among the Jews were so low that superstitious people blamed the Jews and rioted against them in Europe. Of course, this was foolish, and European clergy eventually turned to the laws in Leviticus and realized that human sewage was deadly to humans. Later it was discovered that rodents and insects that came in contact with human feces which was discarded into the streets, carried death back to humans. Though not understanding why or how, the Jews washed after defecating and buried feces...maybe God knows something we don't. Duh!!! The science of their day had not discovered germs, so then how did Moses know these sanitary safeguards if not from God, who knows all things! (See Leviticus 16:26, Leviticus 14:3 and Deuteronomy 23:10.)

This principal of separating clean from unclean extends to circumcision and sex practices as well. Cervical cancer rates are lower in Orthodox Jews and Muslims that practice circumcision. Blood is not to be exchanged during sex, and bodily fluids are to be exchanged exclusively with one mate alone. Homosexuals practice anal sex. This activity violates God's precautions. The anus was not designed to handle proteins. Sperm is a protein, and mixed in the bloodstream is unhealthy. AIDS and other sexually-transmitted diseases seldom plague those who keep God's laws. Societies that have high rates of extra-marital sex have higher rates of sexual disease. God knows the science of the bodies He created, and therefore His Law should be followed.

Food and Dietary stuff

When a believer says we should eat the Bible way, he is

Tithes and Offerings

saying that we are to avoid eating the foods God prohibited in the Old Testament. Yet, he is also saying we can eat limited amounts of these prohibited foods if we remember that under the New Covenant, Christ set us free. But I Corinthians 10:23 says: *“All things are lawful (permissible) for me but not all things are helpful (beneficial); all things are lawful for me, but not all things edify.”* Matthew 15:11 and Mark 7:15 tell us what truly defiles, and Acts 10:15 shows us God has cleansed these foods and therefore we can eat. It has been discovered that these meats, shellfish, scavengers, pork, are not the best for health and some create a high level of uric acid and iodine in the body. Consuming large amounts of meat has been a major cause of heart disease and cancer in America, along with food additives, pollutants and mega-stress. God designed man with only a few canine teeth, but mostly grinding teeth for nuts and veggies. Eating the Bible way – fruits, vegetables, nuts, and low animal flesh is the proven best diet for man.

Everything you wanted to know about tithing, but were afraid to ask!

Tithes and Offerings Simplified

The question usually goes - "Pastor, who gets what, and do I have to tithe?"

No, you do not *have to* tithe or give offerings. Only three things are for sure - death, taxes, and judgment. In all things (as with the above) if you do, then there are consequences, and if you do not there are consequences.

Death is two-fold; physical and spiritual. Your body will give out some day. Unless you are raptured, you will experience physical death. Spiritual death is for all who reject God's gift of eternal life through Jesus the Christ. Acts 4:12: *"There is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."*

If you hear the "Gospel" and reject it you will not be *saved* - in this life, or the next - eternity. If you do not hear the "Gospel" by traditional means - i.e. evangelist, preacher, saint or reading of

the Word, you will be judged according to Acts 10:34-35: ***"Then Peter opened his mouth and said: 'In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality. But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him.' "***

In all cases you will face death and you will be judged on two levels. First, are you saved? Do you get to hell or Heaven? Second, what crowns and rewards do you deserve **now** on earth, and then **later** in Heaven?

As for taxes, we pay them for reasons: 1) protection 2) services 3) to give honor 4) to show gratitude. Man will take taxes by force, if necessary, and is often unjust in accessing them. God allows the law of reaping and sowing to enforce His Law. God's judgment is always correct and fair. ***You have "free will" to do as you choose with your life and your resources, but there are consequences.*** As with the government, you benefit from the blessings this country provides: military protection, education, welfare, social security, police and fire protection, etc. Therefore, you are expected to contribute to its program. If you refuse to do so then you will reap trouble and a sharp reduction of blessings. You will be brought in for judgment, fined or confined. Tithes and offerings are an ordinance given by God that results in curses or blessings, as in Deut. Chapters 28-32.

"Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, 'In what way have we robbed you?' In tithes and offerings. You are cursed with a curse, for you have robbed Me, even this whole nation. Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and try Me now in this," says the Lord of hosts, "If I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, so that he will not destroy the fruit of your ground, nor shall the vine fail to bear fruit for you in the field," says the Lord of hosts; "And all nations will call you blessed, for you will be a delightful land," says the Lord of hosts. "Your words have been harsh against Me," says the Lord, "yet you say, 'What have we spoken against you?' You have said, 'it is useless to serve God; what profit is it that we have kept His ordinance, and that we have walked as

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mourners before the Lord of hosts?’ ” (Malachi 3:8-14.)

The children of Israel could choose what they would receive. As children of Abraham they were entitled to receive even more blessings, which were in place before Moses and the Law.

We see that tithes and offerings existed before the Law and was kept by father Abraham, all the way back to Cain and Abel.

If we look back through time, we see that from Adam's time on, men made offerings to God, long before the ordinances of the Mosaic laws.

Man owed everything to God. Adam and Eve were in the Garden of Eden and all was provided for them. They failed to give honor and thanks to God and followed the leading of the evil one (the serpent - satan). "You can be like God", satan said. Translated - you don't have to honor God, you can do your own thing, be honored, and keep everything for yourselves because you are also a god.

Man's disobedience put them out of the Garden, but life on earth was still a wonderful thing, so they taught their children to joyfully give their best and first fruit offerings to God. Abel did this and Cain didn't. Sin multiplies - Cain dishonored God and then killed his own brother, proving that a man that will rob God will also rob his fellow man.

Abraham, as well as all significant cultures, honored their gods with sacrifices of different kinds. We know Abraham honored God with a thanksgiving tithe of the spoils (booty) of war to king Melchizedek (Gen.14:18). Therefore, we can easily see that God expected a ***material*** act of ***gratitude*** off the top from our blessings. ***If God hadn't put "it" there you couldn't get "it" or use "it"***. Prior to Moses we see the giving of offerings and the building of altars with thanks offerings and sacrifices throughout Scripture. Our forefathers had not invented the big bang and evolution yet, so they all gave thanks to a deity. In our case, Jehovah be praised and thanked.

