THE

BAPTIST PERSPECTIVE

BY

JIMMY K. BARBER

171 PODCASTS

2025

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Why This Podcast?

First, I want to make it clear as to what it is not. It is not to replace worshiping in the house of the Lord. There is no substitute for believers attending the congregation of the Lord and worshiping with the saints. Congregational worship is the highest and greatest form of worship and obedience that one can do in this life. Equally, this podcast is not to replace listening to sermons. The preaching of the gospel is ordained of the Lord for the purpose of feeding, encouraging, admonishing, and supplying the saints those things needful as they travel here below. Obviously, this podcast is not

for background noise. Many people go around with their listening devises just to have some background noise because, sadly, this modern generation hardly knows how to think and they believe they need something to stimulate or to entertain them. Hopefully, each podcast will provide the listener with suitable content to stimulate him and challenge him with material to provide further consideration and study.
Second, the question may be raised that since we already have so much coming at us from all sides, why throw in another "voice" and add to the confusion? Indeed, this is a valid question. It is one that I seriously considered. However, it has been said that while one may not be proclaiming anything new, it is likely that he has an audience unique to his particular realm or area of influence. Therefore, while we are not providing anything new, it is our hope that this ministry will provide valuable information to the audience.

It is hoped that this podcast may provide many uses. Let me try to explain.

Our society is often busy and we do not always have time to devote to a full sermon or to read a lengthy article or book on a particular subject. Hopefully, this podcast will provide short messages (generally 10 to 15 minutes in length) that will stimulate and provoke the audience so that they will be challenged and enlightened in their Christian growth.

The purpose of this podcast is not to blend in with the plethora of material being published today under the umbrella of "Christianity." The messages will be primarily limited to teaching, supporting, and, if necessary, defending Baptist beliefs. While I am denominated as a Primitive Baptist, my goal is not to teach or defend Primitive Baptistism. My primary goal is to teach what I believe the Scriptures teach. Naturally, I believe Baptist theology and practice more closely aligns with what the Scriptures teach than that of other denominations.

I make no excuse for the classification of denominations. Some reject this and maintain all denominations are evil and, therefore, profess to be non-denominational or no denomination. The problem with that is that non-denominational is a denomination. The meaning of denomination is that it is "the act of naming"; "a name or appellation ... used to express a thing or a quality"; or "a class, society or collection of individuals, called by the same name, as a denomination of christians." *Dictionary of American English* by Noah Webster's 1828 edition. Therefore, everyone or any group is denominated or classified as something.

Ecumenicalism and unity is proclaimed essentially by the majority of the Christian world. Often it is further announced that Christians and the world are to dialogue so that they can determine how much each will compromise their principles so that all may be united as one. This so-called unity was condemned by God at Babel.

Gen. 11:1-9: And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. [2]And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. [3]And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them throughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for morter. [4]And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top *may reach* unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. [5]And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. [6]And the LORD said, Behold, the people *is* one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. [7]Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. [8]So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. 9Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.

Paul also established this truth when he delivered his address at Mars' Hill.

Acts 17:24-26: God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; [25]Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; [26]And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation.

While God did not establish the world for class warfare and tyrannical domination, neither did He ordain one-worldism whereby there is not to be distinction and individual races or ethnic classes. There can be and ought to be unity in diversity. But while this podcast is teaching Baptist ideology, it is not our desire or intention to belittle or propagate a hatred spirit where we differ or oppose another belief. The objection is for the purpose of strengthening and clarifying where Baptist differs from others and not to degrade or demean those who have differing views.

Hopefully, such a podcast as this will provide the audience with truths and concepts that will aid in strengthening and encouraging Baptists in their beliefs.

Why Are There Differences?

(Today's message shows the causes of doctrinal differences and a brief description of the major theological positions. It concludes by showing that according to the Scriptures there are only two ways of salvation—grace or works.)

Previously, we noticed that while there are differences in the world and that if someone upholds and defends one idea from another it does not necessarily mean he is belligerent, mean-spirited, or hateful. We further stated that our purpose is to teach and build up our faith from a Baptist perspective. The question then may be asked, "Why are there differences among people who profess to be Christian? If we all have the same Bible as our rule of faith and practice why is it that all do not believe alike?" These are valid questions. I believe this can be summarized from quoting from J. P. Boyce's *Abstract of Systematic Theology* (p. 6) regarding as to the causes of doctrinal variations and why the study of theology will never be "reduced to an exact science." He stated the following:

> The causes of doctrinal variation will therefore be apparent.
>
> If men came to the study of Biblical Theology with minds entirely unprejudiced, capable of examining its truths with the same mental powers, and with the same amount of study, all would agree as to its facts and doctrines. But this cannot be done. Mental capacities vary. All men have their prejudices. All have not equal time for study, and all use not equally the time that they have. Thus variety is certain even in studying Biblical Theology.
>
> The same causes increase this in Christian Dogmatics, because here the human element enters more largely than in Biblical Theology; while reverence for antiquity, opposition to change, and the influence of the learned of the past and the present, prevent the alteration of Ecclesiastical creeds which embody Ecclesiastical Dogmatics, and thus lead men constantly to continuance in error, and refusal to accept truth.

In addition to what Boyce stated, when we come to ideas, opinions, and practices of men, we all draw the line somewhere. This is true in areas outside of religion. This is why there are differences in types of education (public, private, home), financial intuitions (checking/savings, credit unions, 401k's, IRA's), businesses (restaurants, groceries, furniture, appliances), politics (which should be obvious at this point), and many other areas. In other words, we all draw the line somewhere. With regard to religion, particularly the Christian religion, there is a standard to which the believer is commanded to bow—the Holy Scriptures, the Bible. This is the standard to which we desire to reference in maintaining the beliefs of Baptists.

While there are many different views of salvation and its associated doctrines and practices among Christians, fundamentally they all fall into one of three buckets: by works, by grace and works, by grace alone. Today theologically they may be classified as Pelagianism, Arminianism, or Calvinism. Using these three different classifications, historically Baptists mainly fall into the class of Calvinism.

(Technically, Baptists are not Calvinists in the fullest sense of the word. We hope to enlarge on this more later.) Historically Baptists were mainly in the Calvinist class, especially in America.

Allow me at this point to enlarge somewhat on the three theological camps mentioned above.

To provide a brief description of Pelagianism I will take from the definition as given in *Wikipedia*. "**Pelagianism** is the belief that original sin did not taint human nature and that mortal will is still capable of choosing good or evil without special divine aid. This theological theory is named after the British monk Pelagius (354-420 or 440), although he denied, at least at some point in his life, many of the doctrines associated with his name. Pelagius was identified as an Irishman by ... Jerome. Pelagius taught that the human will, as created with its abilities by God, was sufficient to live a sinless life, although he believed that God's grace assisted every good work. Pelagianism has come to be identified with the view (whether taught by Pelagius or not) that human beings can earn salvation by their own efforts." This brief definition is very simplistic but it gives a general overview of what is commonly meant by Pelagianism. Therefore, the idea of salvation by works is commonly classified as Pelagianism. (I will add that much of what is commonly believed by those classified as being Arminian comes under the theology of Pelagianism and is called Semipelagianism, but time does not allow me to enlarged on this.)

Again, to borrow from Wikipedia, **Arminianism** is based on theological ideas of the Dutch Reformed theologian Jacobus Arminius (1560-1609) and his historic supporters known as Remonstrants. ... Jacobus Arminius (Jakob Harmenszoon) was a student of Theodore Beza (Calvin's successor) at the Theological University of Geneva.

Dutch Arminianism was originally articulated in the Remonstrance (1610), a theological statement signed by 45 ministers and submitted to the States General of the Netherlands. The Synod of Dort (161819) was called by the States General to consider the Five Articles of Remonstrance. These articles asserted that

1. Salvation (and condemnation on the day of judgment) was conditioned by the graciously-enabled faith (or unbelief) of man;
2. The Atonement is qualitatively adequate for all men, "yet that no one actually enjoys [experiences] this forgiveness of sins, except the believer ..." and thus is limited to only those who trust in Christ;
3. "That man has not saving grace of himself, nor of the energy of his free will," and unaided by the Holy Spirit, no person is able to respond to God's will;

4. The (Christian) Grace "of God is the beginning, continuance, and accomplishment of any good," yet man may resist the Holy Spirit; and
5. Believers are able to resist sin through Grace, and Christ will keep them from falling; but whether they are beyond the possibility of ultimately forsaking God or ""becoming devoid of grace ... must be more particularly determined from the Scriptures."

As you can see, this semipelagian system with a mixture of works and grace.

Calvinism is essentially the "system that makes the sovereign pleasure of God the ground of His saving purpose." *A Systematic Study of Bible Doctrine,* by T. P. Simmons, p. 191. Therefore, salvation by grace alone.

Again I remind you that these are broad views that cover many different ideas and opinions concerning the theology and salvation of man. In reality, the Scriptures teach us that there are only two views or ways that man is saved—by works or by grace—Rom. 11:6, "And if by grace, then *is it* no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if *it be* of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work."

As you can see from what is presented here today, one of the major foundational principles to be remembered in studying the Holy Scriptures of God and the salvation of man along with all related doctrines is that it is either of works or grace. Since God plainly said that we are saved by grace and not works, then anything that contradicts this grace is not of God. See Eph. 2:8-9. Therefore, man is only accepted by God by grace.

Differences Narrowed

(The generally accepted view within Christendom is that every Christian is either a Catholic or Protestant. But historical Baptists believe this is not the case. This podcast shows that the historical Baptist position is that they are not Protestants.)

In our last study we noted that in a broad and general way we categorized theological differences among Christians under three heads: by works, by grace and works, by grace alone. We further identified these systems theologically as Pelagianism, Arminianism, and Calvinism. We concluded by saying scripturally there are only two basic theological systems—grace or works—Rom. 11:6, "And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work." We also stated in our previous podcast that Baptists who maintain the theological position of grace alone technically

are not Calvinist nor are they to be classified as reformers or Protestants in the true sense of the word.

Sadly, today, the majority of people have the idea that under the Christian systems that one is either Catholic or Protestant. This is not the case. Protestants are those who distanced themselves from the catholics (mainly Roman Catholics) during the protestant reformation in the sixteenth century. Historically, Baptists do not believe they came into existence during the protestant reformation nor did they come into being after the reformation. Notice the following from the 1926 Bureau of Census for the United States Department of Commerce: “It is a distinct principle with Baptists that they acknowledge no human founder, recognize no human authority, and subscribe to no human creed. For all these things, Baptists of every name and order go back to the New Testament. And while no competent Baptist historian assumes to be able to trace a succession of Baptist churches through the ages, most of them are of one accord in believing that, if we could secure the records, there would be found heroic groups of believers in every age who upheld with their testimonies and, in many cases, with their lives, the great outstanding and distinctive principles of the Baptist churches of to-day” [sic.].

While we may expect the general population not to know the truth about this, it is sad that today many (if not most) who profess to be Baptist do not know the truth regarding their origin. More disturbing is that many who profess to be Baptist claim to be reformed and have adopted the name and some principles of the reformers that are in conflict with historic Baptist beliefs. Let us be clear at this point. Because a belief or practice is historic does not necessarily make it right. However, if a doctrine or practice aligns with or does not violate the Scriptures then it should be followed. May we never lose sight of the fact that the final authority is the Word of God.

Allow me to enlarge on this somewhat. There are things about the Lord Supper that are believed by the reformers and Baptists that differ and we plan on addressing some of them in the future. However, there is at least one thing where there may be differences not only between the reformers and the Baptists but also between various congregations of each group. This is the question of how often should the Lord's Supper be observed. The Scriptures plainly declare in I Cor. 11:26, “For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.” Many discussions and writings have been done concerning how often should a congregation have the Lord's Supper. The Scriptures are silent about this. Historically, one group may follow the rule of each week, while another would practice each month, a different group may follow quarterly, and an additional group practice it annually. While arguments may be made for each position, the Scriptures declare simply “for as often as ye eat.” History may prove a group practicing one thing and a more

modern group practice something different. In such cases, the history of the one group does not invalidate the practice of the more modern position, nor does the modern group negate the historical practice. The answer to this question is not the historical position of any group. Congregational unity is to be sought out and practiced and agreed on without violating the conscious of any is the answer to this question.

While the Lord used the protestant reformation in a grand and majestic way, we must bear in mind that there were people outside of Catholicism defending and proclaiming the gospel all the way back to the time of Christ and the apostles. Also, off and on, there were people inside Catholicism that sought to reform some of her practices and beliefs. (Allow me to point out here that Catholicism as is identified today does not go back to Christ and the apostles. However, our purpose is not to identify or study catholic beliefs. Let us also keep in mind that many heresies [if not all] in one way or another can be found in the days of Christ and the apostles.)

As previously stated, Baptists are not Protestants and while historically we share some major theological beliefs, there are major differences that many today do not understand. While this is true, my purpose in these podcasts is not to battle against the Protestants or reformers or any other group. In many ways I admire many of them. Nevertheless, there will be times when I am setting forth various doctrines when I will endeavor to point out where and why we differ from those who hold to an opposite view. It is hoped that I will be able to do this in such a way so that the truth is what is important and not the author.

I would like to quote J. H. Merle D'Aubigne from his book entitled *The Authority of God,* pp. 303305. He was addressing friends and students at the Theological College at Geneva, on October 2, 1850. I believe the quote captures the spirit of what I am saying. It is as follows:

> Yes, my brethren, you who are younger, make progress. We do not say to you, "Be simply such as we are;" we do not say, "Be such as the Reformers were, feature for feature;" although they were men of God of immense powers, and we should all be happy to have more of the riches of the Spirit that God had communicated to them. No, we do not say this. We say to you of the Bible, as the laborer to his children:
>
> > "Sell not your inheritance;
> > Within its bosom is a treasure: Onward ... be of good cheer, You shall find it, you shall gain your end. Turn well your field ..

Dig, rake, plough it;
Leave not a spot untouch'd
But turn it over again and again”

Yes, young brethren, do not be satisfied with receiving ready made, from the hands of others, what you yourselves ought to find in Scripture. You must search it; you must find it; you must apply it; you must assimilate yourselves unto it. He who seeks well, finds well. Go beyond us, dear friends, but in the study of Scripture; go beyond us, we conjure you, but in the knowledge of this Word of God, in its application to your heart and life,—in assurance of faith,—in the fidelity with which you endeavor to bring before Christian people, not your own thoughts, but the thoughts of God Himself, such as they are found in His oracles. For this end, work, but with great humility,—with great distrust of yourself. Work, remembering that you “wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against spiritual wickedness in high places,”—against the influence of evil systems and the spirit of the times,—against the seduction of the demons of pride and unbelief: “Withstand in the evil day, and having done all, stand.” May God grant this unto you.

It is with this spirit that I pray these studies are produced and that they will be used of the Lord to bless you to rise higher to honor and magnify the truth of the Scriptures.

The New vs the Old (1st)

(While there are many covenants given in the Scriptures, many of the differences between Baptists and Protestants are due to how the Old and New Testaments are viewed. The Protestants believe that the New Testament is an extension of the Old, while the Baptists maintain that it is not.)

In the previous broadcast we pointed out that though Baptists are not Protestants and while historically we share some major theological beliefs, there are major differences that many today do not understand. Before we discuss some of the individual issues, it would be good to give a broad overview as to why some of these differences occur. I want to remind the audience that our purpose at this time is not to do a detail study but only give a broad overview. I believe many of you may not have the time to delve into an in-depth study of all of the different theological pros and cons of every theological difference. Equally, too often ministers throw out theological terms and various biblical doctrines when the audience really does not understand what is being discussed. To illustrate this, allow me to relate a

conversation that I gave in my book *Justification: The Heart of the Gospel*.

> The doctrine of justification, a central truth in Christianity, has been the focus of many books and articles written from various viewpoints. An incident related to me by a Christian friend illustrates from everyday experience the need for a practical and understandable book on this crucial subject. During a break at work, my friend discussed with an associate the apparent differences between present day Christian writers and those of the past. The fellow worker asserted that modern writers and Christians possess greater spiritual insight into the Scriptures than did Christians in previous eras. To the amazement of his co-worker my friend disagreed pointing out that very few people presently had a satisfactory understanding of important Bible doctrines such as justification. The ruffled co-worker replied, "What's that?"

That particular co-worker was a professed "spirit filled, Bible believing Christian." I'm not suggesting that the listening audience falls into this bucket. I only use this to show that many times we take it for granted that those listening understand what we are saying and following our train of thought. Therefore, if some things I say are very elementary for some of you, I ask that you please be patient with me as I seek to be clear for those new to the faith or some who may be "babes in Christ," I Cor. 3:1; I Pet. 2:2.

This being said, I believe one overall foundational difference that separates the Baptists from the Protestants is how the covenant is viewed. At the expense of being too fundamental, I will try to explain the differences as simple as possible. The Protestants maintain that the New Testament/covenant is an extension or a continuation of the Old. This is commonly referred to as *covenant theology*. The Baptist position is that the New Testament is not an extension of the Old. Both positions maintain that the covenant of God is foundational to salvation and the purpose of God. Both agree in many ways regarding the covenant or covenants of God, but there are some fundamental differences which result in how some doctrines and practices are believed which separates the two groups.

(For some who may not be aware, allow me to digress here and explain something. When I speak of Protestants, you must understand the various denominations or groups to which I am referring. Those people who were members of the Roman Catholic, and others of like mindedness, that wanted to "reform" or change the Catholics back to New Testament Christianity were designated as "reformers" or "Protestants." Their original intent was not to start a new denomination. Over time, various branches of religion under this broad

understanding of the Scriptures came into being. Here are some of the names: Reformers or designated with some such nomenclature; protestants, because they protested against Rome; Church of England (Anglicans); Episcopalians; Presbyterians; Methodists; Pentecostals; and others who came of these denominations as well. Many people who are members of some of the denomination that came out of, or came out of those who came out of Catholicism, do not have any idea of their heritage. If they understood this, they would understand more as to why they believe what they do about the Lord's Supper, baptism, church polity, the relationship between the church and state, and other practices. As we continue our studies, hopefully, we will try to clarify as to why and how we differ regarding these things.)

With this in mind, let us enlarge somewhat concerning the differences between the views regarding the covenants. If we were going to do a detailed study of the covenants mentioned in the Scriptures it would be needful to study such as the following: the covenant of works given to Adam; the covenant given to Noah; the covenant given to Abraham (both regarding the land in Palestine and the covenant concerning Christ); the covenant given to Moses; the priestly covenant; the Davidic covenant; the new covenant. While studying all of these covenants and their interrelationship are indeed interesting and of great importance, for our purpose and the general audience of today we plan only to look at the distinction between the old and new covenant and why the new is not an extension of the old. To do this, I believe it is profitable to look at some passages in the book of Hebrews. But first allow me to give a simple overview of this book.

The writer of Hebrews was writing to Hebrews (Israelites) who were converted from the Old Testament worship and identified themselves with the New Testament worship. Because of this they were being persecuted for their faith and were considering going back under the Old Testament law worship. This book shows that Christ and the New Testament worship was superior to that of the Old Testament and that what we now have is better. In other words, Christ is superior to:

1) the prophets, Heb. 1:1-3;
2) the angels, Heb. 1:4-2:18;
3) Moses, Heb. 3:1-19;
4) Joshua, Heb. 4:1-13;
5) Aaron (priests/priesthood); Heb. 4:14-7:18;
6) Ritualism, Heb. 7:19-10:39.

Also, a study of the word better from the follow verses and their context should be done in conjunction to the outline given above:

1:4: Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained

a more excellent name than they.

6:9: But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.

7:7, And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better.

7:19, For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God.

7:22; By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament.

8:6; But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.

9:23; It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.

10:34; For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance.

11:16, But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.

11:35, Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection:

11:40; God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

12:24: And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

I regret that our time has run out today. The Lord willing, we will continue showing that the New Testament/covenant is superior and better than that of the Old and that the New is not an extension of the Old.

The New vs the Old (2nd)

(Though the Protestants believe the New Testament is an extension of the Old, a study of the book of Hebrews clearly shows that otherwise. Scriptures speaks plainly of a "first" and "second" covenant. The Scriptures equally sets forth an "old" and "new" covenant, and that the "second" covenant is established on "better promises" and does not "vanish away" as the "old.")

In our last podcast we began discussing the subject of the covenant regarding some differences between reformed theology and Baptist theology. We showed the distinction between the Old and New Testaments as found in the book of Hebrews. We saw that the New Testament economy is better than that of the Old and that the covenant of the New is superior to that of the Old. In short, there are two distinct covenants and the New Testament is not like that of the Old Testament. Hebrews 8:7-9 says, "For if that first *covenant* had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord." Notice that the Scriptures declare here of a "first" and "second" covenant. Then it speaks of a "new" covenant that is "not according to the" "first covenant." In other words, there are two distinct covenants. The reformers, however, maintain that this "second" covenant is somehow an extension of the "first" covenant.

John Calvin, when writing against "some madmen of the sect of the Anabaptists," in Book II, Chapter X of his *Institutes of the Christian Religion* gave the following:

> "Let us guard pious minds against this pestilential error, while we at the same time remove all the difficulties which are wont to start up when mention is made of the difference between the Old and the New Testaments. By the way also, let us consider what resemblance and what difference there is between the covenant which the Lord made with the Israelites before the advent of Christ, and that which he has made with us, now that Christ is manifested.
>
> "2. It is possible, indeed, to explain both in one word. The covenant made with all the fathers in so far differing from ours in reality and substance, that it is altogether one and the same: still the administration differs." (Vol. 1, pp. 369-370 of mine.)

Calvin also alludes to this commenting on Hebrews 8:7, "Though the crime of

violating the covenant was justly imputed to the people, who had through their own perfidy departed from God, yet the weakness of the covenant is also pointed out, because it was not written in their hearts. Then, to render it perfect and valid, God declares that it needed an amendment."

Allow me to say at this point that Calvin does have many good things to say about the similarities and differences between the Old and the New Testaments. Calvin was a brilliant man and much can be gained from reading him, but it must be remembered that his views (as with all the reformers) concerning baptism, the Lord's Supper, church doctrine, the relationship between the church and civil government, and many other things are influenced by his understanding of the covenant. As we can see in the book of Hebrews regarding the covenants, there are the "old" and "new," the "first" and the "second." Equally, Hebrews 8:6 says that Christ "is the mediator of a better covenant." Note, a "better covenant" "established upon better promises." The Scriptures did not say or indicate that they were one and the same or that the New is an extension of the Old.

Regarding Hebrews 8:6 and 7, note the following excerpts from the Baptist John Gill:

> ... the covenant of grace, as administered under the Gospel dispensation; which is not only better than the covenant of works, that being conditional, this absolute; that stood on the foot of works, this on the foot of grace, and is established in Christ; that being broken and made void, this continues; and not only better than the covenant of the Levitical priesthood, which was but a typical one, and is now ceased, but also than the covenant of grace, as administered under the legal dispensation; The covenant of grace unveiled in the Gospel dispensation, called the better testament, the better covenant, and the new covenant; in order to, introduce which, the first was removed, that this might succeed it; just as because there was no perfection by the Levitical priesthood, it became necessary that another priest should arise, of another order."

Noticed that Gill asserted that the first covenant was "made void and is now ceased," and that "the first was removed." In other words, he did not indicate that the second covenant was an extension of the first. And when commenting on the new covenant in verse eight he says, "but it is so called in distinction from the former administration of it, which is waxen old, and vanished away; and with respect to the order of succession, it taking place upon the former being removed; and on account of the time of its more clear revelation and establishment being in the last days; and because of its mode of administration, which is different from the former, in a new

way, and by the use of new ordinances; and because it is always new, its vigour and efficacy are perpetual; it will never be antiquated, or give place to another; and it provides for, and promises new things, a new heart, a new spirit, etc. to which may be added, that it is a famous, excellent covenant, there is none like it." Notice that he stated that the former covenant waxed old and "vanished away," and that the second "is different from the former, in a new way, and by the use of new ordinances."