The tithe is therefore not a "Jewish thing", for it was established 1,000 years before there was a Jew. The Jews appear and they organize and structure the tithe.

Let's see how that came to be.

Enter the Laws under Moses. Lev. 27:30 shows that the tithe was given annually to the Lord via the priesthood (Levites). It was given to support the priesthood and maintain the temple and its responsibilities. The tithe was from the seed, fruit trees, herds, flocks, etc.; the work of man's hands.

Moslems are required to give 3% to Allah, which proves he is not the same god as our Jehovah, since our God expects the tithe to be a minimum of 10%. ***Moslems do better on average than most Christians, which only give about 2.4%.*** The Jews under Moses gave at least three tithes totaling 23 1/3% of their income, plus other prescribed and regulated offerings. Jesus, in Luke 18:12, points out they tithed even on their spices and herbs. Note that Jesus said, "*which you should do*", as He commends their giving.

The first tithe was the annual 10% tithe. Then three times per year at Passover, Tabernacles and Weeks. The second tithe covered expenses to get to and stay in Jerusalem. To these feasts they brought tithed produce and meat, which was consumed by the altar and by worshipers as part of the party. And finally, every three years a charity tithe was given in the local community for the needy. (See Deut. 12, 14 and 26)

The New Testament doesn't say much about tithing. Matthew 23, Luke 11:42; 18:12, Hebrews 7, Malachi 3:8-10, and Corinthians relate powerfully to this subject. It appears Jesus and the disciples never questioned it and our Lord never removed tithes and offerings. He did remove the restrictions of the dietary law in Acts 10 and in John, as He declared *all foods clean*. But *nowhere* does the tithe get altered.

The foundation of the tithe is not the Mosaic Law. The tithe is based upon God's greater law of sowing and reaping, blessing and curse, and honor and stewardship. If we sow into the Kingdom of Heaven, we will reap material and spiritual blessings, (i.e. wealth, power, health, God's favor) on the earth. If we dishonor God, and are selfish towards His priests and the needy, we will get no help from Heaven - satan is free to do what he does best - kill, rob and destroy. The curse is not that God attacks us - it's that we have *rejected His protection*.

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Notice that in Malachi 3, the Lord states that after "robbing God", He allows the devourer (satan) to ruin our material crops. If we are selfish, why should a generous God go out of His way to save us so we can continue being selfish? ***If we won't seek first the Kingdom of God, why should He add to us the things we need when we're only going to waste them and not learn from our mistakes?*** True love causes us to improve and get better so we can be wise with God's blessings. ***Jesus implies that if you cannot handle, appreciate, and be responsible with material wealth, how then can you handle spiritual wealth?***

If we honor God we are wise and will honor His creatures and creation. "God so loved the world that He gave..." (John 3:16). God is a giver - if we honor Him we'll be like Him. This will result in stewardship - the call of the Christian to be a servant and manager over the will and work of the Master. This stewardship puts us right back in the headship of Adam - Genesis 1, having dominion over creation!

God gives us the ability to make and obtain wealth. The priest must labor at meeting the spiritual needs of the people, insure the blessings and protect the people. This is a full time job, so the Levites were given no inheritance of land in the Promised Land. God alone is the source of their every need. The priest must minister unto God and unto the needs of the people. They must maintain and direct the wealth of God by the will of God.

In the New Testament Jesus paid His tithe, offerings and taxes, and sometimes in surprising ways. In Matthew 17:24-27, Jesus told Peter that the first fish he caught would hold a piece of money in its mouth, which Jesus told him to pay their temple taxes with. His offerings and charity were huge - way beyond 10%, as He fed over ten thousand people on two separate documented occasions. ***Giving is an undeniable part of being a Christian.***

It appears that 10% is a minimum required, and that offerings above that are what really causes the blessings to be poured forth. Doing the minimum will get you just that - the minimum. Remember in Matt. 23:23 Jesus commends the pharisee for

tithing, and I doubt He was referring to just 10% when He said, "*and this you should have done.*" I'm sure He meant you should have met the whole 23 1/3% that was standard for His day. Our blessings today are based on better promises and a stronger covenant, so should we do *less*? The law of Faith says believe you receive and you shall have it. If we know God loves a cheerful giver and has promised to bless him, then standing in Faith for God's promise is wisdom. "*Give and it will be given unto you*" (Luke 6:38) seems like a fair deal. The measure you use will be measured back to you.

The answer then is simple. Forget all the debates and step out into the realm of Faith. Believe God will keep His word and you will have abundance. Poverty is never promised for those that are "cheerful givers" who are merciful and faithful (2Cor 9:7). "Seek first the Kingdom of God and all these things will be added unto you." (Matt.6:33)

By tithes and offerings we are storing up treasures in Heaven.

******You can call down some of this stored up
treasure for here on earth
during your times of need.***

Some people give their tithe to missionaries, evangelists, charities and various programs. This cannot be supported in the Word, as these places are not the "storehouse". These are not the temple. Your tithe belongs to the local storehouse that *you* use and *will need*. A TV evangelist will not Christen your children, educate them, visit you in the hospital, marry you, go to court with you, bury you, grieve with you, train you, counsel you, or disciple you, and has no responsibility over your soul, etc.

The local storehouse does this and more. The local temple is where you worship and fellowship. You are responsible for its heat, lights, staff, missions and outreaches. A "good" temple has resources for emergency food, finances, and spiritual strength and education.

Home missions and many different foreign missions are supported ***through your local church***. Monies are pooled and directed where they are needed with good safeguards and oversight. A portion of your tithe goes overseas and in some

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cases to the TV evangelist you are impressed with.

Your ***offering*** should go to the programs that you feel led to do more for - first inside the storehouse, then outside to the Body of Christ. Anyone that tries to lay claim to your tithe should provide all the work of God described above. Your tithe should guarantee that the source from which you are fed and have personal worship with is well cared for and prospering. Almost ***all*** charities, missionaries, and evangelists got started and are sustained by a portion of tithes from some local church.

Offerings bring great blessing and are needed to keep the extras going in the world of Christ. A good church will tithe off of the tithes that come in to support other ministries. Money is a tool. It is for the spreading of the Gospel and the building and the establishment of more temples to serve the saved and reach the unsaved.

In 1 Cor. 16:1&2 Paul says, ***“Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also. On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.”*** This shows that collections and doing the work of the church came from the local bodies. Should we do less?

Simply believe the Word and God's promises. You'll be blessed - ask anyone that's been doing tithes and offerings for years. They will tell you the proof is in the eating and that God doesn't lie or fail. Most people that don't tithe are selfish and seldom see God's financial miracles. Tithing will cause you to become budget conscious and make you a better money manager. Give 10% of your income to the local storehouse and then offerings to priests and Godly people, projects, and charities. The 80-90% you keep will always be more than enough and God will work money miracles ***for you!***

***“Remember, God wants you to have riches
but He doesn't want riches to have you.”***

Quote from Kenneth Hagin

“And try Me now in this,” says the Lord of hosts, “If I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it.”

(Malachi 3:10)

Worldview Truth & Traditions

Traditions are subject to worldview. Worldview is the way in which a person perceives and interprets his world and the world of others on the basis of his *higher* principles, political, religious and social assumptions. The Christian worldview means that a person’s view is based on the belief system that there is a God who is supreme, superior and self-sustaining. Therefore, the Christian **worldview** sees God as being in and affecting everything on the earth. The atheist worldview means that a person has decided there is no God; he must then redefine all the aspects of existence from that vantage point. He must come up with reasons for existence, reasons for actions and consequences. The humanist places at the center of his worldview mankind or the self. The individual therefore, sees humankind as the cause and reason for all things. The evolutionist must use the same mental exercise, for he must view his world from a standpoint of change, mutation, transition and then must also find a causal force behind all things. Since most mutations are bad, the evolutionist is stuck with a negative causal force that does not lend itself to order and requires more hope and faith than Bible religion. Worldview determines a lot of things and will also determine levels of tolerance, intolerance, acceptance and rejection. For example, a Christian views Thanksgiving as a holy and sacred tradition, where the focus is upon giving thanks for the bountiful blessings of God. The atheist and humanist would totally ignore the significance of the holiday. They would transfer the holiday into turkey day, centered upon self and the holiday becomes “lets overeat-day”. The truth that our forefathers came to this land for religious freedom gets lost and will soon be forgotten, as their world view becomes more

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widespread.

Arriving at Truth is only difficult because people accept different worldviews. If a worldview is accepted as truth, then the opinions that spring forth from this supposed truth begin to take on a ring of truth. A lie can and will support another lie. A rationalization will support a series of lies. A supposition can then become a foundational truth, which leads to a series of lies and false assumptions. Things become totally confusing when we add the factor of human nature. Human nature will believe by choice. The spiritual law that Faith comes by hearing (Romans 10:17) causes humans to believe whatever is repeated over and over again, accepting it as truth, by sheer repetition. In psychology, this is a form of conditioning. Therefore, a person's worldview is conditioned into them, even though it is based upon lies. This becomes false faith based on error rather than Truth. Hitler was a master at repeating lies, but when Jesse Owens, an American Black, outran all the "superior white Aryans" in the Olympics, Jesse shattered their "truths". Yet, the lie had been so ingrained as a worldview and as truth that the facts were ignored and the nation continued in oppressing Jews, blacks, and other minorities. Only Faith in the truths of God will never be disproved. Let us consider ***Darwinism*** for a moment. In the last 15 years, scientific endeavors have raised serious questions that challenge or thoroughly abolish the possibility of evolution as true scientific reality. But the ***worldview***, and the subsequent traditions associated with it are still very intact. This worldview is so entrenched that people who challenge this icon of intellectualism are dubbed "ignorant, narrow-minded, and intolerant", as well as "unscientific". This is thoroughly laughable when you consider that no scientific research has been able to conclusively prove or establish evolution as truth. There is no scientific proof of the theory in paleontology, biology, chemistry, or even archaeology. Carbon dating is not accurate beyond 50,000 years and people using this technique rely heavily upon the opinion of paleontologists when determining the age of a fossil. This influence is often based upon the geologic column (dating fossils by the strata of soil they have been found in). This

of course is not science, but guess work, because this geologic column is not found in the field but only on paper. Another problem with carbon dating is that an item exposed to water for a long period of time gives an unreliable result. A worldwide flood would then invalidate all carbon-dated fossils. DNA and gene studies show that the process of evolution is virtually impossible to reproduce in the laboratory, but still, the worldview binds itself to evolutionists with bulldog determination. The evolutionist would not care to admit it, but he has chosen to believe this “science” based upon his worldview; rather than an examination of the facts determining what his worldview should be. In other words, because I choose not to believe in God, (because of the implications of that worldview), I must then destroy God and adopt a worldview that will sustain what I choose. Simply put, if I believe that there is a God, then I must acknowledge Him as the Creator and myself as the created thing; therefore, it behooves me to behave in accordance with His higher law rather than my own. If I desire to live by my own law, I must adopt a worldview in favor of a godless creation, a godless world.