Allow me to pause here for just a moment and draw your attention to the phrase of Gill—"by the use of new ordinances." This is important in that New Testament baptism is not an extension of Old Testament circumcision and the Lord's Supper is not an extension of the Old Testament Passover. We will discuss these doctrines more in the future, but I wanted to introduce to the listener this foundational principle for consideration at this time.

Again, I say that much, much more could be said regarding this topic. Equally, many books have been written in defense of each position. It is not our purpose (at least not at this time) to provide an in-depth study of this subject, but to give broad guidelines of the differences. I trust this is helpful to the audience who may not have thought of these things before.

The New vs the Old (3rd)

(In our discussion today, we begin to see some of the basic doctrines that are different due to the views of the Old and New Covenants. Many of these differences are very fundamental to the overall interpretation of the Scriptures concerning these doctrines.)

Since there is a fundamental difference between the Baptists and the reformers regarding the covenant, what doctrines are involved due to this difference? Some of the basics subjects are the family, baptism, the Lord's Supper, ecclesiology (doctrine of the church), and the relationship of civil government to the church. Naturally, some of these topics are interrelated and involved other subjects in secondary ways. For example, liberty of conscience is affected by more than one of the doctrines listed above.

With the belief that the New Testament is an extension of the Old, it was maintained by the reformers that the New was linked and related to the Old by the rite of circumcision. In attempt to answer objections to infant baptism, Calvin gives the following:

> In order to gain a stronger footing here, they (objectors of infant baptism—JKB) add, that baptism is a sacrament of penitence and faith, and as neither of

these is applicable to tender infancy, we must beware of rendering its meaning empty and vain, by admitting infants to the communion of baptism. But these darts are directed more against God then against us; since the fact that circumcision was a sign of repentance is completely established by many passages of Scripture (Jer. iv. 4). Thus Paul terms it a seal of the righteousness of faith (Rom. iv. 11). Let God, then, be demanded why he ordered circumcision to be performed on the bodies of infants? For baptism and circumcision being here in the same case, they cannot give anything to the latter without conceding it to the former. If they recur to their usual evasion, that, by the age of infancy, spiritual infants were then figured, we have already closed this means of escape against them. We say, then, that since God imparted circumcision, the sign of repentance and faith, to infants, it should not seem absurd that they are now made partakers of baptism, unless men choose to clamour against an institution of God. *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Vol. 2, Book IV, Chapter XVI, para., 20 (pp. 542-543 in my set).

Jeremiah 4:4, Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and take away the foreskin of your heart, ye men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem: lest my fury come forth like fire, and burn that none can quench it, because of the evil of your doings.

Romans 4:11, And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that the righteousness might be imputed unto them also:

There are several things in this quote that needs to be addressed later. However, I will briefly mention some now. One is the subject of sacrament. The reformers insist in calling baptism and the Lord's Supper (and also other things, at times) sacraments. Baptists simply maintain that they are ordinances (rules, laws, regulations) given by God for believers and they are not some mysterious means of grace to benefit those who participate in them. Second, the Scriptures speak of repentance, but not of penitence. Third, the Scriptures do not affirm that "circumcision was a sign of repentance." Romans 4:11 tells us that circumcision was a "seal of the righteousness of the faith which he (Abraham) had" in uncircumcision. It was never stated as such to anyone else as assumed by Calvin and the reformers. Fourth, Calvin spoke of God demanding "circumcision to be performed on the bodies of infants." This, too, is misleading. God only demanded circumcision to be performed on males. Females were never included in the rite of circumcision in the

Scriptures. In any case, I only gave this quote to show that the reformers link or connect circumcision and baptism. Remember that in the passage quoted, Calvin said, “For baptism and circumcision being here in the same case, they cannot give anything to the latter without conceding it to the former.” Calvin was making the connection with his reference to Romans 4:11.

This connection is why the reformers maintain that children of believing parents are in the covenant and/or kingdom and thereby come under the umbrella of the church. Under the subheading of “Baptism as a Duty,” Charles Hodge said the following in his *Systematic Theology*, Vol. 3, pp 587,588:

> Membership in the visible Church is not only a great honour, it a great advantage. ... Every one admits that it is a blessing to be born in a Christian, instead of in a heathen land. It is no less obviously true that it is a blessing to be within the pale of the Church and not cast out into the world. It is good to have the vows of God upon us. It is good to be under the watch and care of the people of God. It is good to have a special claim upon their prayers and upon their efforts to bring us into, or keep us in the paths of salvation. And above all, it is good to be of the number of those to whom God has made a special promise of grace and salvation. For the promise is unto us and to our children. It is a great evil to be ‘”aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise.” They, therefore, sin against God and their own souls who neglect the command to be baptized in the name of the Lord; and those parents sin grievously against the souls of their children who neglect to consecrate them to God in the ordinance of baptism. Do let the little ones have their names written in the Lamb's book of life, even if they afterwards choose to erase them. Being thus enrolled may be the means of their salvation.

The Scriptures are clear in showing that baptism is not a mystery of some means of grace. I Peter 3:21 says, “The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also save us (not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:” This plainly states that baptism is a figure (i.e., it is a picture or a type). Just like the ark in which Noah and his family were delivered from the flood was a picture or figure of how we are saved by the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, so is baptism a picture of the same thing. Therefore, when Jesus was baptized by John and He said, “for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness,” it was being done in a picture (figure or type).

Remember, Charles Hodge also believed “the five points of Calvinism.” However, what one believes regarding one doctrine greatly influences his beliefs in

all other doctrines. Therefore, it is important that we believe the truth of the Scriptures to avoid contradictions in our overall theology. Equally, this shows the importance of knowing the difference between what Baptist believe from that of the reformers. Yes, there are many similarities between Baptists and reformers, but there are some fundamental differences which separate the two groups. The Lord willing, we will discuss some of these in more detail as we go forward.

Ordinance or Sacrament

(This podcast shows the difference between an ordinance and a sacrament. The reformers believe that the sacraments are means of grace and a mystery of revealing the Lord to those who participate in them. Conversely, the Baptists maintain they are ordinances given by the Lord to be performed by believers for His honor and glory.)

In our last podcast we noted that the reformers maintain that baptism and the Lord's Supper are sacraments but Baptists simply believe they are ordinances given by the Lord to the congregation for His honor and glory. In order to try to get a better understanding of what a sacrament is we will quote John Calvin from his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book IV, Chapter 14, pp. 491-492.

1. Akin to the preaching of the gospel, we have another help to our faith in the sacraments, in regard to which, it greatly concerns us that some sure doctrine should be delivered, informing us both of the end for which they were instituted, and of their present use. First, we must attend to what a sacrament is. It seems to me, then, a simple and appropriate definition to say, that it is an external sign, by which the Lord seals on our consciences his promises of good-will toward us, in order to sustain the weakness of our faith, and we in our turn testify our piety towards him, both before himself, and before angels as well as men. We may also define more briefly by calling it a testimony of the divine favour toward us, confirmed by an external sign, with a corresponding attestation of our faith towards Him. You may make your choice of these definitions, which in meaning differ not from that of Augustine, which defines a sacrament to be a visible sign of a sacred thing, or a visible form of an invisible grace, but does not contain a better or surer explanation. As its brevity makes it somewhat obscure, and thereby misleads the more illiterate, I wished to remove all doubt, and make the definition fuller by stating it at greater length.
2. The reason why the ancients used this word in this sense is not obscure. The old interpreter, whenever he wished to render the Greek term musth,rion into

> Latin, especially when it was used with reference to divine things, used the word *sacramentum*. Thus, in Ephesians, "Having made known unto the mystery (*sacramentum*) of his will;" and again, "If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God, which is given me to you-wards, how that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery" (*sacramentum*) (Eph. i. 9; iii. 2). In the Colossians, "Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but is now made manifest to his saints, to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery" (*sacramentum*) (Col. i. 26). Also in the First Epistle to Timothy, "Without controversy, great is the mystery (*sacramentum*) of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh" (1 Tim. iii. 16). He was unwilling to use the word *arcanum* (secret), lest the word should seem beneath the magnitude of the thing meant. When the thing, therefore, was sacred and secret, he used the term *sacramentum*. In this sense it frequently occurs in ecclesiastical writers. And it is well known, that what the Latins call *sacramenta*, the Greeks call musth,ria (mysteries). The sameness of meaning removes all dispute. Hence it is that the term was applied to those signs which gave an august representation of things spiritual and sublime. This is also observed by Augustine, "It were tedious to discourse of the variety of signs; those which relate to divine things are called sacraments" (August. Ep. 5. ad Marcell.).

If you are confused after hearing the first two paragraphs of Calvin's chapter on the sacraments you will be pleased to know that the remaining twenty-four paragraphs are equally confusing.

However, as you no doubt noticed, he asserted that a sacrament was (1) a help to our faith, (2) an external sign, (3) a seal on our conscious of God's promises, (4) to sustain the weakness of our faith, and (5) a testimony of our piety towards God before Him and before angels and before men. Then he proceeds to say that this is all a mystery by using the Latin translation of the Scriptures by the Catholics where they substituted the Latin word for sacrament in the place of the Greek word for mystery.

The "Westminster Confession of Faith" equally affirms that the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper are "holy signs and seals of the covenant of grace." However, the 1689 "London Confession of Faith" declares that baptism and the Lord's Supper are "ordinances of positive and sovereign institution." As we previously pointed out in our last podcast, baptism is simply a figure (picture, type) as plainly stated in I Peter 3:21. Regarding the Lord's Supper, Scripture declares that

the Lord instituted it as a memorial unto Him. I Cor. 11:24-26 says that the bread and wine were to be taken in remembrance of Him; that is, in remembrance of Jesus Christ. This is what a memorial service is; it is something done in remembrance of another. Baptism is a picture of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ; that is, salvation in a picture. The Lord's Supper is a memorial service of the death of Christ and a proclamation of the gospel. I Cor. 11:26 says, "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." The Greek word for shew is translated preach, declare, etc. in other places in the New Testament.

When we simply take the Scriptures as written we do not find that baptism and the Lord's Supper are some mysterious sign of some invisible grace for the purpose of helping our faith or sealing some covenantal promise. They are simply a memorial service and picture of our salvation that was purchased by the Lord Jesus Christ. Yes, there are various blessings and benefits received by those who participate in these commands of the Lord, but they are not some mysterious function that add to our faith or some means of grace that contributes to our salvation. As the Scriptures declare, "Salvation is of the Lord." Christ paid the debt in full and when He bowed His head on the cross and cried "It is finished," His righteousness was accepted (and continues to be so) of our Heavenly Father on our behalf. What greater blessing to know and relish when participating in these ordinances? We do not have to wonder if we have missed out on something because of some hidden mystery we fail to understand. It is the simple message of the gospel that is set forth in these ordinances.

In conclusion, a Baptist should not be guilty of referring to baptism or the Lord's Supper as sacraments. Equally, we should not refer to the Lord's Supper by calling it the Eucharist. It is not a thanksgiving feast. It is simply a memorial service. As we said earlier, there are many blessings and benefits to those who partake of these ordinances scripturally and we plan on addressing some of these in the future. However, we should never forget the basic meaning of these ordinances as found in the Scriptures.

Does It Matter?

(The message today opens the discussion as to why it is important to know what one believes and why he should believe it. In a world that proclaims that truth is relative, we find that foundational principles of what one believes forces him to hold to a world view and that view is not relative. It is truth to him.)

In our last study we discussed the belief of the reformers that baptism and the Lord's Supper are designated as sacraments. We further pointed out that this does not

agree with the scriptural view that baptism is a figure (picture or type) of the death, burial, and resurrection and the Lord's Supper is a memorial of the broken body and the shed blood of Christ for the remission of sins. Many today will raise the question, "Is it really all that important?" And further asked, "Does it really matter that much?"

According to the reformer John Calvin, the proper observance of sacraments is a sign of the church. He also stated that if this is maintained along with the preaching of the word, it is still a church regardless of how many other faults it may have. He further asserted that to disregard such a congregation is to desert religion. Listen as I read from his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book IV, Chapter 1, paragraphs or sections 10 and 12, pp. 289-290, 291.

> 10. We have said that the symbols by which the Church is discerned are the preaching of the word and the observance of the sacraments, for these cannot anywhere exist without producing fruit and prospering by the blessing of God. ... Be this as it may, when the preaching of the gospel is reverently heard, and the sacraments are not neglected, there for the time the face of the Church appears without deception or ambiguity and no man may with impunity spurn her authority, or reject her admonitions, or resist her counsels, or make sport of her censures, far less revolt from her, and violate her unity (see Chap. 2 sec. 1, 10, and Chap. 8 sec. 12). For such is the value which the Lord sets on the communion of his Church, that all who contumaciously alienate themselves from any Christian society, in which the true ministry of his word and sacraments is maintained, he regards as deserters of religion. So highly does he recommend her authority, that when it is violated he considers that his own authority is impaired. . For there is no small weight in the designation given to her, "the house of God," "the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:15). By these words Paul intimates, that to prevent the truth from perishing in the world, the Church is its faithful guardian, because God has been pleased to preserve the pure preaching of his word by her instrumentality, and to exhibit himself to us as a parent while he feeds us with spiritual nourishment, and provides whatever is conducive to our salvation. Moreover, no mean praise is conferred on the Church when she is said to have been chosen and set apart by Christ as his spouse, "not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing" (Eph. 5:27), as "his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all" (Eph. 1:23). Whence it follows, that revolt from the Church is denial of God and Christ. Wherefore there is the more necessity to beware of a dissent so iniquitous; for seeing by it we aim as far as in us lies at the destruction of God's truth, we deserve to be crushed by the full thunder of his anger. No crime can be imagined more atrocious than that of sacrilegiously and perfidiously

violating the sacred marriage which the only begotten Son of God has condescended to contract with us.

12. When we say that the pure ministry of the word and pure celebration of the sacraments is a fit pledge and earnest, so that we may safely recognise a church in every society in which both exist, our meaning is, that we are never to discard it so long as these remain, though it may otherwise teem with numerous faults.

Here we see the importance of baptism and the Lord's Supper. But some may say that what Calvin said is not what is commonly believed by the reformers today. The *Westminster Confession of Faith*, which is the standard to which most of the reformers hold to today says in Chapter XXVII, Article 1, "Sacraments are holy signs and seals of the covenant of grace, immediately instituted by God, to represent Christ and His benefits; and to confirm our interest in Him: as also, to put a visible difference between those that belong unto the Church and the rest of the world; and solemnly to engage them to the service of God in Christ, according to His Word."

Since the reformers assert that baptism is an extension of the Old Testament and replaced circumcision and is performed by sprinkling, then unless one believes according to their views he is outside the church of God. The same may be said regarding the Lord's Supper. However, this position is not limited to the reformers. The *London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689* equally proclaims the importance of what is believed along this line. From Chapter XXVIII, Article 1, we read, "Baptism and the Lord's supper are ordinances of positive and sovereign institution, appointed by the Lord Jesus, the only lawgiver, to be continued in his church to the end of the world." From this we find that both reformers and Baptists maintain that what is believed about baptism and the Lord's Supper is connected with the truth of the doctrine of the church.

My purpose here is not to determine when the candlestick is removed from a congregation. That is determined only by the Lord Himself. However, I believe we can agree that where one congregation believes the reformed position and another congregation believes the Baptist position they cannot accept each other's policies and practices. This does not mean that there should be bitter hatred and malice toward each other. It simply means that they cannot fellowship each other in these beliefs.

While the above is true, allow me to further say that the point is not to belittle one view and exalt the other, but to emphasize the importance of knowing what the truth is regarding these things and then defend it with wisdom and love. Too often in this ecumenical society it is published that we need to remove all boundaries and walk together. However, as G. K. Chesterton said, "Don't ever take a fence down until you know the reason it was put up." With this in mind, I want to challenge my listeners

(and especially the Baptists) to know what the boundaries are and why they were established by our wise forefathers. Yes, I can and do respect many who hold to reformed principles, but (like them) we must know that it is important that we know why we believe as we do and that it is important that we defend and hold the line of scrimmage. Remember the words of the apostle Peter, "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear," I Pet. 3:15. In connection with this verse, allow me to give two other verses that, I believe, compliment the spirit of I Peter 3:15. They are found in the book of James. "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls," Jas. 1:21. Next is James 3:13, "Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom."

In future messages we plan to look at baptism and the Lord's Supper in detail. Since these practices are foundational to the congregation of the Lord, it is important that we have a biblical understanding of these practices. There are many benefits derived from partaking of these ordinances that both Baptists and Protestants can agree. However, as we have already seen, basically, there are differences in which they are not compatible, and regardless of how much we may appreciate and admire some who hold the reformed views, we have to defend that which (in our opinion) pictures salvation being totally of the Lord by grace.

What Is Baptism? (1st)

(Since the truth of baptism is essential to the identity of a New Testament congregation, we need to know what baptism is. This podcast begins this discussion. The question of the right to change the way that baptism was originally performed begins to be addressed with this broadcast.)

In our last session, we saw that both Baptists and Protestants affirm that baptism is associated with the validity of the congregation of the Lord. Therefore, it is essential that we know the truth concerning the doctrine of baptism. We need to know the mode, the subject, the purpose, and the administrator of baptism. While there may be other questions regarding this subject, I believe it can be agreed by the majority that these four things are foundational to the topic at hand.

The Mode of Baptism

I believe it is important to first see what the word means as it was used in the New Testament. Without question, scholars throughout the world who know the Greek

language agree that the Greek word bapti,zw means to dip or immerse. J. H. Thayer, in his *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament,* gives the primary definition as *to dip repeatedly, to immerge,* or *submerge*. Additionally, we could quote sources of all denominations as well as secular scholars to prove this point. While this should not be needful to do this, allow me to note that there are people who are so prejudice in their views that they refuse to admit this. Several years ago I attended a meeting of various ministers and men of different denominations who profess to believe the doctrines of grace. The purpose of the meeting was to get better acquainted and to encourage each other. At one of those meetings I was talking to an older Presbyterian minister and the subject of baptism came up. When I stated that the meaning of the Greek word for baptism meant to dip or immerse, he shouted to me, "The Greek word bapti,zw never, ever meant to dip." Needless to say, that conversation ceased. Thankfully, John Calvin admitted the truth of the meaning and practice of the word in New Testament times, though he believed "the church" (as he viewed it) has the authority change it. Listen to Calvin's comments on Acts 8:38, when Philip baptized the eunuch.

> Here we see how the rite of baptism was carried out by the men of long ago: they immersed the whole body in the water. The practice that has now become dominant is for the minister only to sprinkle the body of the head. But the trifling difference in the ceremony ought not to mean so much to us that we split the Church because of it, or throw it into confusion with disputes. Indeed we ought to fight even to the death a hundred times for the ceremony of baptism itself, since it has been delivered to us by Christ, rather than allow it to be taken away from us. But since we have evidence in the symbol of water of new life as well as our washing: since Christ represents His blood to us in the water, as in a mirror, so that we may seek cleansing for ourselves from it; since He teaches that we are recreated by His Spirit, so that we, being dead to sin, may live to righteousness (I Pet. 2.24), it is certain that we have everything that makes for the substance of baptism. That is why, this substance apart, the Church allowed itself freedom from the beginning to have slightly different rites. For some used to immerse three times, while others did it only once. Accordingly there is no call for us to be too particular about things that are not so necessary, provided that adventitious ceremonials do not contaminate the simple institution of Christ.

While Calvin says that too much should not be made over the mode to cause trouble, it is amazing that the reformers shed a lot of Baptist blood because they would not submit to sprinkling whether it is adults or children. In fact, during one of the ministerial meetings that I mentioned above, I reminded one Protestant minister

that his forefathers persecuted my forefathers. He followed up with an agreement and stated that he "didn't think it was a bad idea." That was the last time I attended any of those meetings.

For those who may think that Calvin's comments on Acts 8:38 was simply a side note, allow me to quote from his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book IV, Chapter XV, paragraph/section 19, p. 524.

> Whether the person baptised is to be wholly immersed, and that whether once or thrice, or whether he is only to be sprinkled with water, is not of the least consequence: churches should be at liberty to adopt either, according to the diversity of climates, although it is evident that the term *baptise* means to immerse, and that this was the form used by the primitive Church.

I am using Calvin's *Institutes* as translated by Henry Beveridge. At the end of this quote there is a footnote giving the quote from the French edition. (Calvin originally wrote his *Institutes* in French.) The footnote has the French quote and the English translation from the French. Here is the English translation.

> Moreover, it is a matter of no importance whether we baptise by entirely immersing the person baptised in the water, or only by sprinkling water upon him, according to the diversity of countries, this should remain free to the churches. For the sign is represented in either. Although the mere term Baptise means to immerse entirely, and it is certain that the custom of thus entirely immersing was anciently observed in the Church.

Though Calvin thought that "we ought to fight even to the death a hundred times for the ceremony of baptism itself," he did not consider the mode to be important enough to worry about. Since the Lord used the Greek word bapti,zw for baptize and not use any other word (I plan to discuss this in more details in a future broadcast.) why should we think we would have the option to change the practice to a different form? If the truth about baptism is essential to authenticating the church or of congregation of God, why put that in jeopardy by changing the form of how baptism is to be performed? Since baptism is a command and not an option (cf. Acts 10:48), why run the risk of violating a command of the Lord by following convenience or personal preference? Such practice is why modern so-called congregations have women ministers, allow sodomites and all other ungodly lifestyles contrary to the Scriptures within their organizations. When anyone thinks he knows better than what the Lord inspired His writers of the Scriptures to pen, he is guilty of charging God with ignorance, to say the least. God knew what He meant when He inspired the

authors of the Scriptures to write down what He wants us to know and to do. As Dt. 29:29 says, “The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.” In other words, what the Lord doesn't want us to know He doesn't tell us. They are secret to Him. However, what is revealed (or given) to us is given to us *forever to do*.

Yes, there are some things that are optional; such as, the eating of meat or not. But the Lord addressed them and the Scriptures are clear concerning these things. There is, however, no hint in the Word of God that baptism is to be performed in accordance with convenience or personal preference. May we all humbly bow to the plain teaching of the Scriptures as we seek to honor the Lord while we live here as pilgrims and strangers in a sinful world.

What Is Baptism? (2nd)

(This episode continues our study on the mode of baptism. We see the importance of following the details of the inspired Word of God. Equally, it asserts that immersion, sprinkling, and pouring are not synonymous and gives a simple illustration to prove this.)

In our last study, we began to study the mode of baptism. There we saw that Calvin admitted that immersion of the whole body in water is what the believers of New Testament and the early saints believed and practiced. He further asserted that since some immersed once and others three times they had “different rites,” and because of this “there is no call for us to be too particular about things that are not so necessary.” He continued by saying that it justified changing from immersion to sprinkling. This change he said was a “trifling difference in the ceremony” and that it “ought not to mean so much to us.”

The thing that Calvin failed to note is that immersing three times or one time did not change the mode. It was still immersion and this (as he called it) “different rites” did not in any way suggest a consideration of sprinkling with the early believers. What would cause Calvin to say, “Moreover, it is a matter of no importance whether we baptise by entirely immersing the person baptised in the water, or only by sprinkling water upon him, according to the diversity of countries, this should remain free to the churches?” We can believe that the only reason he, or anyone else, would suggest sprinkling in the place of immersion was because this is what the Catholics practiced and he wanted to hold to his preconceived idea and practice as performed by the religion he was trying to reform.

We also saw in our previous study that the Greek word bapti,zw means to dip or

immerse and that this meaning is affirmed by all Greek scholars, both sacred and secular, around the world. Let us consider this word somewhat in more detail. As we stated in our previous broadcast, "Since the Lord used the Greek word bapti,zw for baptize and not use any other word why should we think we would have the option to change the practice to a different form? If the truth about baptism is essential to authenticating the church or congregation of God, why put that in jeopardy by changing the form of how baptism is to be performed? Since baptism is a command and not an option (cf. Acts 10:48, where Peter commanded the believers in Cornelius' house to be baptized), why run the risk of violating a command of the Lord by following convenience or personal preference?"

God, by inspiration, used words to convey His thoughts to us. He made it clear that vital truths and doctrines are defined and given to us by the use of the very tense of a word. In Galatians 3:16, God said, "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." Since God is so specific and emphasized that the Scriptures in Genesis 15:6 said "seed" (singular) and not "seeds" (plural), we believe when He used the Greek word bapti,zw He did not intend to mean anything else than what that particular Greek word meant. To substitute sprinkling or pouring for immersion is a violation of the Word of God.

(Allow me to digress somewhat here. So far I have not mentioned pouring for baptism. Time will not allow for a detailed study on the subject of pouring. Since we are not doing a detailed study of baptism and sprinkling either, but we are only attempting to answer some of the basic principles which also will apply to pouring. However, I want to show that some do try to make a case for pouring. Several years ago, Jay Adams wrote a little book entitled *Meaning & Mode of Baptism*. In it he stated "If Jesus was immersed, He was not the 'Christ' or 'Messiah' p. 20. Further in the book while discussing what took place in Acts 2 on the day of Pentecost, he tried to show that there were two kinds of baptism—real baptism (Spirit baptism) and ritual baptism (water baptism). [We may consider the subject of "spirit baptism" sometime later, but we do not have time to do so here.] He further said that "the ritual [or as he believes "water"—JKB] must symbolize the real [or as he affirms "spirit" "—JKB], or it is no symbol at all, and has no point," p. 22. On p. 23, he wrote, "Not only does Acts 2 not teach baptism by immersion, but no passage of Scripture more clearly describes the mode by which a baptism was performed (as a pouring). ... There is nothing in the text to make one conclude that the Pentecostal baptism way by immersion; everything gives evidence that it was by affusion." Affusion is the act of baptizing by pouring.

I hope this brief side note will give you some indication as to why some endeavor

to believe that pouring is a form or mode of baptism. Again, I remind you that more arguments could be given to support pouring as a mode of baptism, but we are trying not to be exhaustive. We are only seeking to give broad overviews in our studies. We are not trying to denigrate those who practice sprinkling and/or pouring. We are trying to support the Baptist positions and show why we cannot follow the teachings of the reformers regarding these ordinances.)

Our plans are to look at these three modes—immersion, sprinkling, pouring—and the corresponding Greek words in more detail later. Time will not allow us to begin this study today. However, I want to give a simple illustration to show the confusion of using these three English words as meaning the same thing.

If two or more words are synonymous then they can be substituted into a sentence and not change the meaning. For example, if I say "The dog was chasing a rabbit." or "The hound was chasing a rabbit." or "The beagle was chasing a rabbit," the meaning of the sentence is not changed. The only difference in the illustration is that the type of dog is more descriptive in the last sentence, but the meaning is the same throughout. If we apply this same principle to Mark 1:5 with our three words of immersion, sprinkling, and pouring being synonymous, we would not change the meaning of the verse. The verse reads "And there went out unto him all the land of Judaea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins." Now let's see what happens when we substitute "baptized" with our three English words. First, "And there went out unto him all the land of Judaea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all immersed of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins." Second, "And there went out unto him all the land of Judaea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all sprinkled of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins." And lastly, "And there went out unto him all the land of Judaea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all poured of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins." Did you catch the difference? To be immersed or dipped of or by John in the river does not change the meaning. However, to be sprinkled of or by John in the river, one would have to be ground to a power to be sprinkled of John in the river. Likewise, to be poured of or by John in the river, one would have to be melted or changed into a liquid to be poured of John in the river of Jordan. Therefore, these three English words—pouring, sprinkling, and immersion—are not synonyms. Thus we see that to be poured in the river is not the same as to be sprinkled in the river and these two are not the same as being immersed in the river. They do not mean the same thing; therefore, they cannot teach the same doctrine our Lord intends us to know and practice when performing this ordinance.

Hopefully, this simple illustration will help you to better understand baptism. Also, as you discuss this subject with someone who does not care about the meaning

of Greek words and other details, this illustration will show him that the three English words cannot mean or teach the same thing. There is a difference and that difference must be maintained in following the command of our Lord.

We will, the Lord willing, continue our study of the mode of baptism in our next podcast.

What Is Baptism? (3rd)

(As we conclude our study of the mode of baptism, we will see from meaning and use of the Greek words for immersion, sprinkling, and pouring are not synonymous. Scripture shows the Lord using these three words together in the same context and it is obvious that they are not identical. Also, the use of prepositions with the Greek word for baptism clearly teaches that baptism is performed "in water" and not "with water.")

Previously, we saw that immersion, sprinkling, and pouring are not synonymous and gave a simple illustration to prove this from Mark 1:5. Today, our desire is to look somewhat into the meaning and use of the two Greek words for sprinkling and pouring in connection with the Greek word bapti,zw, and its kindred words.

The Greek word for sprinkle is PANTLZW and the basic Greek word for pour is eK/ew. The Greek word pavTiZw is used four (4) times in the New Testament with another word that kin to it (pavTiapoc) is used two (2) times. The first word is found in Hebrews 9:13, 19, 21; 10:22 and the second word is found in Hebrews 12:24 and I Peter 1:2. It is obvious that these verses are not connected with performing the ordinance of baptism.

The Greek word evKce,w also has kindred word which is evKcu,nw. They are used eighteen (18) and ten (10) times respectively in the New Testament.

The Greek word bapTi,zw; however, is used eighty (80) times with its kindred words ba,pTiama (22x), ba,pTw (to dip) three (3) times, and bapTiamo,j four (4) times. The Greek word bapTiaTh,j which is translated "Baptist" is used fourteen (14) times.

When we look at the words for sprinkle and pour, they are never associated with the Greek word for baptize. The closest connection would be the two times the word pour is used in Acts chapter two. However, if the pouring forth of the Holy Spirit was baptism, why would these same people later be commanded to be baptized since they were already baptized with the pouring? Obviously, they are not one and the same act in this chapter. Clearly if God wanted sprinkling (or pouring) to be a mode for baptism He would have made it plain. When the Lord desires these three words (i.e., immerse or dip, sprinkle, and pour) to be used it is obvious what He means and

there are no misunderstandings. Look at Leviticus chapter four. In verses 6 and 7, and verses 17 and 18, we find the following:

Lev. 4:6-7, "And the priest shall **dip** his finger in the blood, and **sprinkle** of the blood seven times before the Lord, before the vail of the sanctuary. And the priest shall put *some* of the blood upon the horns of the alter of sweet incense before the Lord, which *is* in the tabernacle of the congregation; and shall **pour** all the blood of the bullock at the bottom of the altar of the burnt offering, which *is at* the door of the tabernacle of the congregation." (Emphasis mine—JKB.)

Lev. 4:17-18, "And the priest shall **dip** his finger *in some* of the blood, and **sprinkle** *it* seven times before the LORD, *even* before the vail. And he shall put *some* of the blood upon the horns of the altar which *is* before the LORD, that *is* in the tabernacle of the congregation, and shall **pour** out all the blood at the bottom of the altar of the burnt offering, which *is at* the door of the tabernacle of the congregation." (Emphasis mine—JKB.)

Can anything be clearer than this that when performing the ordinances of the Lord in His tabernacle, that dipping (or immersing) and sprinkling and pouring are not the same thing? Would Calvin say that if the priest did not follow this as exactly given it would be a "trifling difference in the ceremony"? I think not.

Another interesting thing about the Greek word bapti,zw and its kindred words and the ordinance is that in the Greek New Testament it is always "in" water. The King James Bible sometimes says that baptism was performed "with water." The reason for this is (I believe) because of the rules given to the translators by King James I. At heart, he was a Catholic and wanted to move the Church of England back under Roman Catholicism; therefore, one of the rules given to the translators was that "the old ecclesiastical words to be kept."What was meant by this "the old ecclesiastical words" was such words as used and understood by Roman Catholics. (This and other rules is why the Greek word for bapti,zw was anglicize and the Greek word ekklhsi,a was not translated but "church" was substituted for it. That is a different study that may be discussed at a later time. However, less I am misunderstood, while the King James Version translation was not divinely inspired, I believe it is the best English translation.)

As we previous stated, every time a Greek preposition is used in connection with baptism it is always the Greek word evn which should be translated "in." This Greek preposition (evn) is used 2,781 times in the New Testament and 1,874 times it is translated "in" and 135 times "with." Not one of these 135 times is in connection

with the Greek word for baptize. There are 16 Greek words given the translation "with," but only three (3) of them have the basic meaning as "with" and they are meta,, para,, and su,n. It is interesting that not one of these three words is connected with baptism—baptism by water or by spirit. Therefore, to baptize in water, as we saw in Mark 1:5, would be immersion and not sprinkling or pouring.

Many other arguments can be supplied to support immersion or dipping for baptism. In John 3:23, we find "And John also was baptizing in Tnon near Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized." There is no need for "much water" to sprinkle a few drops of water on someone. Again, in Acts 8:38-39, it is written "And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing." What need of both Philip and the eunuch going "down ... into the water" to sprinkle or pour water upon the eunuch? This is needful to perform immersion. Both went down into the water and both came up out of the water.

We have seen that the lexicographers agreeing that the Greek word means to immerse, and the reformers like Calvin, Luther, and others admitted to the meaning and practice of the early believers being by immersion, and from our study of the Scriptures, that all questions should be removed regarding immersion being what God requires for baptism. Additionally, the Greek Orthodox Catholics practice immersion today when baptizing, even with their babies. If anyone should know the meaning of the Greek word for baptism it would be Greeks.

Having briefly looked at the mode of baptism, we plan to move on to the other foundational principles of baptism—the subject, the purpose, and the administrator of baptism. It is important that we carefully study and understand these things since both Baptists and Protestants agree that the truth about baptism is essential to the validity of the New Testament congregation. Additionally, since baptism is one of the first things a believer is to perform in His obedience to Christ, it is important that he obey the Lord as God requires him to do so.

The Subject of Baptism (1st)

(Today we begin considering who is the proper subject or candidate for baptism. In this study, we find that a major difference between Baptists and Reformers is that the Reformers include infants whereas Baptists do not. This podcast covers how the Greek words for baptism are used in connection with the rite of baptism in the gospels.)

Today we desire to take up the *subject* of baptism. Here again there is a distinction between the Baptists and the protestants. This is shown by quoting from the standard articles of faith from the two groups. Article four of the "Westminster Confession of Faith," says, "Not only those that do actually profess faith in and obedience unto Christ, but also the infants of one, or both, believing parents, are to be baptized." The "1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith" states in Article 2, "Those who do actually profess repentance towards God, faith in and obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ, are the only proper subjects of this ordinance." Both agree that those who profess faith in Christ and are living in obedience to Him (i.e., Christ) are to be baptized. The difference lies in the statement that "infants of one, or both, believing parents, are to be baptized." The reformers affirm that certain infants are fit subjects for baptism while Baptists deny this. Many volumes have been written over the years (and continues to be written) regarding this issue. However, as we have stated from the beginning, we need to see what saith the Scriptures? Thus far, we have tried to the best of our abilities, to give a high level view of the differences between Baptists and Protestants and not to be laborious with too many details. As we attempt to show that the subject for baptism only includes those who "actually profess repentance towards God, faith in and obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ," I do not know how to do this any better than by looking at the particular passages in the Scriptures relating to baptism. I pray the Lord will bless me to do this without being too detailed and that the continuity of the subject will not be lost.

Our first passage is the third chapter of Matthew. (This will include the parallel passages as found in the other gospels.) [Read the chapter.] From this chapter we find the following: 1) They that were baptized by John confessed their sins, verse 6; 2) John required fruits of repentance before baptism, verses 8, 11. Obviously the baptism of Jesus (Who had no sin and could not sin) did not require repentance or confession of sin. Therefore, from the clear language of this passage there is not the slightest hint that infants were included here.

In the next chronological order in the gospels where we find baptism discusses is in Luke chapter seven. In verses 29 and 30 we read, "And all the people that heard *him*, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him." We are only looking at this passage at this time with regard to the subject of baptism. The text tells us that those who were baptized "heard" John. This cannot be referring to infants because they do not hear or comprehend intelligent conversation. We also find another group and they are those who were not baptized because they "rejected the counsel of God." Infants are not mentally mature enough

to reject intelligent words that are collected together to convey concepts and ideas.

As we come to the end of the gospels, we find two other passages that relate to our study. They are Matthew 28:18-20 and Mark 16:15-16. They read as follows:

Matthew 28:18-20, "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen."

Mark 16:15-16, "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

Who is it that our Lord commanded to be baptized in these passages? In Matthew, those who were to be baptized were first to be taught. In Mark, it was those to whom the gospel was preached and believed that were baptized. Again we see that these passages do not indicate that infants are proper subjects for baptism.

Thus far, we have looked at all the passages in the gospels that use the Greek words for baptism and their connection with the ordinance of baptism and we do not see any reason for concluding that "infants of one, or both, believing parents, are to be baptized." I am aware that there are other passages in the gospels which the reformers used to infer the baptism of infants and small children, and we plan to discuss those in future studies. Currently we are limiting our study to those passages where the Greek words that are used for the rite of baptism to see if infants are included. So far we only find repentant believers who are living in obedience to the Lord as proper candidates or subjects for baptism.

The Lord willing, we will continue this study in our next podcast by considering the book of Acts.

The Subject of Baptism (2nd)

(Previously we studied the passages in the gospels regarding the Greek words for baptism and how they are used in connection with baptism. Our study today continues with this theme in the book of Acts.)

Previously we looked at all the passages in the gospels that use the Greek words for baptism and their connection with the ordinance of baptism and we did not see any reason for concluding that "infants of one, or both, believing parents, are to be baptized." Today we will take up our study in the book of Acts.

Acts 1:22 speaks of one being selected to replace Judas Iscariot and that one of the qualifications being that he must have accompanied the apostles "beginning from the baptism of John." This passage can hardly be used to support the baptism of infants. However, in Acts chapter 2, where three thousands were baptized on the day of Pentecost (cf. Acts 2:38, 41), the argument is made by the reformers that infants are included because in verse thirty-nine it is stated that "the promise is unto you, and to your children." However, the passage does not stop there. It continues with "and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." In the preceding verse (v. 38) the command given by Peter was to "repent, and be baptized." Therefore, since we have no indication as to how we can tell whether an infant has repented, how can one scripturally baptize him? Equally, verse thirty-nine does not say the promise is unto the children of a believing parent, but as many as the Lord calls. Since the only way we know if a person is called of God or not is by the outward acts of belief and repentance, we do not have authority of the Lord to baptize him until such acts are found in the individual.

In Acts 8, where Philip was preaching and baptizing in Samaria, we see in verse twelve those whom Philip baptized "believed" his "preaching" and that "they were baptized both men and women." Nothing is said to imply anything about little children and especially infants. Later in this chapter when Philip baptized the eunuch there is nothing mentioned in the text to include infants. The same can be said for Acts 9:18 where Ananias baptized Saul (Paul).

Next we come to chapter ten when Peter was sent by the Lord to the house of Cornelius in Caesarea. We find in verse twenty-four that Cornelius "had called together his kinsmen and near friends." It was previously stated that Cornelius was "a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always," Acts 10:2. In other words, Cornelius had fruits of repentance and feared God as well as "all his house." After Peter came into Cornelius' house, he said to Peter that they were all "present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God," verse 33. Then Peter began preaching unto them beginning with the baptism of John and continued through the life, death, and resurrection of Christ. While Peter was preaching the Holy Spirit fell on "all them which heard the word." Afterwards, Peter commanded them to be baptized, verse 48. The reformers maintain that since this was an household infants must be included. However, I know many homes or households that do not include infants. If infants were included, this would be an excellent place to clarify the issue. When Philip was at Samaria, Scripture declares that he baptized "both men and women," Acts 8:12. Therefore, if infants or small children were included at Cornelius' house the Lord could have clear the issue by including in the text "men, women, and children (or

infants).” But the case is that those who were baptized were people who were devout, feared God, gave alms, prayed unto the Lord, and “heard the word,” verse 44. Additionally, those who came with Peter heard those that were later baptized “speak with tongues, and magnify God,” verse 46. This is not the actions of infants. To me, for one to infer that infants or small children were baptized at Cornelius' house, he has to read it into the text with a preconceived opinion. When Peter explained this event in Acts chapter 11 there is not anything recorded there contrary to what we see in chapter 10.

The next passages are found in Acts chapter 16 where we find the baptism of Lydia and her household and the household of the jailer at Philippi. In Acts 16:13-15 we read, “And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted *thither*. And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard *us*: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought *us*, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide *there*. And she constrained us.” And in verses 27-34 we find, “And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here. Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed *their* stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.”

Without question, all that were baptized in the household of the jailer were believers because it is said of them “believing in God with all his house.” Therefore, there were no infants in “all his house.” As for the household of Lydia, there is no indication that she was married. If so, why should we think those who were baptized with her in her house were different from all the other examples we have studied thus far. To build a doctrine of infant baptism on a passage that is silent and assume what is not said is dangerous, to say the least.

The next household baptism is found in Corinth. In Acts 18:8, it says, “And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized.” Those in Crispus'

house and other Corinthians who were baptized are designated as "believed on the Lord" and "hearing believed."

There is nothing in the other passages in the book of Acts to suggest that little children or infants are to be baptized. Therefore, the book of Acts, which is the history of the New Testament believers, gives us much information as to the beliefs and practices of that time and does not support the baptism of infants of believing parents. Our plans are to study subsequent passages in the New Testament regarding baptism in future lessons. So far we have found that the Scriptures support what Baptists believe concerning the subjects or candidates for baptism. It is "those who do actually profess repentance towards God, faith in and obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ, are the only proper subjects of this ordinance."

The Subject of Baptism (3rd)

(In our previous studies regarding Greek words for baptism and their connection with the rite of water baptism, we covered the gospels and the book of Acts. Today we continue by looking into the epistles.)

So far we find that the passages in the gospels and the book of Acts support what Baptists believe concerning the subjects or candidates for baptism. It is "those who do actually profess repentance towards God, faith in and obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ" and does not include "infants of one, or both, believing parents." Now we will look at this subject in the epistles.

We find the subject of baptism first mentioned in the epistles in the book of Romans. The Greek words are mentioned in verses three and four. However, to help with the understanding we will try to set the verses in context by reading Romans 6:1-6: "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also *in the likeness* of *his* resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with *him*, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." Paul is teaching the saints at Rome that because they are justified by the imputed righteousness of Christ they are to also live holy lives because of their baptism. When one is baptized, he is testifying that he is dead to the world and that he desires to "walk in newness of life" to the glory of God. Obviously, this argument is for adults or those who can hear and comprehend the arguments made in this text and not for

infants.

Calvin maintained that Paul's teaching here is for believers. In his commentary on Romans, he said, “It is beyond question that we put on Christ in baptism, and that we are baptized on this principle that we may be one with Him. ... Indeed, he teaches us that this fellowship of His death is the focal centre of baptism. . Baptism means that being dead to ourselves, we may become new creatures. Paul rightly passes from the fellowship of Christ's death to the sharing of His life. . Having laid this fundamental proposition, Paul may very properly exhort Christians to strive to live in a manner that corresponds to their calling. It is irrelevant to argue that this power is not apparent in all the baptized, for Paul, because he is speaking to believers, connects the reality and the effect with the outward sign (*substantiam et effectum externo signo coniungit*) in his usual manner. . In short, he teaches us what the truth of baptism is, when rightly received. Thus he testifies that all Galatians who had been baptized into Christ had put on Christ (Gal. 3:27).” *Commentary on Romans*, pp.122-123.

The Baptist, Robert Haldane, is in agreement. “The rite of baptism exhibits Christians as dying, as buried, and as risen with Christ. . In baptism, they are also represented as dying with Christ. . The death of Christ was the means by which sin was destroyed, and His burial the proof of the reality of His death. Christians are therefore represented as buried with Him by baptism into His death, in token that they really died with Him; and if buried with Him, it is not that they shall remain in the grave, but that, as Christ arose from the dead, they should also rise. Their baptism, then, is the figure of their complete deliverance from the guilt of sin, signifying that God places to their account the death of Christ as their own death: it is also a figure of their purification and resurrection for the service of God.” *Commentary*, pp. 244-245.

(I realize that some in modern times [both protestants and Baptists] set forth that baptism in Romans 6 is referring to “Holy Spirit” baptism. Our plans are to discuss that topic at a later time. For now, we are only studying to see if the Scriptures support infant or child baptism.)

The next passage we find in the epistles is in I Corinthians 1:14-17, “I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name. And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other. For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.” Paul affirms that he baptized Crispus, Gaius, and the household of Stephanas, but he couldn't remember if he baptized any other. When we studied Acts

chapter eighteen, we saw that Paul not only baptized Crispus, but also "all his house." The text also stated that all in Crispus' house believed. The verse in Acts 18:8 further states that "many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized." This would include the "household of Stephanas." Therefore, this passage does not support infant baptism either.

In I Corinthians 10:2, the baptism there refers to the children of Israel in the wilderness and their identity with Moses and will not be considered with the subject at hand since it is not in connection with water baptism.

I Corinthians 12:13 is a unique verse and is generally considered in modern times as what is called "Holy Spirit baptism." We are going to pass over this passage at this time because our plan is to do an entire study regarding this in the future. This passage is generally not used by the protestants to support infant baptism anyway.

The next passage to consider is I Corinthians 15:29. While this passage is a controversial verse it is not one used by the reformers to support infant baptism either. In analogy with the overall interpretation of the Scriptures concerning baptism, it is obvious that it does not mean that someone can be baptized for someone who has died. We know from I Peter 3:21 that baptism is a figure (type, picture) of the "complete deliverance from the guilt of sin" of the believer. And as Peter connects baptism with the resurrection of Christ, Paul links it to either the death of Christ and our being resurrected in Him or our being raised to walk in holiness as portrayed by us as we "were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death," Rm. 6:3.

Since Calvin referenced Galatians 3:27 in connection with Romans 6:3-4 which teaches that we publicly put on Christ or become identified with Christ, then this passage is not teaching anything about infant baptism. A child or infant being baptized is not consciously putting on Christ in any way.

Now we come to Ephesians 4:5. The verse reads, "One Lord, one faith, one baptism." However, the context is much the same as Romans 6 and Galatians 3 where Paul is encouraging the saints at Ephesus to walk in holiness according to the truth of the Lord. Whatever the passage is teaching and whatever can be gleamed from this verse, there is nothing in this verse to infer infant baptism.

The passage in Colossians (Col. 2:12) is the same context as that of Ephesians and Romans. Since Colossians is somewhat of a parallel epistle to that of Ephesians, the similarity is easily seen. Therefore, there is again no support in this passage for infant baptism.

Much the same can be said with the passage in Hebrews 6:2. Whether this "baptisms" is referring to ceremonial washing of the Old Testament economy or of

New Testament water baptism, there is nothing in the text to encourage anyone to teach or practice infant baptism.

The last passage where a Greek word for baptism is used in the New Testament is I Peter 3:21. We have referred to this verse previously and we found that it clearly teaches that baptism is a figure (picture, type) of the "complete deliverance from the guilt of sin" of the believer. There is something else about this passage that should help to clarify our question. One thing that baptism does for the believer is that it is "the answer of a good conscience toward God." When an infant is baptized, it cannot be said that the child is receiving "the answer of a good conscience toward God." Regardless of what an infant may know, it is doubtful that he knows whether he has a good conscience or a bad conscience before God. This passage gives more support for the Baptist position than the protestant view because the actions leans toward one who professes faith in Christ and obedience to the Scriptures.

We have covered all the passages that have the Greeks word for baptism in connection with water baptism. Obviously, we omitted those passages where the Greek words clearly refer to ceremonial washing under the Old Testament or where they are used symbolically for descriptive language of suffering. Also, we set aside I Corinthians 12:13 because we plan (as we previously stated) to cover this in a separate study. In our next study, we plan to take up other basic passages which the protestants use to support infants or small children as candidates for baptism, but our time is up for today.