From a Christian standpoint, since God has given all men free will and the ability to think, men are free to choose the worldview that suits them and live according to it. This creates no problems until a person’s worldview comes into conflict with others. For example, I am an atheist who believes all people under the height of 5’10” should be killed, if this becomes my worldview, and my truth becomes “they are evil and are to be destroyed”. That would, of course, conflict with the worldview of other people who are under 5’10” who want to live. If there is no God, and therefore no higher moral order, then whichever worldview is backed up by might, wins out. In a moral vacuum, the pre-eminence of a worldview is based upon the old adage of might makes right. Might may be physical, political, legal, educational, or military. A reliance upon the masses via democracy or majority rule does not always leave us with a moral outcome. Remember that the masses can be conditioned to accept a lie and act upon it, resulting in immoral behavior as

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the accepted norm due to an improper worldview. Survival of a society cannot be predicated upon everybody doing their own thing. History has proven that this brings disastrous results, and that the strong will always dominate the weak, regardless of law or morality. If there are no moral absolutes and no God, then truth becomes transient, and is subject to the whim of ***worldview***. Traditions and customs change and therefore they cannot be held up as absolute, or as moral. I don't believe that truth is a whimsical vapor that is undefinable and unattainable. Mathematics and biology tell us that things are well defined and ordered throughout our universe. Mechanics, engineering, biology; the very building blocks of life, (DNA, genes, RNA and so forth) all show that there are absolutes and finalities. There are realities in this world that are not subject to change, nor do they tolerate any variation. That being so, how can we assume that the nature of life and behavior is any less exacting? A careful examination of history, social and psychological sciences reveals that some scientific exactitude found in nature is clearly demonstrated in the human experience. For example, the family is the best, most functional unit in which mankind universally exists. Experiments at dissolving the family, altering it, or absolutely doing away with it have all led to social deterioration. Societies without law and order have always resulted in chaos; chaos has always led to disintegration and eventual elimination. No society has survived that has condoned murder, rape and lawlessness. Moral codes of behavior exist and permeate every society that lasts over 200 years.

A society that rejects God also tends to reject God's principles, God's laws, and God's worldview. It's as if you cannot have one without the other. If you reject God, you also reject His Word. Customs and traditions must be redefined within this context; therefore the shifting sands have to be continually propped up, again and again, on different foundations. Why can't we just tell the truth, analyze the data, and publish the results in an unbiased way?

Religion is man's pursuit of truth and his best benefit for establishing a ***worldview*** that brings some peace of mind and

contentment. Would the god with the greatest proof, please stand up? This god would have to be supernatural, exist outside of time, and be over his creation and not subject to it, and most importantly, be able to define what is truth. Surely we could measure the success or failure of a moral code by measuring the following:

1. Human suffering over periods of time
2. Economic cost
3. Prosperity
4. Generational benefit
5. Prophecy and outcome

More simply put, if God is God, then He should be able to;

1. Tell the future
2. Effect the present
3. Explain the past
4. Identify the truth

God's morality should line up best with what man is designed for, and disobedience to this law should have disastrous results. No one has been able to equal or surpass the behavioral codes of the Bible as taught to us by Jesus the Christ. Whether or not man can achieve these standards or principles would not be the point. The point is whether or not these ideas are correct and speak of truth. There is a universal appeal to all men concerning the blessings and benefits of living a godly life. God's original customs and traditions have been changed, re-invented, and in some cases discarded. The foundational truths that these customs and traditions are built on, though, have not been shaken as the principles of the Gospel have not been disproven or discredited as Truth. This does not mean that everyone likes them or welcomes them, but nonetheless, their presence is a testimony to an all knowing wise God - who is Father. A wise parent does know what is dangerous for their child. A wise parent also knows the best way for a child to navigate through life. How much more then, would a supernatural God know what is best for His created beings, as well as the best way for them to navigate through life? The most challenging part of this creation is that God, who is Love, must allow free will which often has dangerous and

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unpredictable outcomes. Love can only be love if one is free not to love. God allows us to choose our own truth, ***worldview***, customs and traditions, even though we may not choose Him. Let's see in the next section how customs and traditions have been used against God's Festivals and His hopes and plans for His people.

****** Since man tends not to do what he doesn't understand, man doesn't learn well from supernatural sources.***

Man tends to do only what he understands or likes. He will even do things out of habit that are solely based upon tradition and custom. Man will find things he likes to do and invent a religious meaning and create a tradition that promotes what he desires. The most dangerous scenario is that men will take a demonic (satanic) ritual and attempt to make it palatable to God. Because we enjoy it or accept it as a tradition does not make it holy or even O.K.

Nominal Christians gladly embrace all the traditions that are so-called Christian days and holidays. More Orthodox believers dislike the commercial aspects of many, i.e. Christmas and Easter, but still participate. The more fundamental Christians that emphasize the Bible as a final authority, will limit their participation and campaign against these celebrations. The Christian who is "Jewish aware" will observe the Jewish feasts and follow the Bible. This believer recognizes the fact that Jesus was Jewish as part of a greater picture. Not all believers know that Christianity is built upon a Jewish foundation.

******To read the Bible from a Gentile perspective is to not understand the Bible!***

The Sabbaths and the Festivals give a special depth to prophecy and Bible events. The Jews, throughout the Old Testament, are guilty of not properly observing the TRUE **TRADITIONS** established by God: Sabbaths, Jubilees, agricultural commands, seasonal festivals, etc. The Gentiles, after 40 AD are being grafted into the natural tree, whose roots are Jewish. By 100 AD, the Gentiles started to move away from Judaism toward incorporating paganism (Romans 11). Notice the stern warnings by Jesus to John about 100 AD as they appear in Revelation:

Christianese

Chapter 2:4: *“Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love.”* Revelation 2:9: *“and I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of satan.”* Revelation 2:14,15: *“But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Baalam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality. Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.”* (The Nicolaitans were the new emerging clergy-priesthood that was made up from the laity.) Revelation 2:20: *“Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.”* Revelation 3:2: *“Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before God.”*

Revelation 3:4: *“You have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy.”* Notice only “a few”. Revelation 3:8: *“I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name.”* Revelation 3:11: *“Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown.”* Revelation 3:15-17: *“I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. Because you say, I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing - and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked:”*

Obviously, the church was being compromised and losing ground, even while the apostle John was alive. By the 300’s AD, we have a new religion that Jesus would not call His, for it is not Jewish. The purpose and meaning of the Jewish Feasts is lost and being substituted by diluted and polluted holidays and customs.

Now add 1900 years to this sad situation and we must

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conclude satan and his agents surely have infiltrated the camp. This internal onslaught has caused great problems. What we call Christianity today has little in common with the Faith of our 1st century fathers. If the Bible is an accurate historical document, then we have suffered an evil metamorphosis. The Faith of our fathers has been changed into a different creature.