The Subject of Baptism (4th)

(We have studied the Greek words for baptism and their connection with the rite of water baptism in the New Testament. Today we will look at some of the other basic passages which the Protestants use to support the baptism of infants of believing parents.)

We want to remind you that our purpose is not to provide a detailed study of this subject; that is, the candidates for baptism. We are simply looking at the foundational arguments and verses used to support the differing views. While we differ from the protestants, it is not our intent to belittle them but to give instruction as to why we as Baptists cannot follow their practices. Our purpose is to support and instruct Baptists and not to tear down others, but the arguments of others must be considered since they are given as being opposite to our beliefs.

There are verses used by the protestants where they believe infant baptism is inferred where the Greek words for baptism are not included.

In an earlier study, we found that in the *Westminster Confession of Faith*, it is

stated that "the infants of one, or both, believing parents, are to be baptized." For support of this statement, the following passages are referenced: Gen. 17:7, 9 with Gal. 3:9, 14; Col. 2:11-12; Acts 2:38-39; Rom. 4:11-12; I Cor. 7:14; Mt. 28:19; Mk. 10:13-16; Lk. 18:15.

We see that the protestants begin with Genesis 17 when the Lord made a covenant with Abraham regarding his seed and the land of Canaan. Let us remember, as Adoniram Judson said, "It does not follow that children are connected with their parents in every covenant because they were connected with their parents in one covenant." *Christian Baptism*, p. 41. He further stated, "The whole strength of the argument now presented rests in the supposition that the covenant of grace, in which Christians now stand, is the same with the covenant of circumcision, in which children were connected with their parents." *Ibid.* It is clear that Judson knew the arguments for infant baptism because he was a Congregationalist minister prior to becoming a Baptist. Also, we need to keep in mind that the new covenant clearly identifies that everyone in it is a child of God. Hebrews 8:10-13 makes this clear: "For this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that he saith, A new *covenant*, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old *is* ready to vanish away." Notice that God said regarding everyone in the new covenant: "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." Those in the new covenant "know the Lord: for all shall know" Him "from the least to the greatest." This is not what the Scriptures declare regarding children born into the world. Our Lord said that "that which is born of the flesh is flesh," Jn. 3:6. Even Job said, "Who can bring a clean *thing* out of an unclean? not one," Job 14:4. Believing parents cannot produce believing children. They can only produce unclean children of the flesh. Therefore, such cannot be in the new covenant. And since the protestant confession links Gen. 17:7, 9 with Gal. 3:9, 14, where it is stated that those "which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham," and "the promise of the Spirit" is equally received "through faith."

Next they give Col. 2:11-12 to support their belief of infants of one or more believing parent to be in the covenant and a candidate for baptism. The passage reads, "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with *him* through the faith of the operation

of God, who hath raised him from the dead." As you can see, infants are not mentioned in the two verses. As we saw in a previous study, the reformers assume that baptism took the place of circumcision. They assume in this passage that somehow the circumcision mentioned here has reference to children and, therefore, such are to be buried with Christ in baptism. Of this passage, the Baptist, B. H. Carroll said, "that in being united to Christ they received the real, or spiritual circumcision, and their baptism was in a figure both a burial and a resurrection with Christ. In other words, the antitype of circumcision in regeneration, and baptism symbolizes Christ's burial and resurrection and pledges our own." *An Interpretation of the English Bible*, 6 Volumes, "Colossians, Ephesians, and Hebrews," Vol. 6, p. 50. There is nothing in this passage to support that infants or small children of anyone are subjects for baptism. It has to be read into the Scriptures with a preconceived idea. For such assumptions allow me to quote from Robert Shaw's *The Reformed Faith: An Exposition of the Westminster Confession of Faith*, pp. 287ff.

> Our Confession affirms, that "the infants of one or both believing parents are to be baptised." This might be confirmed by numerous arguments; but only a few of them can be here stated with the utmost brevity. 1. The infants of believing parents are to be considered as within the covenant, and therefore entitled to receive its seal. The covenant which God made with Abraham was substantially the same with that under which believers now are. This appears by comparing Gen. xvii. 7, where the covenant made with Abraham is expressed, with Heb. viii. 10, where the new covenant is expressed. In the one, the promise is: "I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee; and in the other: "I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. [Note: the author failed to quote that their sins and iniquity would not be charged against any included in this covenant. Obviously, all infants that are baptized are not saved. JKB The author continues.] We thus find, that when God established his covenant with Abraham, he embraced his infant seed in that covenant; and that the promise made to Abraham and to his seed is still endorsed to us [Even the land of Canaan? JKB] is evident from the express declaration of the Apostle Peter (Acts ii. 39): "The promise is unto you, and to your children." If children are included in the covenant, we conclude that they have a right to baptism, the seal of the covenant. 2. Infants were the subjects of circumcision under the Old Testament dispensation; and as baptism under the New Testament has come in the room of circumcision [Another assumption, and of course females were not circumcised. JKB], we conclude that infants have a right to baptism

under the present dispensation. That, under the Old Testament, the infants of God's professing people were to be circumcised, cannot be doubted; for the command is express: “Every man-child among you shall be circumcised.”—Gen. xvii. 10. That baptism has now come in the room of circumcision is evident from Col. ii. 11, where it is called “the circumcision of Christ.” It must therefore follow, either that the privileges of the Church are now greatly abridged, or else that the children of the members of the Church now are to be admitted to baptism, as they were to circumcision under the former dispensation. 3. That the children of professing Christians are members of the visible Church, and therefore entitled to baptism, appears from the words of our Saviour (Luke xviii. 16): “Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God.” By “the kingdom of God,” we apprehend is to be here understood the Church on earth; and if children are members of the visible Church, it cannot be denied that they have a right to baptism, the sign of admission. [If children are members then they have a right to the Lord's Supper as well, but that is not given to children/infants. JKB] But if by “the kingdom of God” be understood the state of glory, the inference is strong that, being heirs of eternal life, they ought not to be denied that ordinance which is the seal of their title to it. 4. The warrantableness of infant baptism may lie inferred from the commission of the apostles to baptise “all nations,” which certainly includes infants; and from the practice of the apostles, who baptised “households,” upon a profession of faith by their domestic heads. Paul baptised Lydia “and her household,” the Philippian jailer “and all his,” and “the household of Stephanas.”—Acts xvi. 15, 33; 1 Cor. i. 16. “Now, though we are not certain that there were young children in any of these families, it is highly probable there were. [We have studied these passages previously and shown the author is only assuming what is not stated in the Scriptures and that only conscious believers were baptized in such households. JKB] At any rate, the great principle of family baptism, of receiving all the younger members of households on the faith of their domestic head seems to be plainly and decisively established. [Really? JKB] This furnishes ground on which the advocate of infant baptism may stand with unwavering confidence.” (Quote from Miller on Infant Baptism. From footnote in book.) 5. That the infants of believing parents ought to be baptised; and that it is sufficient if one of the parents be a member of the visible Church, is evident from 1 Cor. vii. 14: “For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.”

From this selection of Shaw's, we see that the arguments are based on what is affirmed, assumed, appears, apprehended, inferred, and, finally, concluded from quoting passages or partial passages out of context to support his case. However, our time is up for our study today. The Lord willing, we will take up here in our next podcast.

The Subject of Baptism (5th)

(Today we continue to look at some of the other basic passages which the Protestants use to support the baptism of infants of believing parents.)

In our last study we quoted from the *Westminster Confession of Faith* where it states that "the infants of one, or both, believing parents, are to be baptized," and listed the supporting passages for their belief. The passages referenced are Gen. 17:7, 9 with Gal. 3:9, 14; Col. 2:11-12; Acts 2:38-39; Rom. 4:11-12; I Cor. 7:14; Mt. 28:19; Mk. 10:13-16; Lk. 18:15. We discussed briefly Gen. 17:7, 9; Gal. 3:9, 14; and Col. 2:11-12. Today we will look at Acts 2:38-39; Rom. 4:11-12; and I Cor. 7:14.

You may remember that we addressed Acts 2:38-39 in a previous study where the Greeks words for baptisms were addressed. To those that cried out, "What shall we do?" Peter told them to repent and be baptized and that the promise was to them and their children; that is, to "as many as the Lord our God shall call." He further said to save themselves "from this untoward generation." Then it is stated that "they that gladly received his word were baptized." From what we find in the Scriptures (1) the promise is limited to "as many as the Lord our God shall call; (2) they were to repent prior to baptism; (3) the command to be baptized was given to those who inquired—"what shall we do"; (4) the injunction was given to the inquirers to "save themselves from this untoward generation"; (5) those who were baptized "gladly received" Peter's word. This is not the description of infants. Furthermore, if infants were to have been baptized why is it that God did not give record of this on the day of Pentecost? This would have been a perfect time to answer this question. Though the promise is to our children who are called, they must first gladly received the gospel and repent of their sins prior to baptism. Equally, they are to be knowledgeable enough to live in such a way that they are being delivered from this evil and wicked world (untoward generation).

The next passage listed above is that of Romans 4:11-12. This passage, if you will remember, John Calvin used to link the Old Covenant to the New Covenant to indicate that the new is an extension of the old. Regarding verse eleven, Charles Hodge said, "All therefore who were circumcised, professed to embrace the covenant

of grace. All the Jews were professors of the true religion, and constituted the visible Church, in which by divine appointment their children were included. This is the broad and enduring basis of infant church-membership." *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans,* p. 117. Note that Hodge said that "all ... who were circumcised professed to embrace the covenant of grace." What about the females who were not circumcised? Where they outside the covenant of grace? When we read the passage, it says that the sign of circumcision was a seal of the righteousness of faith that Abraham had and not that it was a sign or a seal of his descendents. Nor was it a sign of Abraham's servants because the Scriptures declare that circumcision was to be performed on "every man child . born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which *is* not of thy seed. He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised," Gen. 17:12-13. As you can see, much is inferred and much is overlooked in this passage as it is supplied as a support for by the protestants for their practice of infant baptism.

Regarding Romans 4:11-12, let us hear from the Baptist, Robert Haldane, from his commentary on *The Epistle to the Romans*, p. 174. Haldane said, "This blessedness is described by David as consisting, in the imputation of righteousness without works. But this was not all: circumcision was not only a sign, but a seal of that righteousness which was imputed to Abraham through faith while he was uncircumcised. This does not mean, as is generally understood, that it was a seal of Abraham's faith. This is not said. It is said that it was a seal of the 'righteousness' of the faith which he had; that is, a seal of that righteousness itself, namely, the righteousness of God, which he had received by his faith."

Further, allow me to quote from the notable Baptist, John Gill, regarding Romans 4:11, "It may be inquired whether circumcision being called a seal, will prove that baptism is a seal of the covenant? I answer, that circumcision was only a seal to Abraham of a peculiar covenant made with him, and of a particular promise made to him, and was it to be admitted a seal of the covenant of grace, it will not prove baptism to be such; since, as has been observed, baptism does not succeed it in place, in time, and use; and could this be allowed that it succeeds it, and is a seal of the righteousness of faith, as that was, it can only be a seal to them that have both faith and righteousness, and not to them that have neither; it would only at most be a seal to believers. But, alas! not ordinances, but other things more valuable than they, are the seals of the covenant, and of believers; the blood of Christ is the seal, and the only seal of the covenant of grace, by which its promises and blessings are ratified and confirmed; and the Holy Spirit is the only earnest, pledge, seal, and sealer of the saints, until the day of redemption."

The next passage given to support "the infants of one, or both, believing parents, are to be baptized," is I Corinthians 7:14. It reads as follows: "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy." You will remember in our last session that Robert Shaw said, "That the infants of believing parents ought to be baptised; and that it is sufficient if one of the parents be a member of the visible Church, is evident from 1 Cor. vii. 14." But what is the context of this verse? Paul, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, is instructing believers regarding a situation where one of the spouses in a marriage is a Christian and the other is not. Evidently the congregation at Corinth had asked Paul about this and other questions regarding marriage and divorce because in the first verse of the chapter he said, "Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me." After giving some instructions regarding these questions, in verse twelve he begins to address the situation where both parties in a marriage are not believers. Thus far nothing is said regarding baptism, especially infant baptism. Paul instructs the congregation that in such cases, if the unbeliever desires to live with the believer the marriage is to continue. In other words, the marriage is just as valid and legal (holy) as if both were believers. Also, in such cases, their children were legitimate (holy) and not ill-legitimate or bastards. The unbelieving spouse is sanctified; that is, living in a holy state of marriage. (The words for sanctified and holy are from the same Greek word.) Therefore, the marriage is legitimate and the children from such people are legitimate. Equally, the unbelieving spouse is living in a legitimate (holy/sanctified) marriage. There is no warrant to impose infant baptism into such a passage. Agreeing with this interpretation, we quote from Adoniram Judson's work on *Christian Baptism*. Remember that Judson was of the protestant persuasion prior to him becoming a Baptist. He wrote as follows:

> The holiness ascribed to the children cannot be moral holiness, for it is ascribed to the unbelieving parent also. Nor can it be ceremonial or federal holiness, securing a title to church membership, or any church privilege; for though it is ascribed to the unbelieving parent, he is not considered a member of the church, or entitled to any church privilege. Nor is this interpretation consistent with the apostle's reasoning. It appears that the Corinthians have inquired of the apostle, whether it was lawful for believers, who were married to unbelievers, to continue the marriage connection. The apostle determines that it is lawful; for, says he, the unbeliever is sanctified by the believer, that is as "every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving; for it is *sanctified* by the word of God and prayer." (I Tim. 4:4-5) In this sense, the

> unbeliever is sanctified, so that it is lawful for the parties to dwell together. Now if it was not lawful to dwell together, your children would, of consequence, be unclean. But they are not unclean. Therefore, you may be satisfied that your cohabitation is lawful marriage. But to urge the church membership of children, or their title to any church privilege, as proof that the unbeliever is sanctified to the believer, so that it is lawful for them to dwell together, would have been quite irrelevant.

At this point, Judson quotes many ancient writers that agree with his interpretation of the Greek word for holy in this place.

Our time is up for today. The Lord willing, we will look at the remaining three passages in our next podcast.

The Subject of Baptism (6th)

(Today we will look at the remaining passages given from the *Westminster Confession of Faith* which the Protestants use to support the baptism of infants of believing parents.)

The passages that we will study today are Mt. 28:19; Mk. 10:13-16; Lk. 18:15. These are the last passages from the list found in the *Westminster Confession of Faith* to support the baptism of infants of believing parents.

Matthew 28:19 states, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Previously we quoted from Robert Shaw's exposition of the Westminster Confession and referring to this passage he gave the following:

> The warrantableness of infant baptism may lie inferred from the commission of the apostles to baptise "all nations," which certainly includes infants; and from the practice of the apostles, who baptised "households," upon a profession of faith by their domestic heads.

As you see, he said that "infant baptism" was "inferred" from this passage. John Calvin, when commenting on this passage, said, "But as Christ enjoins them to *teach* before *baptizing,* and desires that none but *believers* shall be admitted to *baptism,* it would appear that *baptism* is not properly administered unless when it is preceded by faith." Calvin further comments that this "appearance" is a "pretence" and only applies to Gentiles, and he proceeds to connect baptism with God's covenant to Abraham in Genesis 17:7 inferring that now children of one or more believers are

included. Nevertheless, it still remains, as Calvin said, Matthew 28:19 appears to say otherwise. Calvin also stated regarding Matthew 3:6 and Mark 1:5, "That men may come forward, in a right manner, to be baptized, *confession of sins* is demanded from them: otherwise the whole performance would be nothing but an idle mockery." In order to make allowances for his reformed views of infants and small children, he says this is for adults. (Allow me to say that many quotes like this can be supplied by other reformers. Calvin was not alone in stating the obvious of these and other like passages.) However, in both passages, nothing is said or implied in the passages regarding infants. The protestants or reformers build their doctrines on inferences and suppositions. Matthew 28:19 plainly declares that the order is first, teach, and then baptism. Also, verse twenty follows with further teaching after baptism. This cannot be done with infants and small children. The obvious sense from the text is that when one understands the truth of the gospel, baptism follows. To read into the Scriptures, as Shaw does, and not accept the Scriptures as God inspired them is unwarranted to say the least and dangerous to say the most. Our Lord said in Revelation 22:20-21, "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in this book." I am not saying that the protestants are necessarily willful or malicious in their interpretations, but I am saying that it is a serious matter to deny the plain teaching of God's Word and read into it what is not said or plainly taught.

Now we come to the last two passages. Since both passages are in the same context we will study them together.

First is Mark 10:13-16, "And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them: and *his* disciples rebuked those that brought *them*. But when Jesus saw *it*, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And he took them up in his arms, put *his* hands upon them, and blessed them." Second is Luke 18:15, "And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them: but when *his* disciples saw *it*, they rebuked them."

Let us quote again from Calvin in his *Commentaries on the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke* regarding these passages along with Matthew 19:13. He said, "Those *little children* have not yet any understanding to desire his blessing; but when they are presented to him, he gently and kindly receives them, and dedicates them to the Father by a solemn act of blessing." The passages do say that the Lord took them in

His arms and blessed them, but they do not say that Christ dedicated "them to the Father." That is inferred as the reformers do in so many other passages regarding the baptism of infants or small children. Calvin further states, "He declares that he wishes to receive *children*; and at length, *taking them in his arms*, he not only embraces, but *blesses* them by the *laying on of hands*; from which we infer that his grace is extended even to those who are of that age." Notice that Calvin said that "we infer that his grace is extended ... to those who are of that age." Here is another inference. He went on to say, "To exclude from the grace of redemption those who are of that age would be too cruel; and therefore it is not without reason that we employ this passage as a shield against the Anabaptists. They" (the Anabaptists—JKB) "refuse baptism to *infants*, because infants are incapable of understanding the mystery which is denoted by it. We, on the other hand, maintain that, since baptism is the pledge and figure of forgiveness of sins, and likewise of adoption by God, it ought not to be denied to *infants*, whom God adopts and washes with the blood of his Son. Their objection," (by "their objection" Calvin is referring to Anabaptists—JKB) "that repentance and newness of life are also denoted by it, is easily answered. *Infants* are renewed by the Spirit of God, according to the capacity of their age, till that power which was concealed within them grows by degrees, and becomes fully manifest at the proper time. . In short, by embracing them, he testified that they were reckoned by Christ among his flock. And if they were partakers of the spiritual gifts, which are represented by Baptism, it is unreasonable that they should be deprived of the outward sign."

Calvin and the reformers and protestants of today "infer that grace is extended . to those of that age" and that "God adopts and washes them with the blood of his Son." They also maintain that "*Infants* are renewed by the Spirit of God, according to the capacity of their age, till that power which was concealed within them grows by degrees, and becomes fully manifest at the proper time," and children/infants are "reckoned by Christ among his flock . and partakers of the spiritual gifts." If this is true, then all infants/children who are baptized are either saved or some fall out of grace and are lost. No wonder Charles Hodge said when writing about infant baptism, "Do let the little ones have their names written in the Lamb's book of life, even if they afterwards choose to erase them. Being thus enrolled may be the means of their salvation." *Systematic Theology*, Vol. 3, p. 588.

One thing is obvious from these passages. Nothing is stated in them about baptism. Whatever is included in the blessing given by Christ, it is certain that nothing was said about baptism. Furthermore, it is obvious that Christ did not baptize them because Scriptures states that "Jesus himself baptized not," Jn. 4:2.

We have studied all the passages connected with the subject of baptism (with one exception) and the Greek words used associated with those verses and nothing was said about infants or small children being baptized. Also, we looked at those passages supplied in the *Westminster Confession of Faith* given to support the baptism of infants and again we did not find any verse that stated that infants were baptized or were candidates or subjects for baptism. Therefore, the Scriptures are clearly silent on the matter. May we always yield ourselves to the authority of God—the Holy Scriptures— and not be guilty of building doctrine on inferences and suppositions but humble ourselves to the clear teaching of the Word of God.

The "one exception" passage I mentioned is I Corinthians 12:13. It reads "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether *we be* bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." This passage is often used by both Baptists and protestants to teach what is considered "spirit baptism" or "regeneration." The Lord willing we will study this passage in our next broadcast.

Baptism of the Spirit (1st)

(As stated in our last podcast, today we will study I Corinthians 12:13. This passage is often used by both Baptists and Protestants to teach what is considered "spirit baptism" or "regeneration.")

Obviously, we cannot to do a full study of the baptism of the Spirit as found in the early days of the history of Christianity and the question as to whether it continues today. That would be a lengthy study and require several podcasts. And though our purpose is to study I Corinthians 12:13 and its connection with the subject of baptism, it will be necessary to touch on such incidents as the Day of Pentecost and other like occurrences.

Often this passage is used by both Baptists and Protestants to teach what is considered "spirit baptism" or "regeneration." Also, in modern times some have included Romans 6:3-6, Colossians 2:11-13, and Galatians 3:27 in connection with I Corinthians 12:13 to teach "spirit baptism" or "regeneration." It must be admitted that this subject is not a simple matter and the interpretation of I Corinthians 12:13 is equally no easy subject. I believe the Baptist B. H. Carroll may have described the complexity of the subject as well as anyone. He said, "Indeed, I do not know a subject about which there is so much incorrect thinking and confusion of mind as about the baptism in the Spirit. Not one preacher in a thousand, whether he be ignorant or learned, has any clear conception of the signification of the Baptism of the Spirit." With that being said, Carroll had his own unique interpretation of this passage. Also,

I want to make it clear that I do not think that I have the last word on the subject and in light of what many of sound writers say regarding this text it is difficult to think it to mean otherwise. Many quotes could be supplied to show this, but we will limit ourselves to two.

From the *Works of Thomas Manton* (the Puritan) in volume 13, p. 236, gave the following regarding how believers are united to Christ. "Now a man is united to Christ two ways—

1. Externally.
2. Internally.
1. Externally, by baptism and profession: John 15:2. ... [I do not understand the use of this text here.—JKB]
2. Internally; when we are ingrafted into the mystical body of Christ by his Spirit, and have the real effect of our baptism and profession: 1 Cor. xii. 13."

Next we will quote from the Baptist John Gill in his commentary on this verse. "*For by one Spirit are we all baptized,* This is to be understood not of water baptism; for the apostle says not in one, and the same water, but 'by', or 'in' one Spirit, are we all baptized; the baptism of water, and of the Spirit, are two different things; . There is indeed an allusion made to water baptism, but it is the grace of the Spirit in regeneration and sanctification which is here intended ."

As I said before, many such like quotes can be supplied to support this interpretation. Also, it might seem audacious and prideful to differ with men of such notability. Nevertheless, allow me to provide some things for your consideration regarding this passage.

First, we must consider how the Greeks words for baptism were translated and used in the Scriptures.

1. Βαπτιζω is used 80 times in the New Testament. It is translated *baptize* 76 times, *wash* 2 times, *baptist* 1 time, *baptized* 1 time.
2. Βαπτισμα is used 22 times and is always translated *baptism*.
3. Βαπτιστες is used 14 times and is always translated *Baptist*.
4. Βαπτω is used 3 times and is always translated *dip*.
5. Βαπτισμος is used 4 times and is translated *washing* 3 times (Mk. 7:4, 8; Heb. 9:10) and *baptism* 1 time (Heb. 6:2).

Therefore, without question, when these Greek words are used in connection with the ordinance of baptism almost in every place it refers to water baptism. To my knowledge, the major exceptions are I Corinthians 12:13; Romans 6:3, 4; Colossians 2:12; and possibly Galatians 3:27. My question is, "Why should these four (4)

passages mean something different from the rest of the New Testament?" Even when the words referred to washing, water was involved. (Obviously, when the words were used symbolically or metaphorically regarding suffering, the meaning would have no bearing on the rite of baptism other than that of immersion or being overwhelmed.) What is it about these passages that would cause the reader to immediately think the Lord was talking about something different from the overall use of the words? Why should we immediately think of being baptized by the Spirit (or even with the Spirit) when reading these verses regarding baptism when all others have to do with water?

The second consideration is the use of the Greek word baptizw in this letter written to the congregation at Corinth. (None of the other Greeks words for baptism are used in I Corinthians.) This word is used ten (10) times in this book. In chapter one, it is used six (6) times and it is obvious that it refers to water baptism. I Corinthians 10:2 is clearly used in a metaphorical way when referring to the Israelites being "baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." However, it fits the picture of our baptism. When we are baptized in water we are submitting our lives to the Lord as our deliverer and leader, so likewise, did the Israelites when following Moses out of Egypt. The type and analogy matches in both cases. In chapter fifteen and verse twenty-nine, baptizw is used two times. Regardless of the interpretation of this difficult passage, I believe everyone agrees that this passage is not related to "spirit baptism" but to that of water baptism. Therefore, why should the word for baptism in I Corinthians 12:13 refer to something different from the other uses of it in this epistle? What did Paul say or how did he used the Greek word baptizw to cause the saints at Corinth to think differently about this word than how it was used throughout the epistle? It is generally considered when interpreting Scripture that we are to let the Scriptures interpret itself, and that we are to interpret in light of the clear teaching of the Scriptures and not build doctrines or form opinions on that which is unclear. Unless the Scriptures give a clear understanding that the word is used differently from the clear usage throughout the writing, then we should not read something else into the text.

A third question to consider regarding baptism is the *how*. In other words, how is baptism performed? On the surface this question will likely appear to be trite. However, I assure you it is of extreme importance. When baptism is performed, there must be the subject (who is baptized), the administrator (who is baptizing), and the element (into what is the subject baptized). Generally, baptism is performed by the believer being immersed in water by the minister. The believer is the subject, the element is water, and the minister is the administrator. But what about "spirit baptism"? Who is the administrator and what (or who) is the element and who is the

subject?

On the day of Pentecost, when it is generally believed by all that there was a baptism of the Holy Spirit, we find all three parts of baptism: the subject; the element; the administrator. The “about an hundred and twenty” (Acts 1:15) were “in one place” (Acts 2:1). The spirit came and filled the house, Acts 2:2. After the people from the various countries heard the spirit filled people “speak ... the wonderful works of God,” some asked what it all meant, Acts 2:11-13. Others accused them of being drunk with wine. Peter addressed the crowd and said that it was a fulfilling of the prophet Joel. After quoting the prophecy of Joel and preaching other things concerning the prophecy and the work of Christ, Peter said, “Therefore (Christ) being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear,” Acts 2:33. Therefore, Christ, the administrator, baptized the believers, in the Holy Spirit. Even John Wickliffe connected the order of baptism of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost to that of water baptism. Notice this from Henry Danvers' (a Baptist), in his book, *A Treatise of Baptism*, in 1674, p. 284 (p. 280 in Sprinkle reprint) where he outlines Wickliffe's beliefs. He said, “. therefore faith and repentance, or regeneration goes first, baptism of water follows after; in order to the baptism of the Spirit; as Acts 2:38.”

There is much discussion as to whether what took place at Samaria (Acts 8:14-17), at Caesarea, in Cornelius' house (Acts 10:44-47), or at Ephesus (Acts 19:6) was the same thing as on the Day of Pentecost in Jerusalem. In reality, our study is not to answer the questions regarding those incidents or if such continues to happen today. However, assuming (for arguments sake) they are one and the same, the pattern is identical: Christ as the administrator; believers are the subjects; the Holy Spirit is the element. However, this is not the pattern that is presented regarding “spirit baptism” with I Corinthians 12:13.

Since our time is up for today, the Lord willing, we will have to continue this study in our next lesson. Please continue to be in prayer as we go forward with this subject.

Baptism of the Spirit. (2ND)

(This episode is Part 2 of our study of I Corinthians 12:13. As previously stated, this passage is often used by both Baptists and Protestants to teach what is considered "spirit baptism" or "regeneration.")

In our last study, we began looking at I Corinthians 12:13. We did not discuss this verse when we went through the New Testament looking at the five Greeks words for baptism as they related to water baptism. Since this verse is often used (along with Romans 6:3-6, Colossians 2:11-13, and sometimes Galatians 3:27) to teach about "spirit baptism" or "regeneration," we wanted to study it separately. Previously, we discussed somewhat about the difficulty of the passage. We further gave a couple of quotes showing how it is often believed that this verse is teaching "spirit baptism" or "regeneration."

We also presented some things to consider about the subject. First, how the Greeks words for baptism were translated and used in the Scriptures. Second, how the Greek word baptizw (none of the other Greeks words for baptize are used in I Corinthians) is used in this letter written to the congregation at Corinth. Third, the pattern for baptism; that is, how baptism is performed.

We ended our lesson by saying there is much discussion as to whether what took place at Samaria (Acts 8:14-17), at Caesarea, in Cornelius' house (Acts 10:44-47), or at Ephesus (Acts 19:6) was the same thing as on the Day of Pentecost in Jerusalem. We also said that our study is not to answer the questions regarding those incidents or if such continues to happen today. However, assuming (for arguments sake) they are one and the same, the pattern is identical: Christ as the administrator; believers as the subjects; the Holy Spirit as the element. However, this is not the pattern that is presented regarding "spirit baptism" with I Corinthians 12:13. Today we want to look at the pattern that is generally presented for "spirit baptism" or "regeneration" and see if it fits the pattern of water baptism and the pattern of baptism of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost.

As a follow-up from our conclusion regarding Christ being the administrator for Holy Spirit baptism see Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Acts 1:5; 11:16. Time does not permit us to look at each verse individually, but since they all essentially say the same thing, we will quote Matthew 3:11 where John said, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me (speaking of Christ) is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." Scripture plainly declares that it is Christ

that baptizes with the Holy Ghost or Spirit. Christ is the Administrator of Holy Spirit baptism. Let us see if this fits the pattern of I Corinthians regarding "spirit baptism" as is considered by many.

John Gill said of this baptism of the spirit, "Now this is wrought by the Spirit of God, and is owing to his divine power and energy; not to water baptism, which has no regenerating virtue in it; nor to carnal regeneration, or a being born of blood, or of the best of men; nor to the will of any man; nor to the will of the flesh, or the power of man's freewill; but to God, to the Spirit, who is Lord and God, and the only sanctifier of the sons of men; by which spiritual baptism, or by whose grace in regeneration and conversion they are brought into one body: the mystical body of Christ, the universal and invisible church; that is, openly and manifestatively; for otherwise it is the grace of God in election, and in the everlasting covenant, choosing them in Christ, as members in their head, and constituting them such, that puts them among that number; but spiritual baptism, or the sanctifying grace of the Spirit, makes them appear to belong to that body, and makes them meet for, and gives them a right unto, a particular Gospel church, and the privileges of it, which the Spirit of God directs and brings them to."

You will notice that this "baptism," according to Gill, is (1) "wrought by the Spirit of God," (2) "by whose grace in regeneration and conversion they are brought into ... the mystical body of Christ, the universal and invisible church," (3) it is a "spiritual baptism" that "makes them appear or belong to that body, and makes them meet for, and gives them a right unto, a particular Gospel church." He makes it clear that prior to this "spiritual baptism" the subjects were previously in the everlasting covenant elected and chosen in Christ. Here we see that it is the Holy Spirit that is the administer, and the elect (though dead in sin) are the subjects, but into what are these elect baptized? What is the element? He says it is the "mystical" and "invisible" church. By this are we to infer that tangible and concrete dead sinners are made spiritually alive and put into an intangible, invisible, mystical, and abstract object? If so, this gives a duel meaning of regeneration because the Scriptures teach that regeneration (or the new birth) is making a dead sinner spiritually alive. His will and desires are changed. Something concretely happens to him in a spiritual way. But in "spiritual baptism" the dead person is (by regeneration) put into the invisible congregation or body of Christ. To me, this does not fit the pattern of baptism as taught in the Scriptures—not the picture of water baptism or the picture of the baptism of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost as administered by the Lord Jesus Christ. This "spirit baptism" has to be read into the context of I Corinthians 12:12-27. Another thought to consider is, if this is regeneration when the Holy Spirit comes

into a person to make him spiritually alive to God, is the Holy Spirit somehow performing a "spirit baptism" whereby He (the Spirit) is "baptizing" a dead sinner into Himself (i.e., into the Holy Spirit)? As you can see many questions are opened with this view. And, as Gill rightly says, they are put into Christ before the world in election. And for dispensationalists, they are put into this invisible church when they exercise their free will and believe.

Obviously, the context of this passage has to do with the body of Christ, the congregation of the Lord. The Greek word for body is used nineteen (19) times in I Corinthians and eighteen (18) of the nineteen times is found in our passage of I Corinthians 12:12-17. What the Lord is teaching the congregation at Corinth in this passage is not what the church/congregation is. Neither is He teaching us what baptism is. Because of the friction and division in this congregation over the use of gifts, chapters twelve (12) through fourteen (14) is given to correct the improper use of those gifts and to promote unity within the congregation. In our passage (I Cor. 12:12-27), the Lord inspires Paul to use the human body to demonstrate how the different parts work together for the good and harmony of the whole. Likewise, the congregation with its different gifts is to work together in peaceful harmony for the good of the entire congregation. In verse 12, Paul begins by using the human body as a standard of unity as to how the congregation should be. In other words, Paul was saying that Christ is not divided, but is in perfect unity like a human body. Verse 13 is to be understood by the context. Verses 14-25 are definitely referring to the human body. Verse 26 may, or may not, be referring to the human body. In either case, it is speaking of the care that the members in the body (the congregation) should have for each other. In verse 27, it clearly states that the congregation at Corinth is "the body of Christ." Actually, the definite article is absent before body in the Greek text and the verse can be rightly read "a body of Christ." So out of the 18 times the word body is used in the text, 16 of them clearly refer to a human body. And when Paul said that the congregation at Corinth was "the body (or a body) of Christ" he did not include the congregation at Cenchrea (Rm. 16:1) which was only a short distance down the road. Nor did he address his epistle to the "church/congregation" of Galatia but to the "churches/congregations" of Galatia (Gal. 1:2) when he wrote to a group of congregations. And when there were more than one congregation at Rome (see Romans chapter 16), Paul did not address the epistle of Romans to the church at Rome, but to "all that be in Rome ... called ... saints," Rm. 1:7. I believe too much is made of the idea of "the church" being the "body of Christ" as something invisible and mystical. Clearly the teaching of the church (congregation) of God in the New Testament is focused on the individual congregations and it is there the Lord meets

with His saints in worship and it is in the congregation that the truth is sustained, I Tim. 3:15. Therefore, it is essential that the congregation be of one mind and one spirit in everything. The strength and life of the congregation is in the unity of the members and this is what Paul stressed at Corinth regarding their issues with the gifts.

In conclusion of our study today, those who believe I Corinthians 12:13 is "spirit baptism" maintain that it is the Holy Spirit that does the baptizing. The baptism of the Holy Spirit that John preached (Mt. 3:11 and related passages) clearly stated that Christ was the administrator; therefore, this "spirit baptism" that is advocated by many in I Corinthians 12:13 is something different. They teach that it is regeneration. They further teach that it is when "believers" are added to the mystical or invisible body of Christ. Scripture never designates a group of churches or a group of believers from different churches as a church or body of Christ. The Scriptures do designate a single congregation as the (or a) body of Christ (I Cor. 12:27) and Scriptures plainly show that when a letter is to be addressed to a group of churches it is plainly declared, Gal. 1:2.

Sadly, our time has run out for today. The Lord willing we will look at I Corinthians 12:13 in a more detailed way to declare what we believe it is teaching in our next study.

Baptism of the Spirit (3rd)

(Today's episode contains Part 3 of our study of I Corinthians 12:13. In this episode, we will mainly consider the interpretation of the verse itself.)

In our previous studies we noted that I Corinthians 12:13 is often believed to be teaching the new birth or regeneration; that it is a "spiritual baptism" and does not refer to water baptism. We presented how the Greeks words for baptism were translated and used in the Scriptures. Second, how the Greek word βαπτίζω (none of the other Greeks words for baptize are used in I Corinthians) is used in this letter written to the congregation at Corinth. Third, the pattern for baptism; that is, how baptism is performed. We saw that the pattern for the baptism of the Holy Spirit as prophesied by John the Baptist and as it was performed on the Day of Pentecost (and afterwards) was that Christ was the Administrator, believers were the subjects, and the Holy Spirit was the element. In other words, they were baptized in the Holy Spirit.

The advocates of a "spiritual baptism" in I Corinthians 12:13 maintain that it is ***by*** the Holy Spirit; that is, the Spirit is the administrator of this "spirit baptism." They further affirm that it is when someone is regenerated and/or put into the "universal,

invisible, mystical body or church." This too purposes problems because what is the definition of the "invisible church"? We previously quoted from Thomas Manton and John Gill regarding this, and their view are that the "invisible, mystical church" is the elect that were chosen in Christ before the world began, cf. Eph. 1:4. The modern day dispensationalist affirm that this "invisible church" only contain believers from the Day of Pentecost until the second coming of Christ. Some affirm that this "mystical church" only includes believers who are currently alive on earth, while others say it is the believers who have died and are with the Lord in glory. Therefore, when someone speaks of this "universal invisible church," unless the speaker is clear as to what he means, the audience may have an entirely different opinion as to what he means. (By the way, some advocate a "universal visible church," but that is another study which we will not include here.) It is for this reason, as well as others, that I believe we need to disregard the use of the English word "church" and use, as William Tyndale did, congregation. Tyndale translated the Greek word ἐκκλησία, [which is generally given as "church" in the KJV] as congregation in every place in the New Testament. While much more can be said regarding this, we need to move on and look at I Corinthians 12:13 to try to understand what it is saying.

The verse reads, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether *we be* Jews or Gentiles, whether *we be* bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." (As you will see, this is from the King James Version Bible, which, I believe, is the most accurate English translation.) However, according to the Greek text, the phrase is literally *εν ενι πνευματι;* that is, in one spirit and not by one spirit. In our quote from John Gill in our first lesson on this subject, he allowed this. He said, "for the apostle says not in one, and the same water, but 'by', or 'in' one Spirit." Henry Alford in his *The Greek Testament* (II, 580) and G. G. Findlay in *The Expositor's Greek Testament* (II, 890) affirm that it should be translated "in one Spirit." Many other authorities could be quoted to support this position.

The second thing to consider regarding this verse is the capitalization of the word "Spirit." As is generally known, capitalization as we know it today was not in the original Greek text and, therefore, was added by either translators, or by modern day publishers in some cases. This is demonstrated by the following examples. In my Cambridge wide margin authorized King James Version Bible (and my Collin's and World bibles), the English word "spirit" is not capitalized in Acts 11:12 and 28. Acts 11:12 reads, "And the spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting." From Acts 10:19, obviously Acts 11:12 should also be capitalized because it reads "While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee." Further I believe Spirit in Acts 11:28, should, too, be capitalized: "And there stood up one of

them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar." However, in another Bible that I have published by Regency Publishing House, which is also an authorized King James Version Bible, the word "Spirit" ***is*** capitalized in both verses (12 and 28) in Acts 11. They are also capitalized in the Geneva Bible as published by Tolle Lege Press in 2006. In an exact replica of the original King James Version Bible as printed by Zondervan in 2011 on the 400th anniversary of the 1611 Bible, in Acts 10:19, 11:12, 28, the word "spirit" is not capitalized. Also, the word "spirit" is not capitalized in I Corinthians 12:13 in the exact replica of the original King James Version Bible. However, "Spirit" in I Corinthians 12:13 is capitalized in all of the bibles mentioned above. I also have a Cambridge compact Bible that has the same title page and publishing information as my wide margin edition and the word "Spirit" ***is*** capitalized in Acts 11:12, 28. William Tyndale's translation as published by John Rogers of the Matthew's Bible of 1537, has "Spirit" capitalized in Acts 11:12, 28, but in I Corinthians 12:13, where it is translated "in one spirit," and not "by one spirit," the word "spirit" is ***not*** capitalized. By this you can see that I am not doing violence to the Scriptures by setting forth that the word "spirit" should not be capitalized in I Corinthians 12:13 and that it should read "in one spirit" and not "by one Spirit." In fact, I have the original King James translation and Tyndale's translation to support my position.

(As a side note, I mentioned above that Tyndale translated the Greek word ἐκκλησία, [which is generally given as "church" in the KJV] as congregation in ***every*** place in the New Testament. Since the KJV translators followed Tyndale it may have been translated as such and I Corinthians translated "in one spirit" if the rules by King James had not forbidden them to do so. That is another study which may be considered at a later time.)

This Greek prepositional phrase *εν ενι πνευματι* (in one spirit) is used in two other places in the New Testament. First, Ephesians 2:18, "For through him we both have access ***by one Spirit*** unto the Father." (Emphasis mine.) Second, Philippians 1:22, "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast ***in one spirit***, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel." (Emphasis mine.) You will note that in Ephesians 2:18 it is "***by*** one Spirit" and "Spirit" is capitalized. In Philippians 1:27, it is "***in*** one spirit" and "spirit" is not capitalized. Let it be noted that according to the context of both places congregational unity is what is being taught and I believe that Ephesians 2:18 should be translated "in one spirit" as in I Corinthians 12:13, where, too, congregational unity is the lesson being taught.

While some may think that this is a forced interpretation, note the following quotes.

> After affirming that the access to the Father is "through" or "by means of" Christ, R. C. H. Lenski writes concerning Ephesians 2:18: 'The Greek is able to add the apposition to the "we" by means of the verb ending after the object "peace," thereby helping to emphasize the apposition: "we — the both (of us)," Gentiles and Jews alike. They come to the Father, not by two roads, but by one. Hence also the phrase "in one spirit." One hesitates to leave the consensus of the commentators who here translate "in one Spirit" as do our versions. This consensus also finds the Trinity in Paul's wording: "through him" (Christ) — "in one (Holy) Spirit" — the Father." Yet, attractive as this appears, we question its soundness. In v. 16 we have "in one body" to which there is now added as the complement, "in one spirit." This correspondence extends much farther when we note that "one" recurs together with "both" ("two"): v. 14, "*both* the parts *one* part"; v. 15, "the *two* men *one* new man"; v. 16, "the *both* of them *one* body"; now, "the *both* of us in one spirit." In this chain of four "both — one," one part, one man, one body, the last link is surely one spirit (not one Spirit). Not the thought that God or Christ or the Spirit are one fits into the chain, but one spirit, a unit mind and heart filled with one life and one faith by Christ, his blood and his cross, his gospel preaching of peace does. The decisive word is "one."
>
> '"The access to the Father" implies that the Ephesian Gentiles and Jews have an approach to him as his children and sons, οἰκεῖοί "household members." All the rights of children are theirs as also all the gifts that this divine Father bestows. All come to him as a unit, come "in one spirit," and are thus in one and the same blessed relation and position, no matter if they once were two, some of them Gentiles, others Jews. Πρός is the face-to-face preposition; "there is something almost intimate as well as personal in some of the examples" (R. 624, etc.), it is so in fact.' *The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles to the Galatians, Ephesians, and Philippians*, pp. 447-448. The R. 624 refers to A. T. Robertson's *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in Light of Historical Research.*
>
> Though S. D. F. Salmond, in *The Expositor's Greek Testament*, maintains that the word *spirit* refers to the Holy Spirit, he insists it be translated *in one Spirit*: 'The *en* is not = *by*, but *in*, with reference to the *element* in which alone we have the access. As that right is ours only *through* Christ ..., so it is made ours in actual experience only *in* the Spirit, by Jew and Gentile have it alike because it is one and the same Spirit that works in both. Vol. 3, p. 298. Fausset, in Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown's *Commentary*, agrees with Salmond. Vol. 6, p. 405 A. T. Robertson and William Hendriksen also maintain that it should be translated *in*

one Spirit.

However, our time is up and we must close for today.

Baptism of the Spirit (4th)

(Today's episode contains Part 4 of our study of I Corinthians 12:13. It is a compilation of various scholars who support the view that this verse is water baptism and not some kind of "spirit baptism.")

In our previous studies of I Corinthians 12:13, we considered four (4) things: (1st) How the Greeks words for baptism are used throughout the New Testament. (2nd) How the Greek word βαπτίζω is used in I Corinthians. (3rd) The pattern for how baptism is performed both with water and with the Spirit as on the Day of Pentecost. (4th) We presented a detailed study of the verse in the context and the interpretation of the verse itself and how the Greek phrase *ἑ ἑι ἰεφψιαρι* (in one spirit) is used in the New Testament to promote congregational unity. Today we will give some quotes from various scholars that support the position that this verse is speaking of water baptism and not some type of "spirit baptism." While the authority is in the Scriptures, it is generally admitted that the views of sound scholars and historical use should be considered in biblical interpretation.

The *Westminster Confession of Faith* referenced I Corinthians 12:13 regarding baptism from Article 1where it is stated "for the solemn admission of the party baptized into the visible Church." The confession also quoted Colossians 2:11-12 and Romans 6:3-4 for this (as they called it) "sacrament." (This is taken from the confession as issued by The Publication Committee of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland as printed in 1970.)

While the *London Baptist Confession of 1689* did not list I Corinthians 12:13, it did reference Romans 6:3-5, Colossians 2:12, and Galatians 3:27 as proofs of baptism as an ordinance. William Lumpkin in his book *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, published the General Baptists confession (the 1689 confession is a Particular Baptists confession.) *The Orthodox Creed*. Lumpkin called this "their so-called 'Orthodox Creed' to 'unite and confirm all true protestants in the fundamental articles of the Christian religion.'" This confession was published in 1678 and Article 28 regarding baptism and it referenced I Corinthians 12:13 and Romans 6:3-5 in support of this initiatory rite into the "visible church of Christ."

Some may try to affirm that since the 1689 Confession did not reference I Corinthians 12:13 that was because they believed it referred to "spirit baptism." However, William Kiffin and those associated with him believed I Corinthians 12:13

was water baptism. We will prove this from following quotes from him and John Bunyan. (Please remember that Kiffin signed both the 1643 and 1689 confessions.)

William Kiffin wrote against John Bunyan for his practice of open communion. Kiffin maintained that open communion was a new practice not only for the Baptist but also for other parties within the borders of Christianity. History clearly reveals that Bunyan's practice was a novel occurrence, and that it was later popularized by Robert Hall. (Allow me to add here that Kiffin and Bunyan were good friends. In fact, while Bunyan was in Bedford jail Kiffin went before the king of England on Bunyan's behalf seeking his release.)

Bunyan wrote:

Now that baptism is essential to church communion, I prove from I Cor. xii., where we shall find the apostle labouring to prevent an evil use that might be made of spiritual gifts, as thereby to be puffed up; and to think that such as wanted them, were not of the body, or to be esteemed members; he thereupon resolves, that whoever did confess Christ, and own him for his head, did it by the Spirit, (I Cor. xii. 3,) though they might not have such a visible manifestation of it as others had, and therefore they ought to be owned as members, as appears, ver. 23. And not only because they have called him Lord by the Spirit, but because they have by the guidance and direction of the same Spirit been baptized, ver. 13, "For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body," &c. I need not go about to confute that notion that some of late have had of this text, viz., that the baptism here spoken of is the baptism of the Spirit, because you have not owned and declared that notion as your judgment; but, on the contrary, ***all of you that I have ever conversed with have declared it to be understood of baptism with water***,[Emphasis mine—JKB.] by the direction of the Spirit. If so, then it follows, that men and women are declared members of Christ's body by baptism, and cannot be by Scripture reputed and esteemed so without it; which farther appears from Rom. vi. 5, where men by baptism are said to be planted into "the likeness of his death;" and in Col. ii. 12 we are said to be buried with him by baptism: all which, together with the consent of all Christians, (some few in these latter times excepted,) do prove that baptism is necessary to the initiating persons into the church of Christ. (From "An Exhortation To Peace And Unity," (1688) as found in *The Complete Works of John Bunyan*, (Marshallton, DL: The National Foundation for Christian Education, 1968), Four Volumes in Three, Vol. IV, p. 396.)