***The Butterfly is turned into something new
that's not even a caterpillar.***

The apostles would see modern Christianity as paganism.

The 10 Commandments

“Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition?” (Matthew 15:3)

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.” (Matthew 22:37-40). If you love traditions and activities like Christmas, Easter, Lent, fish on Friday, Sundays, Halloween, Jewish mysticism (Kabala), homosexuality, unlimited tolerance, astrology or witches, then skip this section. The Bible says we will be judged by what we did with what we knew. Ignorance is not quite bliss in spiritual matters; but it may help soften our punishment, while open disobedience will not be excused.

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In Romans 1:25 it says that the people exchanged lies for truths by worshiping false gods. Some of these false gods date back to the worship of Nimrod, Baal, Molech, Greek and Roman gods; in addition to the worship of crystals, rocks, demons, familiar spirits, angels, ourselves, the dead, famous people, all of which are lies. This is an affront to worship of the One true God. The worship of false gods is vanity and things that are of no profit. The Lord is speaking clearly to this generation and subsequent generations, that in spite of all our technology and all

our sophistication, we have adopted traditions that are foreign to, and in opposition to, the Word of God. A ***tradition*** is something that is handed down in a ritualistic manner and is adopted by a subsequent group of people for a period of time, and then becomes institutionalized. When a people adopt and accept a tradition, it becomes custom. That means it becomes a part of their culture, ongoing, and usually isn't questioned or examined. For example, the custom of burial for Christians and Jews has always been a burial of the (whole) body. Jews would bury on the day of death at sundown, or as soon as possible. They would not burn a body unless the person was truly evil, as ***cremation*** was a pagan – Canaanite custom. When the Jews under Moses crossed over to Canaan Land they were warned not to adopt any of the practices of the land. This included tattoos, cutting of the skin for worship, piercing of the skin, nose rings, etc. etc. Pagans would burn their children, sacrifice women and burn their dead. Early Christians buried their dead like the Jews. Mostly due to rising funeral costs, Jews and Christians have slowly moved to cremation. What was not custom, is becoming customary due to cost, ignorance and shifting worldview. The ancients reasoned “God made the body so we have no right to destroy by fire what we did not create, and we should honor the dead and the Creator through burial.” The idea of the resurrection of the dead is Jewish, and Jesus preached it as central to the end of days. So, it follows that the remains would not be destroyed but left intact in one place, except as a punishment for evil people. Amos 2:1: *“For three transgressions of Moab, and for four, I will not turn away its punishment. Because he burned the bones of the king of Edom to lime.”* Jeremiah 7:31: *“And they have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire, which I did not command, nor did it come into My heart.”* (Also Jer. 19:5). As secular worldview and humanism gain strength, the Judeo-Christian view point is replaced by pagan and Hindu practices. Cremation as a tradition has become an accepted custom and is now part of our Christian culture, but is unacceptable in Scriptures.

Holidays and Traditions

The word “holiday” is associated with traditions. The original word is a combination of the words “holy days”. Therefore we have adopted many holy days that are pagan in their origin. We have also adopted things that were manipulations by the clergy or political leaders that have no spiritual basis. One example would, of course, be “the paying of indulgences” to cover sins that have or haven’t been committed yet. During the time of Martin Luther, he vehemently opposed this, which led him to discover the teachings of grace in the book of Galatians, i.e., God’s grace is freely given and there is no exchange of money that affects spiritual matters in the heavenlies. That does not mean that there are not spiritual laws that affect spiritual things, but money cannot be used to replace a humble and a contrite heart, nor can one use money to purchase a seat or a guaranteed place in Heaven. In addition to the traditions of the Jewish holidays and Jewish feasts in America, we’ve adopted other holy days that have been diluted, changed or perverted. Another example: Thanksgiving, which was declared a holy day by our government officials as a day of prayer and thanksgiving to God; Halloween is a day that is holy to satan worshipers because it falls on the eve of All Saints Day, which is supposed to be a holy day of memorial and commemoration of dead relatives and so forth.

Christmas is supposed to be a holy day to the Christ child, and Easter is more appropriately called Resurrection Day, for we hallow and make holy the day on which Christ rose. Memorial Day is to commemorate those who died in war, and Labor Day for those who labor and produce goods and services. Commercialism enters into our traditions and creates Secretaries Day, Mother’s Day, Father’s Day, Children’s Day, Boss Day and all the other days, most of which are not hallowed in any sense, but are excuses for spending money and sending cards. These are good ideas but of no spiritual significance.

The Roots of Tradition-Christmas and Easter

Christianity and Christianese are filled with pagan holidays which must be examined.

Tammuz - Ezekiel 8:15: *“Have you seen this, O son of man? Turn again, you will see greater abominations than these.”*

Christianese

Tammuz (Assyrian fertility god) was the illegitimate child of Samuramis, concubine of Nimrod. Nimrod is credited with the building of the Tower of Babel, and Tammuz' birthday is celebrated on the 25th of December, which was a day that child sacrifice would be done. It was known as a "child mass", where they would put a child on the altar and burn him. So, for all sun god worshipers and worshipers of the darkness, this was a day celebrated as a high mass to satan. Ezekiel 8 shows the worship of Tammuz; "woman weeping for Tammuz" in verse 14, and in verse 16, worship to the sun. Saturnalia = sun god worship, Ra, or Amon- Ra, Shamash and verse 17 may refer to worship of Asherah/Ishtar.

Molech was a satanic god made of metal that had its hands out...they would build a fire behind it, in the back of its hands. The fire would get red-hot and then they would put their children in the hands of the god which would of course burn their children to death. That can be verified in Jeremiah 32:35.

Another practice was, when building graveyards, to build them with groves of trees at the entrance, shaping the evergreen trees and shrubbery into phallic symbols. 2 Chron. 33:2, 3: *"But he did evil in the sight of the Lord, according to the abominations of the nations whom the Lord had cast out before the children of Israel. For he rebuilt the high places which Hezekiah his father had broken down; he raised up altars for the Baals, and made wooden images; and he worshiped all the host of heaven and served them."* These would be a tribute to Baal and Easter, Eostre, the goddess of fertility. Then the pagans would take these grove trees at certain times of the year and decorate them with gold, making the approaches to the graveyards pretty, then they would cut them down and take them home to use in their houses. Sounds familiar, huh? That's in Jeremiah 10:1-4 *"Hear the word which the Lord speaks to you, O house of Israel, Thus says the Lord: Do not learn the way of the Gentiles; do not be dismayed at the signs of heaven for the Gentiles are dismayed at them. For the customs of the peoples are futile; for one cuts a tree from the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the ax. They decorate it with silver*

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and gold they fasten it with nails and hammers so that it will not topple". It should be noted that early Americans refused to celebrate Christmas, recognizing that it had pagan roots. It wasn't until Catholics got here with a sizeable number of people that they were able to start celebrating it.

Jesus was most likely born during the fall Jewish festivals. Scripture gives us a clue when it says that He "*will be called Emmanuel*" (Isaiah 7:14). This means "God with us" – God will tabernacle with us. Therefore, His birth was culminated by the Feast of Tabernacles, not on December 25th. Shepherds don't watch their flocks by night in December in Israel, it's too cold. Astronomers and computers show the great star conjunction happened in the fall, not in the winter. I have come to believe that ***The Light of the World*** was conceived in December by the Holy Spirit during the "Feast of Lights" (The Day of Dedication, a 5 day holiday), on the 25th day of the Jewish month of Kislev.

The Temple was desecrated by a Seleucid Syrian (Greek) called Antiochus Epiphanes about 165 BC. The Maccabees (a Jewish family) led a revolt that regained the Temple, and in December it was cleansed and re-dedicated, hence the holiday "Day of Dedication", an eight day festival at December 25th. The story tells of a miracle of one days' supply of lamp oil burning for eight days in the Temple. Therefore, the Day of Dedication is a time of pageantry and joy. A time to celebrate "The True Light of the World" has been conceived, not born. A time of promise that the Temple of God and man will be cleansed. Jews light a Menorah, in which the center candle is called the servant candle, but it is higher than all the others and is used to light the rest – what a picture of Christ the Messiah. Oh, well, Merry Christmas – NOT! In John 10:22, "*Now it was the Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem, and it was winter*". Jesus is in the Temple celebrating the true meaning of the holiday. John 8:12: "*I am the Light of the World. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.*"

Nine months later, in September, (from Rosh Hashanah to Feast of Tabernacles) they arrived in a crowded Bethlehem to give birth as Micah 5:2 said. Eighteen months or so later, the

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wise men came to a house and found the small Child (Matthew 2). P.S. They missed the manger scene by many moons.

******So much of Christianese concerning Christmas is based on myths and pagan traditions, and is not historically accurate.***

Christians worship in March the holiday of Easter, spring, and the vernal equinox. Easter is another name for Eastre or Eostre - the name of a Germanic fertility goddess worshiped at the spring equinox. In Latin and Greek it means “dawn”, therefore facing east at sunrise. Legend has it that she fell from the sun down to the earth in an egg, and when she crashed to the earth, out popped baby rabbits and chicks, (rabbits because they multiplied so fast).

Jesus is the Passover Lamb, therefore the holiday should be celebrated as Passover, not Easter. Passover is in close proximity with the pagan celebration of the vernal equinox, and Christians have adopted the pagan holiday of Easter. So Easter and Christmas have nothing to do with the Bible or the Lord; very, very interesting.

The book of Samuel talks about Dagon, the chief god of the Philistines, half man and half fish. They bring the Ark of the Covenant into his temple, and it says that Dagon’s head is cut off, but actual reading of the Scripture says that Dagon’s head was cut off and only the fishy part was left. (That is in 1 Samuel 5:1, where it says the only thing left was the stump, but it really means the only thing left was the fishy part). Fish were offered to Dagon as part of their traditional worship on the fish day, Friday. So another question is - where do the 40 days of Lent come from? Well, remember Tammuz, the illegitimate son of Nimrod? The story has it that on his 40th birthday he was gored by a wild pig and so they mourned for 40 days, and then on the celebration of Eastre they sacrificed the wild boar and ate ham at the end of the mourning for Tammuz. It’s also interesting to note that the traditional meal on Easter is ham, which is a total insult to the God Jehovah of the Bible, who calls pigs unclean. The Jewish Temple was defiled by Antiochus Epiphanes (175-163 B.C.) who sacrificed a pig on the Temple altar. The Jews revolted and later cleansed and rededicated the Temple. In AD

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300, when Constantine rises to power, he says he's going to allow the Christians to worship Christ, but he also allowed the perversion and the inclusion of all these customs and traditions that were not based on Christianity. Christians opposed to these pagan substitutions were killed. They were considered not willing to be tolerant, inclusive and open to compromise and therefore they were destroyed, isolated or driven under ground.

O.K., you asked for it. Without sounding preachy, here are the basics: 10 Commandments from two sources, Exodus and Deuteronomy:

“You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself a carved image – any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate Me, but showing mercy to those who love Me and keep My commandments. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. In it you shall do no work. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it. Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you. You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor’s.” (Exodus 20:1-7).

“You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself a carved image – any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate Me, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who take His name in vain.

Observe the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, as the Lord your God commanded you. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it you shall do no work: therefore the Lord your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day. Honor your father and your mother, as the Lord your God has commanded you, that your days may be long, and that it may be well with you in the land which the Lord your God is giving you. You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife; and you shall not desire your neighbor's house, his field, his male servant, his female servant, his ox, his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's." (Deuteronomy 5:1-21.)

In summary, we need to remember that **traditions** and customs get so ingrained, that even if people are shown they are in error and that it displeases God, even the faithful will resist change. Persecution, violence, and being ostracized for bringing the Truth to people have always been the case. As we bring the Truth, each individual believer is responsible to bring change where possible. The Lord has made it clear in His Word that He will return to set things right. He will reign on the earth for 1,000 years, at which time He will establish the proper customs and adherence to the proper **traditions**. But it is interesting to note that Scripture says He will rule with an iron rod during the millennial reign (after the Rapture and before final judgment). This obviously points to the fact that even when Christ is on the earth and the devil is bound in hell, (Revelation 19), the flesh of people will still be rebelling and resisting change, even when faced with the King of Glory Himself. So what should we do in the meantime?