Kiffin said:

Object. 4. *Whereas some infer from I Cor. 12:13.* By one Spirit we are baptized

into one Body, whether Jews or Gentiles, Bond or Free, and have been all made to Drink into one Spirit, &c. *That Baptism is the Inchurching Ordinance, the conclusion is impertinent, for not Water Baptism, but the Baptism of the Spirit is there meant.*

Ans. That Baptism was of so constant and Universal use to the Enchurching of all sorts Ranks and Degrees, is fairly deduced from this Text, however excepted against, and that none were Inchurched without it, unless any man can find or name some persons that were neither *Jews* nor Gentiles, Bond nor Free, which denotes plainly, that all sorts were receiv'd by Baptism: the Jews though before Circumcised, yet were Baptized; the *Gentiles*, some times a People a far off were upon their believing by Baptism received. If free, as Masters, yet not admitted without it; If Bond, as Servants, yet by this Ordinance they were made equally of the same Church Priviledge by Baptism, *Gal. 3. 27, 28.*

And that Water Baptism is here meant is the Judgment of the most Learned Expositors: and the next words do make it Appear, *We have been all made to Drink into one Spirit.* By being baptized into one body and made to Drink into one Spirit. The Apostle shews the Communion which Believers have with the Holy Spirit in the Two Ordinanced, *Baptism* and the *Lords Supper*. For what else can be intended by Drinking into one Spirit, but the Saints Communion in the Spirit, in, and by the Supper [*Drinking*] by a *Synecdoche* being put both for Eating and Drinking: And if so, why must we not as well understand the First Ordinance in its proper Sense for Water Baptism in the former part, as the Later Ordinance, the Supper in the first part of the Text.

2. If the Baptism of the Spirit had been meant, then the being Baptised into one Body, and Drinking into one Spirit, must be one and the same thing, but surely Baptising and Drinking are no more the same, than the Body and the Spirit are the same, into which they are said respectively to be Baptised, and to Drink. But it is clear the Apostle hereby intends to mind those *Corinthians*, how that by means of the same Spirit working upon all their Hearts, they became Members of the same Body by Baptism, and that being of the Body, they came to have Communion in Spirit, or with the Spirit in the Supper.

It cannot be the Baptism of the Spirit, because the Spirit is here set forth by the Apostle, as the Agent or working Cause, and Baptism as the Effect; and it is ridiculous to make Cause and Effect the same thing. It is true the Scripture speaks elsewhere of a being Baptised with the Spirit, but when it doth so, it still declares either Jesus Christ, or God the Father as the Agent of Baptising with the Spirit, but never as making the Spirit both the Subject Matter wherewith, and the Agent whereby, men are Baptised in the same Baptism, see *Matth. 3.11. Mark 1.8. Luk. 3.16. and 24.49. Act. 11.4, 5, 16*.

We find in Scripture that when God chargeth men for sin, he tells them, *They did that which he commanded not, neither did it enter in his heart*. Now that this was the order of Administration with respect to these Ordinances, *viz*. I. To Teach, then Baptise, and then Admit to Church-Communion, is else where fully Evidenc'd from Precept and Example, *Matth. 28.19. Act. 2.41. &c*. And if that be the stated Method of God, and the Universal Practise of the Primitive Christians, we may Rationally infer that the contrary Practise is a Deviation from the Divine Rule, and a thing which God Commanded not.

The Apostle according to the Rule of Christ, first at *Jerusalem*, put this Commission in Execution, *Luk. 24.47*. And did Act according to it, and certainly their punctual Conformity to it, ought to be taken by us as the Interpretation of this grand Precept, and their Example a sufficient Pattern for succeeding Christians; unless we will suppose them to depart from it as soon as they began to Act in pursuance of it, which supposition includes a very strange Uncharitableness, and a very unbecoming Opinion of these Holy men. For nothing can be more plain than that Addition to the Church (or Church-Fellowship) followed after Baptism, and did not go before it: and why men now find a greater good in their own way than in his, is not to be easily resolved. Baptism in those days did certainly precede Church-Enjoyments, for it was esteem'd (as it still ought to be) a means of implanting men into Christ, or the Body of Christ the Church, *Gal. 3.27. Rom. 6.3*. Now let it be considered what a Planting together imports; It must be certainly the first putting of Christians together, in order to their Growing together in Christ, and yet all this was done by Baptism: and may we not suppose Trees to grow together before they are Planted together, as this Spiritual Plantation of Christ, *viz*. the Church, or Society of Christians, who were, and should still be Planted together by Baptism, not into this or that Particular Church; but into that one Church of Christ, which is distributed into several parts and particular Societies. Hence Baptism is called one of the Principles or beginning Doctrines of Christ, and part of the Foundation, *Heb. 6.1, 2*. Now there is no House can stand without its Principle, or can be Erected without a Foundation. See *I Cor. 12:13*. Where we have an account of all being Baptised into one Body, whether Jews or Gentiles, Bond or Free, which comprehended all Ranks and Degrees of Christians, as is elsewhere demonstrated. (From *A Sober Discourse of RIGHT to Church-Communion. Wherein is proved by Scripture, the Example of the Primitive Times, and the Practice of all that have Professed the Christian Religion: That no Unbaptized person may be Regularly admitted to the Lords Supper*, London, 1681, pp. 132-138.)

The Baptist, Henry Danvers, in his *Treaties of Baptism*, published in 1674, said,

"The New Testament Church was by Christ's appointment to be a *separated* people out of the nations consisting only of the *spiritual seed* of Abraham; and therefore believers upon profession of faith by the ordinance of baptism, were added thereto (Acts 2:41: I Cor. 12:13).

Calvin, *Institutes*, Book IV, Chapter XIV, Section 7, when writing about the "sacraments" says, "Hence Paul, addressing believers, includes communion with Christ, in the sacraments, as when he says, 'As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ' (Gal iii. 27). Again, 'For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body' (1 Cor. xii. 13).

Matthew Poole, commenting on this verse stated, "The apostle proveth the oneness of the church, as the body of Christ, from the same sacraments of the New Testament instituted for all Christians, and wherein they jointly partake." He went on to say that the baptism is that of water baptism and the "made to drink into one Spirit" to be that of the Lord's Supper.

John Brown of Hadington (1722-1787), "For without any regard to our being Jews or Gentiles, slaves or freemen, or any other condition of outward life, we are all by these gifts, and by our participation of baptism and the Lord's supper, and by the renovation which we have experienced, and the spiritual nourishment we received, divinely connected into on Christian church, and entitled to all the blessings and privileges thereof." *Brown's Self-Interpreting Family Bible*, (1778) p. 957.

Charles Hodge, commenting on this verse (published in the 1857) said, "This is commonly, and even by the modern commentators, understood of the sacrament of baptism; and the apostle is made to say that by the Holy Ghost received in baptism we were made one body."

The Purpose of Baptism (1st)

(Today we will begin studying the purpose of baptism. Since it is only taught in the New Testament, it is important that we know the purpose for which God gave this ordinance to His repentant believers.)

Previously we saw that both Baptists and Protestants affirm that baptism is associated with the validity of the congregation of the Lord, and for this reason it is essential that we know the truth concerning the doctrine of baptism. It was further stated that we need to know the mode, the subject, the purpose, and the administrator of baptism, and while there may be other questions regarding this subject, I believe it can be agreed by the majority that these four things are foundational to the topic at hand. So far we found that the mode is immersion in water, the subjects are professed believers, and it is generally agreed by both Protestants and Baptists that the

administrator is to be the gospel minister. Though the Protestants changed the mode and subjects in later years, they, too, agreed that in the early days of the history of Christianity that immersion in water was the mode practiced and that it was only performed on believers. This was practiced for at least over three hundred years after the time of Christ before any discussion was introduced regarding a different mode. In our study of baptism with the Spirit as prophesied by John and performed on the Day of Pentecost, and afterwards, that the pattern was the same: Christ was the administrator, believers were the subjects, and the Holy Spirit was the element. Spirit baptism was by Christ and not by the Holy Spirit. Today we shall consider the purpose of baptism.

Baptism was something that was first introduced by John the Baptist. There are some who say that it was adopted from Jewish proselyte baptism. The problem with this idea is that Jewish proselyte baptism did not start until years after New Testament baptism. For proof of this see *A Dissertation Concerning the Baptism of Jewish Proselytes* by John Gill. It is at the back of his *Body of Divinity*. Notice this quote by Gill: "Now since it appears there is no mention made of any such rite or custom of admitting Jewish proselytes by baptism, or dipping, to the Jewish religion in any writings and records before the times of John the Baptist, Christ, and his apostles; nor in any age after them, for the first three or four hundred years; or, however, before the writing of the Talmuds; it may be safely concluded there was no such custom which had obtained in that interval of time." Since baptism as an ordinance is not in the Old Testament and something new introduced by John as ordained by God, the answer to the purpose for baptism comes from the New Testament alone and not from the Old Testament or from any historical custom.

Scripture plainly declares that baptism is a picture of the work of salvation accomplished by Christ as declared in His resurrection, I Pet. 3:21 ("the like figure whereunto even baptism doth also save us ... by the resurrection of Jesus Christ"); Rm. 4:25 ("Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification). I Peter 3:21 also says that baptism is "the answer of a good conscious toward God." Equally, we are told by the inspired Word of God that baptism is a command of the Lord for the repentant believer, Acts 10:48. Therefore, when one obeys the Lord and is immersed in water and raised up from the watery grave it typifies (or, is a picture of) the death and resurrection of Christ. Sprinkling or pouring does not provide this picture.

Several years ago, a precious Baptist minister and his wife were taking care of a gracious Presbyterian lady. The minister and the lady had several conversations regarding baptism, but the lady was unable to see the difference between immersion

and sprinkling and affirmed that sprinkling was proper. After some time the lady's cat died and she asked the minister to bury the cat for her in the back yard. The minister took the cat to the appointed spot and got some dirt and sprinkled it on the cat. After bringing the lady to the spot for her inspection, she exclaimed that he did not bury the cat. He affirmed that he did after the fashion of her views of sprinkling being a burial to portray the resurrection of Christ. The lady immediately understood what the minister was teaching about baptism and later was immersed by the Baptist minister. While this story is somewhat humorous, I believe it is a good illustration to show the truth about baptism and that baptism is a sign of the believer with Christ in His death and resurrection. I Peter 3:21 makes it clear that this is one of the purposes of God for baptism.

The 1689 London Baptist Confession and the Westminster Confession agrees that baptism is associated with the congregation and identified with membership in the congregation. The Baptist confession says that it is "to be continued in the congregation" while the Westminster states that it is "for admission of the party into the visible Church." While much could be said at this point, it is obvious that either directly or indirectly one of the purposes of baptism is associated with the identity of the New Testament congregation.

The London and the Westminster confessions also agree that baptism is a sign of remission of sins, and one giving up himself unto God, through Jesus Christ, to live and walk in newness of life. The difference here is that the Baptists assert that it is a sign only for the believer, but the Protestants maintain that it is not only a sign but a seal of the covenant and that it is a sacrament or a means of conferring grace to or upon the person to whom baptism is administered. In fact, the Westminster goes on to say that "The efficacy of Baptism is not tied to the moment it is administered; yet, ... the grace promised is offered, really exhibited, and conferred, by the Holy Ghost, to such . as that grace belongeth unto, according to the counsel of God's own will, in His appointed time." While the Protestants affirm that it is a sign of "remission of sins," and a sign of "one giving up himself unto God, through Jesus Christ, to live and walk in newness of life . the efficacy of Baptism is not tied to the moment it is administered." So, if none of this is "tied to the moment" that baptism is administered, what is the purpose? What does it prove?

We do find scriptural support that baptism is a sign of remission of sins, and one giving up himself unto God, through Jesus Christ, to live and walk in newness of life. Since unbelievers and infants do not show fruits of repentance, nor do they manifest giving themselves up in obedience to God, and they do not live and walk as a Christian, baptism serves no purpose for them.

I would like to enlarge on some of the things stated before so that we might have a fuller appreciation of them. Without an understanding of the purpose of baptism, it becomes nothing more than some initiatory rite required to become a member of a religious organization, and I am persuaded that for the most part that is all baptism is today in many, if not most, congregations today. Many people (mostly children) are coerced or become emotionally stimulated to follow a trend or their peers to "join the church" when there is no change in their daily lives. In previous times before a person was received as a candidate for baptism and congregational membership he was required to give what is often called "an experience of grace." The individual was to relate how it was that the Lord called him out of darkness and translated him into the kingdom of God. In other words, the pattern of John the Baptist was followed when he required fruits of repentance before He would baptize such as the Pharisees and Sadducees. Unless some kind of requirement for proof of repentance is seen, congregations will continue to be filled with people who afterwards will cease attending congregational worship. If they do continue to attend, they often deny the truth of the Scriptures and are simply members of societies where nothing is required of them in their daily lives. In many cases they simply return to the world while their names are retained on the membership roll for a better show of numbers. To show the mentality of modern, so-called Christian religion, I recently heard on a so-called Christian radio that unless a person is "saved" by around fifteen, it is unlikely that the individual will ever be saved. Such is the mentality of modern "Christian" religion. The Scriptures plainly teach the God saves His people from their sins, Mt. 1:21. Obviously, the salvation of the New Testament believers proves the modern philosophy and its statistics as false or "another gospel," Gal. 1:6-7. When the Lord by His grace and power changes a person, he is delivered "from this present evil world," Gal. 1:4. The true believer is not only given a new heart and mind in regeneration, but he no longer lives, dresses, and acts like the world. He who is given a new heart and will by God overcomes the world because "greater is he" than is in him than "he that is in the world," I Jn. 4:4.

Therefore, as we find the New Testament opening with the message of John, one of the things that is essential in understanding the purpose of baptism is repentance. Matthew chapter three declares that John preached "repent ... for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." The Scriptures further states that those who went to John "were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins," Mt. 3:6. And, as we stated before, "fruits meet for repentance" (Mt. 3:8) were required. Charles Spurgeon rightly said, "Baptism, or the washing of the body in water, most fitly accompanied the cry, 'Repent ye.' The '*Confessing their sins*' which with baptism in Jordan gave it its meaning. Apart from the acknowledgment of guilt, it would have been a mere bathing

of the person without spiritual significance; but the confession which went with it made it an instructive sign." *The Gospel of Matthew*, p. 30.

Our time is up for today, but we see that in baptism there is to be a clear sign of repentance with the confession of the repenting sinner's sins. Without this, there is no baptism. It is, as Spurgeon said, "a mere bathing of the person without spiritual significance."

The Purpose of Baptism.. (2ND)

(We are continuing to study the purpose of baptism. In this day of emphasizing emotions and experiences over spiritual wisdom, it is essential that the purpose of baptism is ascertained.)

In our last study, we gave a general summary of our study of baptism so far and began looking at the purpose of baptism. After listing some of the purposes, we reviewed somewhat that baptism is a sign of repentance towards God. Now let us consider that baptism is a sign of obedience to the gospel.

Scripture plainly declares that baptism is a command. After Peter preached the gospel to those at Cornelius' house and there were evident signs belief, he asked those that came with him if there were any reasons that they should not be baptized. Then Peter "commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord," Acts 10:48. By this we find that the repentant believer is obligated or duty bound to be baptized. He has no options. Too often today people consider baptism to be merely an option or ritual to be performed for membership into the society of a local congregation. This is not the case. Baptism is a conscientious decision of a repentant sinner to obey the gospel of God. The people who showed "fruits meet for repentance" and confessed their sins were baptized when they heard John the Baptist preaching the gospel of the kingdom. On the day of Pentecost, when those who heard the preaching of Peter and the others were pricked in their heart, and asked "what shall we do?" were commanded not only to repent, but to be baptized. (The words for repent and be baptized are both in the imperative mood which indicates a command.) Again, when Ananias was instructed by the Lord to go to Paul in Damascus, he commanded Paul to "arise, and be baptized," (Acts 22:16). Therefore, no repentant sinner has any excuse for refusing to be baptized unless he is providentially hindered such as the thief on the cross. I am persuaded if he were by some extraordinary way released from the cross he would have sought baptism. Equally, a repentant sinner who may be lying on his death bed would be providentially hindered or he otherwise would be baptized.

Several years ago, I was blessed to meet and know Brother George Davis. Previously, he was a Hollywood actor, but the Lord converted him and his wife out

of that ungodly lifestyle. Brother Davis later was diagnosed with ALS (Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis) or as commonly called Lou Gehrig's Disease. As Brother George was getting to the latter stages and could barely walk, he requested baptism. When told that he might not survive such an act, he was not deterred and insisted on following His Lord in obedience to the gospel. I can still remember the glorious day when Brother George was carefully assisted into the river and baptized by the minister. What a wonderful testimony of gospel obedience! The last time I saw Brother Davis he was totally confined to the bed and could hardly talk, but his testimony of Christ and his love for the Lord was still glowing. Indeed, by such faith in obedience to the gospel, "he being dead yet speaketh," Heb. 11:4.

Brother Davis' example reflects the pattern found in the Scriptures. As we study the history of Christianity in the Gospels and in the book of Acts we find that the believers were obedient to the gospel and were baptized. There is no example (other than the thief on the cross who was, as I previously stated, providentially hindered) of a believer in the New Testament that was not baptized. Just as the repentant sinner obeyed and was baptized by John and the disciples of the Lord as listed in the Gospels, we find the same with the believers in the book of Acts. Clearly, the first outward act of Christian obedience is submitting to the command of the Lord to be baptized.

Obviously, God does not accept obedience by proxy or by an unconscious act. An infant does not make a conscious act of obedience unto the Lord. Equally, when a child is submitted for baptism by a parent or some other authority, it is unacceptable to God. As I said, God does not accept obedience by proxy. There is no outward sign of repentance and belief by an infant, neither is there a conscious act of obedience to the command of the Lord, and the infant is unable to present himself for baptism. Therefore, infant baptism or sprinkling does not fulfill the purpose of submitting to this command of God.

In close connection to this topic is giving up one's self to God. Though baptism is a one-time act, the reason for submitting to it is not just for the act; it is an open door (if you will) to a life of submission to the Lord. Baptism in New Testament was not something a person did as a simple act for satisfying the peers. For the person who was baptized it indicated that he had "turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God," I Thess. 1:9. It was a proof of the believers' devotion to the Lord. Too often today baptism is simply seen as something done so that one is logged on the roll of a congregation or a statistic to be entered for a "conversion record." Scriptures teaches otherwise. One of the purposes of baptism is a public testimony that a person has given up his life to deny self, the world, and all oppositions to the Lord and to devoted himself to the commands of God.

Another reason for baptism is a sign that one is devoted to walking in obedience to God in newness of life. This is essentially the same thing that we discussed regarding giving up one's self to God, but it is different in that we are looking at it from a different angle. The first is making the commitment to the Lord; this is manifesting the genuineness of the commitment with a walk or lifestyle devoted to walking in that obedience. Modern evangelism is committed to getting people to make a decision and then affirming one to be a believer at death regardless of the life one has lived. Such philosophy of modern Christianity is interested in the "born again experience" and the life in the hereafter, but hardly concerned with the life in between. This is foreign to the clear teaching of the Word of God. The Scriptures plainly declare that the sheep know the Good Shepherd, hear His voice, believe on Him, and follow Him, John 10:14, 27, 28. Furthermore, we are told that those whom the Lord loves He chastens so that they "might be partakers of his holiness," Heb. 12:6, 10. Those who "obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" shall be receive in the "flaming fire" of "vengeance" "when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels," II Thess. 1:7-10. Indeed, baptism is not a light thing and the Scriptures clearly reveal that therepentant sinner that was baptized in the days of the New Testament followed this lifestyle. They did not live after the world. They followed after the Lord in obedience unto death. This was the argument of Paul in Romans chapter six. He declared the inconsistency of living in sin after one was baptized, Rm. 6:1-12. Let us note some statements of these verses by the Baptist, Robert Haldane. Concerning Romans 3:3, "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized unto His death?" Haldane said, "In this and the following verses, Paul proceeds to give his full answer to the objection he had supposed, by showing that *the sanctification of believers rests on the same foundation, and springs from the same source, as their justification, namely, their union with Jesus Christ, and therefore, so far from their being contrary to each other, they are not merely in perfect harmony, but absolutely inseparable; and not only so, but the one cannot exist without the other.* ... The rite of baptism exhibits Christians as dying, as buried, and as risen with Christ. . This rite, then, proceeds on the fact that they have died with Him who bore their sins." Then following up with comments on verse four, he said, "The death of Christ was the means by which sin was destroyed, and His burial the proof of the reality of His death. Christians are therefore represented as buried with Him by baptism into His death, in token that they really died with Him; and if buried with Him, it is not that they shall remain in the grave, but that, as Christ arose from the dead, they should also rise. Their baptism, then, is the figure of their complete deliverance from the guilt of sin, signifying that God places to their account the death of Christ as their own death: it is also a figure of

their purification and resurrection for the service of God. Believers are dead to the guilt of sin, and if so, the ground of their separation from God being removed His almighty power is engaged and asserted to cause them to walk with their risen Lord in that new life which they derive from Him. It was, then, the purpose of Christ's death that His people should become dead to sin, and alive unto righteousness." And lastly, from Haldane's comments on verse twelve, "It should here be remarked, that although the apostle had expressly taught that they who are justified are likewise sanctified, yet as God is pleased to cause His people to act with Him in their sanctification—so that they shall both will and do, because He worketh in them to will and to do of His good pleasure—the earnest exhortations to obedience, and the motives held forth in the conclusion of the chapter, are entirely consistent with what had been declared as to the certainty of their sanctification resting on the power of God, and to be viewed as outward means which God employs to effect this purpose." *The Epistle to the Romans*, pp. 243-254.

Many such like quotes could be given from both Protestants and Baptists to support that one of the reasons or purposes of baptism is a sign of the believer walking in obedience to God in newness of life. There are some other purposes of baptism that we desire to cover, but our time is up for today and the Lord willing we will cover them in our next session.

The Purpose of Baptism (3rd)

(The purpose of baptism is aligned with an understanding of the finished work of Christ. Too often in the worship of God today, baptism is centered on an emotional experience of the candidate or the increasing of a membership role. Hopefully, our study today will give deeper insight to the purpose of baptism.)

Today we will conclude our study of the purpose of baptism.

While the person who is baptized does receive the answer of a good conscious toward God (I Pet. 3:21), the foundation of baptism is Jesus Christ and His Person and work. We have shown previously that baptism is a sign of repentance towards God, a sign of obedience to the gospel, a giving up of one's self to God, and a sign that one is devoted to walking in obedience to God in newness of life. Now let us consider that baptism is a sign of remission of sins.

We find in Mark 1:4 and in Luke 3:3 that those who John baptized were baptized "for the remission of sins." Mark 1:4 says, "John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." And Luke 3:3, states, "And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." On the day of Pentecost, to those that asked what they

should do, Peter said, “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins .Acts. 2:38. There have been much discussion concerning the phrase “for the remission of sins” particularly around the Greek word eivs which is translated “for.” Some maintain that a person is to be baptized “in order to” having his sins remitted. This Greek word translated “for” is the same word that is translated “at” in Matthew 12:41, “The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented **at** the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.” Obviously, the men of Nineveh did not repent “in order to” get Jonah to preach. The parallel passage in Luke 11:32 teaches the same as this passage. Romans 4:20 also bears this out: “He staggered not **at** the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God.” It was not Abraham's faithfulness that caused the promises of God to be. Just as the promises of God were prior to Abraham's faith, so was the remission of sins through the finished work of Christ a reality prior to baptism in Acts 2:38. Therefore, when one is baptized he is testifying that he believes his sins have been remitted through the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Too often today baptism is seen as a sign that someone is added to the congregation and the number of members has increased rather than a genuine sign that a person has confessed their sinfulness and that their sins are remitted by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

This is one of the reasons that the Lord called Paul to preached the gospel of God. The Lord said to him, “But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; Delivering thee from the people, and *from* the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, To open their eyes, *and* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me,” Acts 26:16-18. Note that one of the reasons for preaching the gospel is so that the believer “may receive forgiveness of sins.” The gospel is not what causes the forgiveness of sins, nor does believing the gospel produce the forgiveness of sins. However, when one believes the gospel, the truth of the forgiveness of sins (remission of sins) is received by the believer in his heart and soul. One cannot receive what is not. Therefore, the forgiveness or remission of sins must be a reality or in existence to be received. Too often the preaching of today is centered around family living, victory over social sins, receiving counseling so that one will have a better quality of life, or entertainments so that the audience will “feel better” about themselves or life. How often do we hear of the depravity and sinfulness of man and the need of his sins being removed by the work of Christ? Not that Jesus

has removed all the sins of the human race and now it is left up to you to give some acknowledgement to that and then everything else is okay. But that Christ actually accomplish salvation for His people and that those for whom He died are regenerated, see their sinfully wicked state, and flee to Christ for the remission of their sins. Afterwards, upon such a faith, the repentant sinner testified of this truth by baptism.

Another purpose or reason for baptism is the testimony of the believer that he was in fellowship with Christ in His (i.e., Christ's) death. In other words, the believer is testifying that when Christ died he (i.e., the believer) legally and judicially died with Christ and was equally resurrected with Him. And since baptism is a picture or figure of the death and resurrection of Christ (I Pet. 3:21), the one baptized is testifying that he, too, is walking in fellowship with Christ, Rm. 6:1-7.

> What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also *in the likeness* of *his* resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with *him*, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin.

In conjunction with this passage, let us look at Ephesians 2:1-10: "And you *hath he quickened*, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in *his* kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Obviously, we do not have time to discuss the entire passage, but I wanted to quote all of it to familiarize us with the context. As you see, it tells us of our depravity of being "dead in trespasses and

sins." This speaks of our fallen condition due to our legal status in Adam when he fell in sin, Rm. 5:12. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." We sinned in Adam and were judicially and legally constituted sinners as stated in Ephesians 2:1-3. In verse four we see the antitheses in with "But God." In verses five through seven, we find that God "when we were dead in sins ... quickened us together with Christ ... raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." The phrase "hath quickened us together with" is one Greek word (αυωοποιεω ˝σψζοοποιεο]) and it means that when Christ was quickened we (the believer/sheep) were likewise quickened. (The only other time this Greek word is used is in the parallel passage in Colossians 2:13.) Likewise, the phrases "hath raised us up together" (αὐεψελπω [σψνεγεφρο]) and "made us sit together" (οŸ'ΚΑΥΛΖΩ [σψνκατΜζο]) are each from a single Greek word and indicate that what happened to the one (Christ) equally happened to the believer. (The Greek word to raise up together is only in two other verses, Colossians 2:12 and 3:1 which are also parallel to the passages here in Ephesians. The word for sit together is only use in one other place, Luke 22:55.) Pulling all of this together, we see that when we are baptized we are not merely testifying that we are a believer in Jesus.

We are also testifying that we were legally and judicially represented in Him in His sacrifice for us and that we are now fellowshipping Him in a living way by walking in fellowship with Him. Our fellowship (lifestyle) is no longer with the world, but it is with Christ. This is what is meant by the sign of the believer being engrafted into Christ, Gal. 3:27. "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."

From the statements given from the confessions regarding the purpose of baptism, both Protestants and Baptists would agree with much of what has been said in the last two podcasts regarding the purpose of baptism. As previously discussed, naturally we would not agree that it is a sacrament or that it is a "seal of the covenant of grace." Since we have discussed these differences before, there is no reason to do so again. Also, our time is up for today and, the Lord willing, we will begin to consider the ordinance of the Lord's Supper in our next podcast.

The Lord's Supper (1st)

(Today we will begin looking at the distinction between the Reformers and the Baptist regarding the Lord's Supper. In this lesson we will show some of the basic positions of the Reformers.)

When we look at the subject of the Lord's Supper and the differences between

that of the Protestants and the Baptists, we find a more difficult distinction than that of baptism. This is because the Protestants too have differences with this subject. While Luther and his followers settled on consubstantiation, Zwingli and his followers maintain more of it being a memorial service, but Calvin and those who aligned with him believed in a somewhat mixed view of the Zwingli and Luther. Though the Protestants came out of Catholicism, they did not support the catholic view of transubstantiation which affirms that the bread and wine are changed into the literal blood and body of Christ. (There was no issue with wine being used in the Lord's Supper until the temperance movement of the 19th and 20th centuries. Therefore, there was essentially no issue between the Baptists and the Protestants regarding the elements of the Lord's Supper.)

J. H. Merle D'Aubigne said, "It is not at Zurich or at Geneva, but in Wittemberg, the focus of the Lutheran revival," (Zwingli was at Zurich, Calvin was at Geneva, and Luther was at Wittemburg) "that we should look for commencement of that reformed Church, of which Calvin became the chief doctor. ... But when the question of the Lord's Supper was once started, Luther violently rejected the reformed element, and bound himself and his Church in an exclusive Lutheranism. The vexation he felt at this rival doctrine caused him to lose much of his natural kindness of disposition, and aroused in him a mistrust, an habitual discontent and irritation, to which he had hitherto been a stranger. D'Aubigne further commented about the Lord's Supper: "While on a superficial glance we see nothing but a trivial dispute about words, a deeper observation discloses to us one of the most important controversies that can occupy the human mind." *History of the Reformation of the Sixteenth Century*, Vol. III, Book X, Chapter VII, pp. 368-369 (5 volumes in 1 by Baker Book House, 1976 edition).

Regardless of the position taken by a particular reformed group, they all agreed that it, like baptism, was a sacrament. Though we discussed the subject and meaning of sacrament in previous sessions, it will be good to review it somewhat here less we forget the seriousness and importance of subject at hand. You may remember that the word for sacrament is derived from the Greek word musth,rion which is translated as mystery. As Calvin said, "The old interpreter, whenever he wished to render the Greek term musth,rion into Latin, especially when it was used with reference to divine things, used the word *sacramentum*." The "old interpreter" to which Calvin referred was Catholic Jerome who is known for translating the Bible into Latin, though there were others who contributed to this translation. This Latin translation is known as the *Vulgate*. Also, remember that the Latin word *sacramentum* was not used for the Greek word musth,rion in every place. It was only "when it was used with reference to divine things." When using sacrament in reference to the Lord's

Supper, Calvin "asserted that a sacrament was (1) a help to our faith, (2) an external sign, (3) a seal on our conscious of God's promises, (4) to sustain the weakness of our faith, and (5) a testimony of our piety towards God before Him and before angels and before men. Then he proceeds to say that this is all a mystery by using the Latin translation of the Scriptures by the Catholics where they substituted the Latin word for sacrament in the place of the Greek word for mystery." From Podcast 007 — "Ordinance or Sacrament."

As was noted earlier, the Catholics believed in transubstantiation which affirms that the bread and wine are changed into the literal blood and body of Christ. Luther and his followers believe in consubstantiation. While they did not believed that the bread and wine were changed into the literal body and blood of Christ, they did believe that the body and blood came along with the bread and wine.

In October 1-4, 1529, Luther, Melancthon, Zwingle, and fficolampadius, along with others, met together for discussion of their differences and to try to come together regarding the basic doctrines. This was called the Marburg Colloquy because it was at Marburg Castle, in Marburg, Hesse, Germany. The Lord's Supper was discussed for days and at times with animated arguments. On Saturday, October 2nd, Luther began the discussion by taking a piece of chalk and writing in large letters HOC EST CORPUS MEUM, which was "this is my body." While Zwingle and fficolampadius affirmed with various arguments and verses of Scripture that the phrase was merely a figure of speech. Luther strongly affirmed that it was the body of Christ. He said, "I do not ask what need we have of it; but I see it written, *Eat, this is my body*. We must therefore believe and do. We must do—we must do!—If God should order me to eat dung, I would do it, with the assurance that it would be salutary." (P. 529) The arguments are interesting but we do not have time to supply them. Finally, it was agreed that Luther write the articles of faith agreed on in the meeting along with the conclusion regarding the body and blood of the Lord in the Lord's Supper. After reading everything preceding the part regarding the Lord's Supper, the Swiss (i.e., Zwingle and fficolampadius and those with them) agreed. Then came the last part regarding the Lord's Supper. Luther read:

> We all believe with regard to the Lord's Supper, that it ought to be celebrated in both kinds, according to the primitive institution; that the mass is not a work by which a Christian obtains pardon for another man, whether dead or alive; that the sacrament of the altar is the sacrament of the very body and very blood of Jesus Christ; and that the spiritual manducation of this body and blood is specially necessary to every true Christian. ... In like manner, as to the use of the sacrament,

we are agreed that, like the Word, it was ordained of Almighty God, in order that weak consciences might be excited by the Holy Ghost to faith and charity. . And although at present we are not agreed on the question whether the real body and blood of Christ are corporeally present in the bread and wine, yet both the interested parties shall cherish more and more a truly christian charity for one another, so far as conscience permits; and we will all earnestly implore the Lord to condescend by his Spirit to confirm us in the sound doctrine.

D'Aubigne stated, "The Swiss obtained what they had asked: unity in diversity. It was immediately resolved to hold a solemn meeting for the signature of the articles.

"They were read over again. Oecolampadius, Zwingle, Bucer, and Hedio, signed them first on one copy; while Luther, Melancthon, Jonas, Osiander, Brentz, and Agricola, wrote their names on the other; both parties then subscribed the copy of their adversaries, and this important document was sent to the press.

"Thus the Reformation had made a sensible step at Marburg. The opinion of Zwingle on the spiritual presence, and of Luther on the bodily presence, are both found in christian antiquity; but both the extreme doctrines have been always rejected: that of the Rationalists," [This is how D'Aubigne and the reformers described the Baptists and other who maintain that the Lord's Supper is a simple memorial service.— JKB] "on the one hand, who behold in the Eucharist nothing but a simple commemoration; and of the Papists, on the other, who adore in it a transubstantiation. These are both errors; while the doctrines of Luther and Zwingle, and the medium taken by Calvin, already maintained by some of the Fathers, were considered in ancient times as different views of the same truth." *History of the Reformation of the Sixteenth Century*, Vol. IV, Book XIII, Chapter VII, pp. 524-536 (5 volumes in 1 by Baker Book House, 1976 edition).

However, this did not end the controversy. D'Aubigne went on to record, "As for Zwingle, he quitted Marburg in alarm at Luther's intolerance. 'Lutheranism,' wrote he to the landgrave, 'will lie as heavy upon us as popery.' ... 'The truth,' said he to his friends, 'has prevailed so manifestly, that if ever any one has been defeated before all the world, it is Luther, although he constantly exclaimed that he was invincible.' On his side, Luther spoke in a similar strain. 'It is through fear of their fellow-citizens,' added he, 'that the Swiss, although vanquished, are unwilling to retract.'

If it should be asked on which side the victory really was, perhaps we ought to say that Luther assumed the air of a conqueror, but Zwingle was so in reality."

Now that we have given this small overview of some of the discussions among the reformers of the Lord's Supper and since the majority of the reformers did not follow the Lutheran doctrine, in our next study we will look at the basic Reformed

view as given in the *Westminster Confession*.

The Lord's Supper (2nd)

(In this study we begin comparing the difference between the standard reformed view and the Baptist view of the Lord's Supper. This lesson also reviews again what is meant by the term "sacrament" because it is generally misunderstood by most people.)

In our last session, we studied somewhat of the different views of the Lord's Supper among the Protestants. We closed by saying that in this session we would look at the Reformed view as given in the Westminster Confession of Faith. There are some things given this confession in which aligns with Baptists beliefs. We will not look at them at this time but consider them together later.

The first thing to consider is from the beginning of Article 1, "Our Lord Jesus, in the night where He was betrayed, instituted the sacrament of His body and blood, called the Lord's Supper, to be observed in His Church, Also throughout "Chapter XXIX—Of the Lord's Supper," the term sacrament is continually used regarding this rite. Since the term sacrament is so often used throughout the world of Christendom and often by Baptists who, it appears, are unaware of what they are saying, I believe it is needful to review this term again. We gave a broad overview in our last study, but let us review some of the details again. Quoting from John Calvin in his Institutes of the Christian Religion, Book IV, Chapter 14, he gave the following:

> First, we must attend to what a sacrament is. It seems to me, then, a simple and appropriate definition to say, that it is an external sign, by which the Lord seals on our consciences his promises of good-will toward us, in order to sustain the weakness of our faith, and we in our turn testify our piety towards him, both before himself, and before angels as well as men. We may also define more briefly by calling it a testimony of the divine favour toward us, confirmed by an external sign, with a corresponding attestation of our faith towards Him. You may make your choice of these definitions, which in meaning differ not from that of Augustine, which defines a sacrament to be a visible sign of a sacred thing, or a visible form of an invisible grace, but does not contain a better or surer explanation. As its brevity makes it somewhat obscure, and thereby misleads the more illiterate, I wished to remove all doubt, and make the definition fuller by stating it at greater length.

Then he proceeded with this:

The reason why the ancients used this word in this sense is not obscure. The old interpreter," [Referring mainly to Jerome's *Latin Vulgate*] "whenever he wished to render the Greek term musth,rion into Latin, especially when it was used with reference to divine things, used the word *sacramentum*. Thus, in Ephesians, "Having made known unto the mystery (*sacramentum*) of his will;" and again, "If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God, which is given me to you-wards, how that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery" (*sacramentum*) (Eph. i. 9; iii. 2). In the Colossians, "Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but is now made manifest to his saints, to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery" (*sacramentum*) (Col. i. 26). Also in the First Epistle to Timothy, "Without controversy, great is the mystery (*sacramentum*) of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh" (1 Tim. iii. 16). He was unwilling to use the word *arcanum* (secret), lest the word should seem beneath the magnitude of the thing meant. When the thing, therefore, was sacred and secret, he used the term *sacramentum*. In this sense it frequently occurs in ecclesiastical writers. And it is well known, that what the Latins call *sacramenta*, the Greeks call musth,ria (mysteries). The sameness of meaning removes all dispute. Hence it is that the term was applied to those signs which gave an august representation of things spiritual and sublime. This is also observed by Augustine, "It were tedious to discourse of the variety of signs; those which relate to divine things are called sacraments" (August. Ep. 5. ad Marcell.).

We will summarize by saying that Calvin "asserted that a sacrament was (1) a help to our faith, (2) an external sign, (3) a seal on our conscious of God's promises, (4) to sustain the weakness of our faith, and (5) a testimony of our piety towards God before Him and before angels and before men. Then he proceeds to say that this is all a mystery by using the Latin translation of the Scriptures by the Catholics where they substituted the Latin word for sacrament in the place of the Greek word for mystery. ... When we simply take the Scriptures as written we do not find that baptism and the Lord's Supper are some mysterious sign of some invisible grace for the purpose of helping our faith or sealing some covenantal promise. They are simply a memorial service and [a] picture of our salvation that was purchased by the Lord Jesus Christ." "A Baptist should not be guilty of referring to baptism or the Lord's Supper as sacraments. Equally, we should not refer to the Lord's Supper by calling it the Eucharist. It is not a thanksgiving feast. It is simply a memorial service."

Also, as seen in the quote from Article 1, it is stated that the Lord's Supper is "to

be observed in His Church." However, in the *1689 Baptist London Confession*, it is "to be observed in his churches." On the surface this may seem like an insufficient point, but it is not. From the end of Article 1 in the *Westminster Confession*, it identifies this "Church" as "members of His mystical body"; that is, the mystical body of Christ. From the *London Confession,* the conclusion of Article 1 is "of their communion with him and with each other." There is a difference between members of a "mystical body" and members of a "congregation."

I am aware that some Baptists often speak of a "mystical body of Christ," as well. The problem with this is it is uncertain as to what is meant when someone uses this term. I have heard this term used when referring to "the Church" as being all the elect (or believers) of God. Equally, some use this term to describe all the believers living at a given time on earth, or all living on earth and the departed in heaven. In a book entitled *A Cloud of Witnesses*, which is a book of last speeches and testimonies of the Scottish Covenanters in the 1600's, at least some of them believed that Christ's mystical body was "the Church of Scotland." Cf. particularly, pp. 245, 295 as found in the 1989 edition printed by Sprinkle Publications. The quote from the *Westminster Confession* that I have supplied comes from a book printed by the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland and contains not only the confession but the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, the Sum of Saving Knowledge, the National and Solemn League, Acknowledgement of Sins, Engagement of Duties, Directories for Publick and Family Worship, Form of Church Government, and all of the other documents related to the standards and beliefs of the Church of Scotland and the Reformer in general. Not only is the term "mystical body of Christ" confusing and means different things to different people, it is not found in the Scriptures and, therefore, should be avoided. (The same thing can be said about other terms as "church militant," "church triumphant," "invisible body of Christ," and other unscriptural and unclear ideas and concepts. Equally, the Scriptures do not speak of any denominational hierarchy that governs over a group of congregations. The only ecclesiastical authority found in the New Testament is the congregation of God.) Without question the Scriptures declare of individual congregations and it is individual congregations that carry out the Lord's Supper. In fact, the only epistle in the New Testament that teaches specifically about the Lord's Supper was written to the congregation at Corinth and how that congregation was to administer the elements to its members—the members of the body of Christ at Corinth, I Cor. 12:27. (I plan to say more about this in the future, the Lord willing.)

Our time is about gone and we will stop at this point and continue looking at the confessions in future studies.

The Lord's Supper (3RD)

(Our study today involves a further study of the distinction of the Lord's Supper between the Protestants and the Baptists. Is it a mystery linked with various emotions or is it revealing the death of Christ in a memorial service?)

Previously we reviewed the basic meaning of a sacrament as is generally believed by the Protestants by quoting somewhat from John Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. Also, we noted the difference between the Protestant *Westminster Confession* and the Baptist *London Confession of Faith of 1689* in that the *Westminster Confession* affirms that the Lord's Supper is to be observed in the "Church" (with a capital "C") but the *London Confession* states that it is "to be observed in" Christ "churches" or congregations. It was further shown that the Protestant confession maintains that the Lord's Supper is a bond and pledge of true believers' communion with Christ and each other "as members of His mystical body." The expression "mystical body" was not defined by the confession, but it is generally considered by both Baptists and Protestants as referring to all the elect of God. However, we noted that James Robertson and John Nisbet, the Younger affirmed in the 1600's that the mystical body of Christ was the Church of Scotland. James Robertson was hanged for his faith December 15, 1682 and John Nisbet was executed on April 14, 1683. (As a side note, the year is erroneously given as 1863 in the 1989 edition of *A Cloud of Witnesses*, printed by Sprinkle Publications. The book contains last speeches and testimonies of the Scottish Covenanters after 1680.). Since such terms as "mystical body," "invisible church," "catholic church (with either a capital "C" or not), "universal church," and other like expressions are not found in the Scriptures, I maintain that it is best not to use them to avoid confusion. The Scriptures do teach that the Lord's Supper is to be administered in a congregation and we ought to teach accordingly.

Article 1, of the *Westminster Confession* also states that the Lord's Supper is for "the sealing all benefits thereof unto true believers, ..." Equally, the "Larger Catechism" of the *Westminster Confession* affirms that both baptism and the Lord's Supper are "seals of the same covenant." The Protestants further teach through their confessions and writings that baptism took the place of circumcision and the Lord's Supper replaced the Passover. (Sadly, many Baptist equally teach that the Lord's Supper replaced Passover, but Christ was killed on the same day that the Passover lamb was slain during His crucifixion. The Lord's Supper was instituted the night before in the upper room, but we will not do a detailed study of the last few days of Christ at this time. Our purpose now is trying to understand what this "sealing" involves.) In order to understand what is meant by this "sealing" we will supply quotes from John Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book IV, Chapter

XVII.

> First, then, the signs are bread and wine, which represent the invisible food which we receive from the body and blood of Christ. For as God, regenerating us in baptism, ingrafts us into the fellowship of his Church, and makes us his by adoption, so we have said that he performs the office of a provident parent, in continually supplying the food by which he may sustain and preserve us in the life to which he has begotten us by his word. Moreover, Christ is the only food of our soul, and, therefore, our heavenly Father invites us to him, that, refreshed by communion with him, we may ever and anon gather new vigour until we reach the heavenly immortality. But as this mystery of the secret union of Christ with believers is incomprehensible by nature, he exhibits its figure and image in visible signs adapted to our capacity, nay, by giving, as it were, earnests and badges, he makes it as certain to us as if it were seen by the eye; the familiarity of the similitude giving it access to minds however dull, and showing that souls are fed by Christ just as the corporeal life is sustained by bread and wine. We now, therefore, understand the end which this mystical benediction has in view—viz. to assure us that the body of Christ was once sacrificed for us, so that we may now eat it, and, eating, feel within ourselves the efficacy of that one sacrifice,—that his blood was once shed for us so as to be our perpetual drink. P. 557.

Notice that Calvin stated among many things (1) that the bread and wine represent "invisible food which we receive from the body and blood of Christ"; (2) that as the believer is "refreshed by communion with him, we may ever and anon gather new vigour until we reach the heavenly immortality"; (3) that it is a "mystery of the secret union of Christ with believers"; (4) that in eating the believer ***feels*** within himself the efficacy of that one sacrifice. Calvin further affirms that the bread and wine is to "nourish our spiritual life," p. 558.

Allow me to say that Calvin does have many good things to say about the believer communing and fellowshipping with Christ and in preparing himself for the Lord's Supper. But our purpose in this study is to try to understand what the Protestants mean by this mystery of the Lord's Supper being a seal to our conscious. From the quote given above, we see that it is said that this sealing includes among many things a ***feeling*** within the believer of the efficacy of the sacrifice of Christ. I will now try the listener's patience by providing others quotes from Calvin.

> The sacrament, therefore, does not make Christ become for the first time the bread of life; but, while it calls to remembrance that Christ was made the bread

of life that we may constantly eat him, it gives us a taste and relish for that bread, and makes us ***feel*** its efficacy. P. 559.

The sum is, that the flesh and blood of Christ feed our souls just as bread and wine maintain and support our corporeal life. ... Therefore, what our mind does not comprehend let faith conceive—viz. that the Spirit truly unites things separated by space. That sacred communion of flesh and blood by which Christ transfuses his life into us, just as if it penetrated our bones and marrow, he testifies and ***seals*** in the Supper, and that not by presenting a vain or empty sign, but by there exerting an efficacy of the Spirit by which he fulfils what he promises. P. 563.

The rule which the pious ought always to observe is, whenever they see the symbols instituted by the Lord, to think and ***feel*** surely persuaded that the truth of the thing signified is also present. For why does the Lord put the symbol of his body into your hands, but just to assure you that you truly partake of him? If this is true let us ***feel*** as much assured that the visible sign is given us in ***seal*** of an invisible gift as that his body itself is given to us. . I say then, that in the mystery of the Supper, by the symbols of bread and wine, Christ, his body and his blood, are truly exhibited to us, that in them he fulfilled all obedience, in order to procure righteousness for us— first that we might become one body with him; and, secondly, that being made partakers of his substance, we might ***feel*** the result of this fact in the participation of all his blessings. P. 564. [Emphasis mine—JKB]

From these quotes it is seen that among many things this ***mystery*** performs a ***seal*** to the sincere believer whereby he ***feels*** something. Therefore, the *Westminster Confession* says this ***mystery*** (sacrament) is "for the perpetual remembrance of the sacrifice of Himself in His death; the ***sealing*** all benefits there unto true believers, .." On the other hand, the *London Confession* says that this ***ordinance*** is "for the perpetual remembrance, and ***showing forth*** the sacrifice of himself in his death, .." For the Protestant there must of necessity be some type of ***feeling*** involved. What this ***feeling*** is we are left to the individual to know what it is. For the Baptist, while certainly the soul ought to be engaged in the ordinance, the command is to ***remember*** and ***show forth*** the Lord's death. For the one, there is an uncertainty of emotions or feeling left to the understanding of a believer still shackled to his sinful nature. For the other, there is a clear declaration to the believer to remember and show forth (by eating bread and drinking wine) the Lord's death. One is shrouded in a mystery; the other is a clear and simple obedience.