Deut. 31 says that when you come into the land, you are not even to inquire about the **traditions** of the other gods, not even to speak the names of these other gods. It's interesting that all the days of the week and the months are named after Greek and Roman gods, forcing us, if we're living in the modern world, to defy God's Law just by speaking the days of the week and the months of the year. Also in Genesis 1:14 it says that a keeping

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of the seasons is with the sun, moon and stars. The word seasons (Mowadah) means convocations, festivals, holidays, and celebrations, which would mean keeping of the Sabbath and the feast days. The early Christian church kept all the Jewish ***holidays*** while worshiping the Jewish Messiah. The present day Christian church keeps none, so we have a problem. Christianese should contain many more Hebrew terms and words. I believe we will all speak Hebrew in the millennial reign.

It seems evident to me that what we must do is tell the Truth in as loving and kind a manner as possible. The devil has been extremely successful in perverting the feasts of God, substituting pagan ritual; and diversion has successfully taken us away from what God had originally intended. We read Genesis and Exodus and we declare “How could the Jews have made those mistakes, and worshiped the golden calf?” But in reality, we have lined up with them and are bowing our knee to the same foolishness, even in these last days. We sacrifice our babies to the god of convenience and self, we mutilate our bodies with tattoos, mouth jewelry and nose rings, just as the ancients did. We still honor the gods of lust, homosexuality and perversion, and bring strange fire into the temple, in the form of drug use; the smell of alcohol is upon the breath of the worshipers, just as Phinehas and Hophni of the Old Testament. We bring idols into our homes, our sanctuaries, into our cars, and justify them in direct contradiction to the Word of God.

Now that we’ve attacked everyone’s favorite pagan pastime, let’s figure out a few things. Only the Jewish festivals will be celebrated when Jesus returns. Paganism has entered the church to draw us away from Jewishness and the real meaning of the festivals. The ***Seven Feasts*** are fulfilled in Jesus, and tell the history of God’s relationship with man.

These are all:

1. Sabbath
2. Passover
3. Unleavened bread
4. Pentecost
5. Rosh Hashanah (Feast of Trumpets)

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6. Yom Kippur (Atonement)
7. Feast of Tabernacles (Succoth, tents)

Traditions run so deep that even after reading this and seeing the truth of it, you'll still probably find a way to dance away from the truth. Christianese generally refers to the pagan rituals in a favorable light, as if our pleasure has somehow altered God's disgust with the abominations of old.

Witches, wiccan, mediums, palm readers, astrologers, and the like are, by definition, violators of God's law. These people practice ***dark arts*** and study lies that lead people away from the true God. There are no good witches or good magic. Harry Potter is an introductory course that leads us the wrong way. J.R.R. Tolkien in *Lord Of The Rings* makes it very clear we cannot wield the powers of satan without being destroyed.

******Somehow we applaud the wolf for having
disguised himself so well.***

I only hope I have helped change the sound of these words for you: ***Christmas, Easter, Lent***, Sunday, Halloween, witches, wiccan.

Tolerance

This word is the modern day minefield for the Christian.

******This is the cross many well-meaning believers
will die upon...tolerance.***

The world will use this to persecute and label people of Faith. The world is redefining this term. At one point, it meant "to put up with, to allow to exist". This meaning has given way to a new meaning, "to embrace, to promote as acceptable, to even defend". Those that oppose what the majority choose to tolerate (new definition) are then labeled "intolerant," "narrow minded," "ignorant," "bigoted," and are refused the civility that accompanies reasonable dialogue. Since majority society has embraced majority rule and rejected Biblical morality, pressure is brought to bear upon those who raise an opposing standard.

The Biblical standard has resisted change, along with

rejecting the concept of evolution - scientific or social. Our founding fathers had a worldview equal to that of present day Bible fundamentalists. But now the very documents they drafted are used to destroy the moral principles they sought to live by. The ACLU and humanist educators have removed the Bible and the Ten Commandments from society at large, freeing the way for an amoral society to take center stage. Nearly everything bad is up and good is down (divorce, sexually transmitted disease, school drop outs, juvenile crime, AIDS, etc.). Social culture has even turned the word “bad” into something good as in saying “I’m bad”, but meaning “I’m good”. There are small glimpses of possible reversals: juvenile smokers are down, abortion rates are down as of 2002-2003. So we must not give up.

Social evolution has moved to stretching or abolishing moral controls. In order to hold control, it has been necessary to judge the message by the messenger, rather than the merits of the message. Name-calling is used to curtail dialogue and debate. The rebellion of the 60’s and 70’s was based upon a desire for unbridled freedom without consideration of consequences. Years later, we know the consequences, but still cling to the mottos of flawed reasoning. “Do your own thing”, “free love”, “live and let live”, “embrace diversity”, “love the one you’re with”, “it’s your thing, do what you wanna do”. Anyone who called for restraint was labeled “uncool”, self-righteous, bigoted, homophobic, puritanical, etc. The label that is most deadly today is, “intolerant”, which signifies all of the above. These labels are used to silence the opposition through guilt and embarrassment. Speaking Christianese can get you identified as a Christian, but also labeled as a “closed-minded, ignorant, backward, intolerant fanatic”.

The Christian uses the term “tolerant” to mean that some things we cannot stop, or even change, but when possible they must be restrained. Any sin that God calls an abomination is not to be quietly tolerated. The tactics of the world have been partly successful in silencing the Christian body. Some years ago Hollywood made a movie with Anthony Quinn as Mohammed. The Muslim outcry was so swift and loud that the movie never

was released to theatres. During this same time, a blasphemous film of Jesus was made and released with little opposition. In it, Jesus was shown as not knowing His mission and involved in a questionable relationship with one of the Marys. The Muslims' intolerance served to preserve the respect for their prophet, while the Christians folded in the name of "freedom of expression". Should a non-believer be able to openly express a lie about a historical figure without even posting a disclaimer? Billy Graham has stated in a tract on the "sin of tolerance" that tolerance, in a sense, implies the compromise of one's convictions, a yielding of ground upon important issues. Hence, over-tolerance in moral issues has made us soft, flabby and devoid of conviction. He goes on to point out how intolerant Jesus was of sin, selfishness and hypocrisy. Also, as exacting as science is in nature, mathematics and physics, God is as exacting in morality and righteousness.

I agree with Billy Graham that our excesses in tolerance have led to compromises that have done incalculable damage.

******To the world "tolerance" has become "anything goes", but to believers we must add "only if God says so".***

End of Days - Claims, Facts and Future

In these last days, some claim that: the actual location of the crossing of the Red Sea by the children of Israel has been discovered; the chariots and war tools of the Egyptians have been found strewn across the bottom of the sea; Noah's Ark has been sighted at the top of Mt. Ararat; the altar of the golden calf has been found at the foot of the true Mt. Sinai; the ashes and location of the true Sodom and Gomorrah have been unearthed and identified; stone carvings have been translated that prove the historical record of David, king of the Israelites; the Dead Sea Scrolls have proven that the Old Testament has been preserved and kept intact for 2,000 years; the sarcophagus of the high priest Caiaphas, who tried Jesus Christ, has been unearthed; as well as the burial tombs of Christians in Bethany from the early church

including Simon of Cyrene's son, Alexander, and Mary, Martha, and Lazarus' tombs. The possible burial ossuary of the Apostle James, brother of Jesus, is believed to have been found. These boxes were used to store the bones of dead relatives. The inscription on this box reads – "James the Son of Joseph the Brother of Jesus," very interesting – huh! Supernatural Bible codes have been discovered in the text of the Bible; DNA and gene studies have shown there is but one race, the human race, with but one mother, from the beginning. Biological evidences seem to substantiate that all life and all organisms are too complicated to have occurred by chance, therefore dispelling evolution as science, and so much more has been revealed, yet many take the Word and the commands of God as if they were suggestions. *The mark of the beast* and the *New World Order* are here. These two important end time signs are found in Revelation 13. People would be identified by number codes that would be in or on their skin. Today injected micro-computer chips fit the Bible description. Also, we see the formation of multinational armies and UN peacekeepers as a foreshadowing of a one world government. We now have a World Bank, World Court, World Health Organization, etc., etc. Soon the New World Order will be in place, antichrist and all.

*****Israel is causing the world to tremble and wars are everywhere affecting everyone.** (Revelation 13, Zechariah 12:2 and Matthew 24)

Things may seem somewhat bleak at this time, but this is not the view or the language of Christianese. A strange part of the Faith is that as things get worse, Christians feel better about the world. You see, Jesus and the prophets foretold what would and must happen. As worldview becomes more secular and the deceptions get worse, it means we are getting closer to Christ's return. The world is turning out just as prophesied and planned, so we rejoice, give praise and have an expectancy that is ultimately hopeful and joyful. We are going somewhere (Heaven) and feel the End of Days is upon us. Earth is not our final destination, but it is an important stop along the way. We are sad that so many do and will have to suffer, yet we see a

bright light at the end of the tunnel, that others refuse to acknowledge. If “God so loved the world” (John 3:16), can we do any less than to pray for the world and warn people of the Biblical outcome? The End Times prayer the Body of Christ has been praying is found in 2Chronicles 7:14: *“If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.”* This healing may be a return to some level of morality and “old fashion religion”. The reality is that “ol time religion” and the revivals of yesteryear failed, so I feel the only real revival and healing will be when the antichrist makes his move and the Messiah returns.

If you have read this little book, you now know enough Christianese to ask Jesus into your heart. In spite of all the human confusion and contradictory theologies, Jesus is still Lord and He wants to have a relationship with you as your ***“Personal Savior”***. This term is confusing but very popular. The “me” generation has birthed a phrase that gives a wrong impression. Jesus is not your ‘lil Savior only for yourself, but is a reigning “King”, Creator God”, etc. the need to belong and connect and have a user friendly God is probably what sustains this Christianese term. It is true that God is not aloof, distant or disinterested in His children. He’s not far off but at hand – and can be reached whenever called upon as a loving parent. But it’s not true that “personal Savior” means your own ‘lil God which makes you more than you are and Jesus less than He is! The Holy Spirit will lead you into the Truth and all you have to do is ask. The final Christianese term is ***Sinner’s prayer***. Well, there is no specific ‘sinner’s prayer’ prayer, but a custom has emerged. It combines a few Scriptures, but is not spelled out verbatim in the Word. John 3:16 *“God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”* Romans 10:9 & 10: *“That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the*

mouth confession is made unto salvation.” And Romans 10:13: *“For whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”* Then Christians have added, *“Repent; ask God to forgive you your sins and invite Jesus into your heart.”* Amen. Don't get hung up on the repentance stuff – Jesus will take you sin and all!! He is a wash-all, sin-removing, renovating Master that will never leave or forsake you. He'll lead you to a church that teaches His Gospel. Find good fellowship based on the accuracy of love and the Word. Oh, ignore the “Free Gift” message. God by His mercy has bestowed upon us His forgiveness; we must pay by fighting against the flesh, canceling doubt and unbelief. We must reject the conflicting traditions of men and die to self. If required or called upon we must be prepared to die for the cause – free gift? No, the gift of salvation was FREELY GIVEN by the Lord. His mercy (kindness) made possible our endowment and empowerment (grace). We accept by Faith His favor, believe in His Work and Person, therefore embracing salvation then and now!!! If we pay the price by accepting, then Christ has great rewards; He paid the price, but it's going to cost you everything.

That done with, sincerity is all it takes and that's all the Christianese you'll ever need. And an Amen goes right there!!

If you have read this book let me congratulate you. I pray you are now a student of the Anointed One, full of grace, Blood washed, fired up, rapture ready, latter rain redeemed, Blood bought, Zoë child.

Yours in Christ,

Donald E. Moore

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