By a clear and simple obedience, I do not want to leave the impression that that is all there is to the Lord's Supper. Obviously, there should be a preparation by the

believer to examine himself and seek to draw nigh to the Lord in fellowship with Him. Equally, there are many way in which a believer should cultivate his soul in preparation for the Lord's Supper and, hopefully, the Lord would visit him in the meal so that his soul would overflow of the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ for his (the believer's) soul. But the Scriptures do not indicate some mysterious sealing based on some experience of the believer.

However, our time is up for today and we will, the Lord willing, continue our study of the Lord's Supper in the next podcast.

The Lord's Supper (4th)

(Our study today is of a more positive nature in that the remaining articles in both the Westminster and Baptist confessions are essentially the same. Therefore, we will discuss of blessings of the Lord's Supper.)

Some of the things that I would like to discuss regarding benefits of the Lord's Supper where Baptists and Protestants agree are (1) that it is "showing forth the sacrifice" of the death of Christ, (2) that it is a "confirmation of the faith of believers in all the benefits thereof," (3) that it is a confirmation of the believer's "spiritual nourishment and growth in him," (4) it is the believer's "further engagement in and to all duties which" he owes unto Christ, (5) it is "to be a bond and pledge of" the believer's "communion with" Christ "and with each other," and, (6) that "worthy receivers ... spiritually receive, and feed upon Christ crucified, and all the benefits of his death." There are many other things stated in the confessions where the two groups agree, but I believe the six things listed will sum up personal benefits that are communicated to the believer in participating in the Lord's Supper. I do not mean to imply that when one partakes of the Lord's Supper that he will necessarily be consciously aware of everything listed. The mind can only think on one thing at a time. Much is said today about multitasking, but if a man is responsible for three computers he can only type and think about what he is tying on one computer at a time. Yes, he may move rapidly from one machine to another, performing different functions on each computer, but he does each separately. He does not do two separate things at one time. Only God can truly multitask. Equally, when preachers talk about multiple benefits associated with one function (like the Lord's Supper), we need to assure the believer that we do not mean to imply that all the benefits will be received at the same time. Also, we need to make plain to the congregation that the particular benefit that is feeding one's soul at a given time may be only blessed to him while another or other benefits are refreshing the soul of others.

The Lord's Supper is a congregational function, but this does not mean that each

believer is receiving the same quality (or quantity) of communion with the Lord. We are individuals and we commune individually. Yes, there is to be oneness in the communion service with the congregation, but this does not negate the individuality of believers. The services of modern church goers are too often centered around musical presentations and entertaining messages calculated to bring the audience to a crescendo of an emotional peak that satisfies the base nature of man. This excitement can hardly be separated from the emotional experience of one when his favorite team wins the game. Everyone is expected to leave the building feeling good—good about themselves; good about the program; good about the message; good about the messenger. This is far from the exhortations of Paul to new converts and newly planted congregations. He told them "that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God," Acts 14:22.

Please don't get me wrong. I am not suggesting that emotions are not to be involved in worshiping the Lord. Emotions are to be involved, but they are to be the emotions of the spirit and not the flesh. Much needs to be taught about the difference between the two. I fear that the majority of professing believers today do not know anything about this difference. While we do not have time to take up this subject in it fullness, it can be definitely said that when one is excited about a belief or practice that is not supported by the Scriptures it is an excitement of the flesh and not of a spiritual nature from the Lord. The Lord willing, I hope we can discuss this somewhat so that you will be able to discern what it is to benefit spiritually when partaking of the Lord's Supper.

Before trying to discuss the benefits as listed at the beginning, allow me to address something else at this time. As I stated before, we are individuals. For example, the preceding events of the week prior to participating in the Lord's Supper for each individual are different. One believer may have gone through several trials and hardships while another brother's life was full of various roads of success. Naturally, each one will come to the congregation of the Lord with different condition of soul. This is not to say that one is better or less than the other. Both may equally be fellowshipping the Lord in the fullness of the spirit of his soul, but they are on a separate plane. One person is more sober-minded while the other's soul is not weighed down so much. Both are trusting in the Lord; both are relying on the righteousness of Christ as the foundation of his salvation; both equally love the Lord; but their state of communion is different. Their communion with the Lord is personal and aligned with the providential dealings of the Lord with each one individually. When we multiply this scenario with all the members of the congregation participating in the Lord's Supper, we must not think that each and every believer will be aligned in their thoughts and emotions. One believer may be joyful while the

brother sitting next to him is somewhat sober-minded. This does not mean that one is more spiritual than the other. In fact, both may be equally communing with the Lord, but each in his own personal relationship with the Lord.

I believe this is extremely important and needs to be made plain. I remember when I was a new convert that I thought if I did not cry during the Lord's Supper then I was not spiritual enough. (I have no idea how I arrived at that conclusion.) More than once I left from partaking of the Lord's Supper believing that I was greatly missing out and was very unspiritual. No doubt, being new to the faith I did not know much, but it was only after years of studying the Scriptures that I realized the significance of what is pointed out above. After being in the ministry for over 50 years and talking with many believers, I believe others are equally perplexed regarding a true spiritual understanding about the emotions and experiences involved in partaking of the Lord's Supper. Needless to say, if one is ignorant and unknowledgeable of the Scriptures and the doctrines revolving around the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is unlikely he will, in all reality, commune with the Lord by partaking of a small piece of bread and a small cup of wine. In fact, unless one is consciously walking and fellowshipping with the Lord on a daily basis, it is impossible to conclude that anything will change when he participates formally as the Lord's Supper is being observed in the congregation. There is no mysterious happening when a little bread is eaten or a little wine is consumed at an ecclesiastical function. The bread and wine are simply just that and they do not become some mystical element by the prayer of a preacher or by the consumption of the participant. They were bread and wine before and they are bread and wine when consumed.

Therefore, we find that it is extremely essential that we understand the importance of the meaning behind the Lord's Supper so that we may receive the benefits that the Lord intended when He instituted it that night prior to His death in the upper room. When He distributed the bread and wine to His disciples that night He told them that it they were to remember and understand that those elements were to cause them to reflect on His broken body and shed blood for them for the remission of sins, cf. Mt. 26:26-28; Mk. 14:22-24; Lk. 22:17-20; I Cor. 11:23-26. Unless we understand the meaning and intent behind these verses, there is no way we can fellowship the Lord in this service. This is why theology is so important. Behind the death of Christ are various truths that need to be understood, at least in part, for that piece of bread and that cup of wine to have significance to the soul and spirit of the believer. But beyond that, it is not merely a theological knowledge of such truths as redemption, remission, righteousness, justification, atonement, adoption, and other related topics. It is a personal and intimate understanding of such truths as they spiritually apply to one's own soul. This is how the benefits of the Lord's Supper are communicated to the

heart and soul of the believer. Obviously, it is essential that the Holy Spirit apply this to our souls for it to be effectual, but He does it by the truth, the word of God. He is the Spirit of truth (Jn. 14:17) and He takes the things (teachings) of Christ (Jn. 14:26) and bring them to our remembrance and manifest them to us as we walk in fellowship with Him. (Study the context of John chapters 14 through 16.)

I trust what has been said today will set the stage and better prepare us as we look at the things listed at the beginning of this podcast. The Lord willing, we will take them up in our next session. However, our time is up for today. May the Lord bless your soul in your studies and meditations of the sacrifice and crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Lord's Supper (5th)

(Today we will begin discussing some of the benefits as listed in the confessions where both Protestants and Baptists agree.)

In a previous session, some positive benefits were listed in partaking of the Lord's Supper. However, before discussing the things listed, we gave some general observations of the importance of one's theology and the differences in individuals as to why the blessings received vary in participating in the Lord's Supper. As stated in the previous study, some of the things that I would like to discuss regarding benefits of the Lord's Supper where Baptists and Protestants agree are (1) that it is "showing forth the sacrifice" of the death of Christ, (2) that it is a "confirmation of the faith of believers in all the benefits thereof," (3) that it is a confirmation of the believer's "spiritual nourishment and growth in him," that is, in Christ, (4) it is the believer's "further engagement in and to all duties which" he owes unto Christ, (5) it is "to be a bond and pledge of" the believer's "communion with" Christ "and with each other," and, (6) that "worthy receivers ... spiritually receive, and feed upon Christ crucified, and all the benefits of his death." Also, we need to keep in mind that we will not necessarily enjoy all of the things listed when partaking of the Lord's Supper at any one time. While we may enjoy multiple blessings, it may be that only one blessing will feed our soul as we partake of the meal.

The first thing listed is that the Lord Supper is showing forth the sacrifice of the death of Christ. I Corinthians 11:26 clearly says that the Lord's Supper shows "the Lord's death till he come." The word for show in this verse is the Greek word katagge,llw and means *to proclaim, promulgate*. Of the seventeen times this word is used in the New Testament, it is translated *preach* ten times; *declare* two times; *teach* and *speak of* one time each. The three times it is translated *shew* it has the same meaning. Therefore, the meal itself is a proclamation of the death of Christ. This is

one time where the membership of the congregation is preaching the gospel of the death of Christ. Too often the bread is broken and the wine is poured prior to the supper, but when our Lord instituted the supper the He took and blessed the bread before breaking and giving it to the disciples. Likewise, He took the cup and blessed it prior to dividing it out to the disciples. Paul told the congregation at Corinth that the Lord delivered unto him the procedure of the Lord's Supper: "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me," I Corinthians 11:23-25. I believe something is lost in the meaning when the congregation does not see the bread broken or the wine poured during the supper. Breaking the bread and pouring the wine before the congregation aids in reminding them of the broken body and the shed blood of Christ. It reminds them that not only were their sins paid for but what Christ endured in paying the penalty for their sins. What a blessing to be reminded of the death of Christ and being blessed to participate in showing or preaching the death of Christ! It is marvelous to know that we (the congregation) are not merely a spectator receiving some bread and wine, but we are actively engaged in proclaiming the death of Christ.

The second thing previously listed is a "confirmation of the faith of believers in all the benefits thereof." Obviously, to confirm "the faith of believers in all the benefits thereof," one must know what true faith is and what are the benefits of having saving faith. Modern Christianity revolves around people who have "made a decision" or given a mental assent to some presentation of logical steps that appeal to the reason of the natural man. The concept of faith is often explain with such logic as believing that a chair will support a person and, therefore, the individual believes (or has faith) that the chair will hold him up and he sits in it. This is not faith in the biblical sense of the word. This is the law of mathematical probability; that is, the chair has supported many other people and it should also hold up the individual. Biblical faith is something else. Biblical faith is often defined by quoting Hebrews 11:1: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." This is true, but there are other factors included in describing biblical faith. Scripture equally teaches us that faith is "a gift of God," (Eph. 2:8) and that "all men have not faith," II Thess. 3:2. Jesus taught that no man ***can*** believe (come to Christ) except the Father draws him to Christ and that everyone the Father gave to the Son is taught of the Father and comes to (believes on) Him, John 6:44-45, 65. The Lord

also taught that some ***will not*** believe on Him, John 5:40. Therefore for one to exercise biblical faith his will must be changed and he must be drawn by the Father. In short, biblical faith or belief is when God changes a person's will and disposition and causes him to believe in the truth of Christ as his Lord and Savior and to walk in the way of God. By this we see that when one participates in the Lord's Supper it is more than merely sitting on the pew and eating a small fragment of bread or drinking a little cup of wine. It is to be a validation of the faith that is wrought in the soul of the believer by God and a testimony of all the benefits of the salvation that is in and by the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Naturally, this is not realized in the heart and soul of one who does not have faith, nor it is a confirmation to the person who carelessly and without serious meditation reflex on what the faith of God and the salvation in Christ is all about. Too many aimlessly sit on the pew with their minds wandering on the cares of life without any consideration to the work of God in the life of a believer or of the divine benefits graciously conveyed to the believing sheep of God. May the Lord pour out a spirit of revival in our day that will quicken the heart and soul of the people of God so that they will give the proper honor and glory to the Lord Jesus Christ for the salvation bestowed on His elect people! Our materialistic society is so filled with the pleasures of life that professing believers hardly know what are the blessings and benefits of the ordinances of God found in the congregation of the Lord. Often the members of the congregation do not know when their next appointed time that the Lord's Supper is to be observed and have to be reminded so that they might attend. Additionally, when the time is announced, many schedule activities and trips in such a way that they do not attend. It would be good if the members would mark their calendars throughout the year as to when the Lord's Supper is to be observed in their respective congregations and plan their lives around it. This would go a long way in the members giving attention to the ordinance and devoting their lives in such a way that their faith would be encouraged and their souls would be blessed by the benefits received by participating in the meal and by the blessings given to us because of the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The third blessings in our list is that it is a confirmation of the believer's “spiritual nourishment and growth” in Christ. Few believers ever stop and take inventory of their spiritual growth or if their souls are being nourished spiritually. We are not talking about something that can be measured naturally or by the flesh. We are discussing the soul, that part of our being that is in communion and fellowship with the Lord. Believer, are you aware of what it is to have spiritual nourishment or growth? Can you sincerely and consciously ascertain as to whether you are growing in a spiritual way? Do you know what it is to receive spiritual nourishment? I

Corinthians 11:28 says that we are to examine ourselves prior to eating the bread and drinking the cup. When is the last time you examined or judged yourself? Have you ever done so? If not, why? If we partake of the Lord's Supper unworthily we are "guilty of the body and blood of the Lord," I Cor. 11:27. Some try to get around this by not partaking of the meal to avoid being guilty. However, this will not work. Verse twenty-eight plainly declares that we are to examine and eat and drink. All three words (examine, eat, and drink) are in the present active imperative in the Greek text. In other words, we have no option. All three are a command. We do not have the option of not eating and drinking after examination. After we examine ourselves, we are commanded to eat and drink. Therefore, when the congregation observes the Lord's Supper, this is an excellent time for the believer to confirm his spiritual nourishment and growth in Christ.

We have come to the end of our time for today. The Lord willing we shall continue looking at the other benefits and blessings of the Lord's Supper in our next podcast.

The Lord's Supper (6th)

(Today we will continue discussing some of the benefits as listed in the confessions where both Protestants and Baptists agree.)

In our last study, we began discussing some of the benefits as listed in the confessions where both Protestants and Baptists agree. Today we will continue discussing some of these benefits.

The fourth benefit previously listed is that it is the believer's "further engagement in and to all duties which" he owes unto Christ. It is obvious to any Bible reader that believers have many duties that they owe to Christ and one of these duties is partaking of the Lord's Supper. As we noticed previously, I Corinthians 11:28 plainly declares that we are to examine and eat and drink. All three words (examine, eat, and drink) are in the present active imperative in the Greek text. In other words, we have no option. All three are a command. We not only do not have the option of examining ourselves prior to the Lord's Supper, but we are equally commanded to eat and drink; that is, we are commanded to partake of the Lord's Supper.

The Scriptures declare that obedience is the proof of the believer's love to Christ. Jesus said, "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." Further, He said, "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me." (John 14:21, 23-24.) Many professed

believers today are slack in their attendance at the Lord's Supper. In fact, there are many people who profess to be a believer that never attach themselves to a congregation and do not participate in the supper of the Lord. Such people refuse to submit themselves to the Scriptures because they (by practice) set themselves in authority above the Lord. Too often a person (or family) will attend a congregation but because that congregation does not dot every "i" and cross every "t" as they believe, they refuse to submit themselves to it. In effect, they place themselves in judgment or in authority over the congregation and, thereby, abstain themselves from the commandment of the Lord—the Lord's Supper.

Allow me to clarify something here. I am not saying that any group of people who assemble together is a congregation of God. Obviously, if the pastor or pastors of a congregation are not preaching the true gospel of God and the congregation is not properly administering the Lord's Supper according to the teaching of the Scriptures, one should not join himself to it. Also, I am not implying that the gospel and the Lord's Supper are the only distinguishing marks of a scriptural congregation of the Lord. Nevertheless, I am saying that these two marks are generally listed at the top of the list by both Baptists and Protestants and are vital to the subject at hand.

Sadly, we live in an age where most people do not have the proper reverence and respect for the worship services of the Lord. When I was young and unconverted, I remember that I was taught to respect the worship services. Then people would generally sit in their seats and give their undivided attention to the prayers, songs, and preaching. Hardly would you see anyone getting out of their seats for any reason and they did not have water in containers at their pews. Today it is not uncommon to see people (young and old) going back and forth to water fountains and bathrooms or lifting a bottle of water during the sermon. Additionally, it is not uncommon to see some removing themselves from the worship of the Lord to answer their phones. No wonder the Lord's Supper is so little considered since the worship of the Lord as a whole is so little regarded. While I am addressing this, allow me to say that too often the ministers set the stage and encourage such lack of reverence by their modern casual dress. The worship of the Lord, whether on Lord's Day morning, afternoon, or evening, or during mid week services, is to have the same honor and respect because it is the same God that we are to adorn and admire. Equally, when we are commanded to remember the Lord in partaking of His supper, we should not consider it lightly. We should remember that we are commanded to do so and by doing it we manifest our love and devotion to Him.

The fifth benefit previously listed is that it is "to be a bond and pledge of" the believer's "communion with" Christ "and with each other." What is meant by "a bond and pledge"? We might better understand it if we would say "a connection and

guarantee" of the believer's communion with Christ and each other. In other words, we are testifying that we are living in communion with Christ and that we are living in fellowship with each other, especially with our fellow church members. While communion with Christ is the center of the Lord's Supper, the fellowship of the saints must not be ignored. It, too, is central to what the Lord's Supper is all about. However, we will look at the first part which is that of the believer's communion with Christ. But before doing this, we should be clear about something.

The Greek word translated communion is κοινωνία and it is translated as communion and fellowship. In fact, it is translated fellowship twelve times and communion four times. It is translated distribution, contribution, communication, and communicate one time each. Three other kindred words to this Greek word (κοινωνέώ κοινωνικόός ανδ κοινονός. are translated as to partake, communicate, distribute, partner fellowship, and companion. By studying these words and their meaning it is clearly seen that there is a mutual participating between the parties (that is, the believer and the Lord) on a reciprocating basis. Just as two people have a fond attraction for each other, they are continually fellowshipping with each other. Therefore, the believer is to be living in a conscious awareness of his fellowship and companionship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Notice that the confessions read that by partaking of the Lord's Supper it is "a bond and pledge of the believer's communion with Christ." Obviously, one should be communing with the Lord during the meal, but the statement is declaring more. It is affirming that fellowship and communion with the Lord is a way of life on a daily basis. Too often one will approach the Lord's Supper and wonder why he is not blessed with sweet fellowship with the Lord. Usually this is because he does fellowship the Lord daily. As we noted previously, a bond is a link or connection, and the pledge is a guarantee or assurance. Therefore, in partaking of the supper one is affirming his assurance and connection of his ongoing fellowship with Christ. You see, the believer is not merely eating and drinking in remembrance of Christ, he is affirming his fellowship with Christ.

However, this is only half of what this benefit declares. It equally declares that it is "a bond and pledge of the believer's communion with each other"; that is, that the participant is living in fellowship with the saints, particularly with a congregation of the Lord.

There are some who believe that all believers are to be invited to the table while others limit the meal to a particular denomination. Some limit the supper to the particular congregation. Our purpose is not to try to determine which view is correct, though I believe it should be limited to the congregation. Regardless, which view is correct, I do believe we can all agree that the people who do partake of the Lord's

Supper are generally those of a particular congregation. It is there where the individual member usually affirms his allegiance and responsibility to partake of the Lord's Supper.

Therefore, we should bear in mind when we eat the meal that we are affirming our communion and fellowship with the people of the congregation. Too often the individuals of the congregation hardly know some of the members. Regardless of the size of the congregation, the membership should be so acquainted with each other that there is some fellowship. The members are to take time to know and understand their fellow members so that they are consciously aware of each other. How can one pray intelligently for their fellow members if he does not know of their struggles, needs, and blessings? The Scriptures tell us to rejoice with those who are rejoicing and to weep with those who are weeping and that we are to be of the "same mind one toward another," Rm. 12:15-16. This cannot be done unless we know something about each other.

Beloved, our time is up for today, but this topic needs to be further addressed and, the Lord willing, I plan to do so in our next podcast. However, I trust you are beginning to see that there is much more included in partaking of the Lord's Supper than what is generally taught or considered in this age.

The Lord's Supper (7th)

(Today we will continue discussing some of the benefits as listed in the confessions where both Protestants and Baptists agree.)

We ended our previous podcast discussing that the Lord's Supper is "a bond and pledge of the believer's communion with each other." While the meal is to focus on the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ in remembrance of Him, it is not limited to that. I believe that many, if not most, people only think of the Lord's Supper as something that is private between the believer and Christ. In our emotional age when religion is focused on feelings and excitements, the sermons around the Lord's Supper are often centered and directed to the individual experience and communion with Christ. We do not want to lose sight of the importance of having a true and real communion in the death of Christ, but neither are we to ignore the communion and fellowship of the saints—the membership of the congregation. This is vital to Christianity and is the heart and soul of salvation. I John 4:7-8 says, "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love." Again, in verses twenty and twenty-one John states, "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother,

he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also." As we know, many other such passages could be quoted, but these are clear and prove that unless we have love and fellowship (communion) with our fellow believers we do not have communion with the Lord. There is no option. Our partaking of the Lord's Supper involves partaking (fellowshipping) with fellow believers in the congregation of the Lord. As we noted before, this communion of the saints may extend beyond the congregation, but it is obvious that if this love and fellowship is not a living force within the congregation it likely does not expand outside the assembly.

The Lord admonished the congregation at Corinth for the divisions (heresies) that were among them. He further said that because of the factions within the congregation they scripturally could not be partaking of the Lord's Supper. I Corinthians 11:20 says, "When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's Supper." The general consensus of the commentators is that the verse is saying that they could not eat the supper as long as they were divided. Obviously, if all of the members were in fellowship with each other and likeminded in their love for one another these divisions (heresies) would not have been in the congregation at Corinth.

I Corinthians 10:16-17 is another passage that teaches about the fellowship of the congregation and its connection to the Lord's Supper. It says, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread." While we are to remember the broken body of Christ in the Lord's Supper, the passages also states that "we being many are one bread, and one body." Again, the commentators generally agree that this is referring to congregational oneness. Listen to the words of John Gill concerning this: "The several members of the church of Christ; particular believers are indeed many, considered in themselves, in their own persons; yet by virtue of their union to Christ, which is manifested by their communion with him, they are one bread with him, the bread of life, and one body with his, signified by the bread; they are of one and the same mass and lump, they are incorporated together, they are flesh of his flesh, and one spirit with him: or they are one bread and body among themselves; as bread consists of many grains of corn which have been ground and kneaded together, and make up one loaf; and as the members of an human body are many, and make up one body; so believers, though they are many, yet are one body, of which Christ is the head; one in union with him and one another, and one in

their communion together at the Lord's table." Additionally, in I Corinthians 12:27, we are told that the congregation at Corinth was "the body of

Christ." Too often preachers today only talk of the body of Christ as referring to all of the elect of God, or all of the believers currently alive, or some other concept of like nature that is separate and apart from the individual congregation. Some say that the individual congregations are a part of the body of Christ, but the Scriptures plainly teach that a New Testament congregation is "the body of Christ." Actually, in the Greek text, the definite article "the" is not there and it could be read "a body of Christ." In other words, each New Testament congregation is a body of Christ in and of itself and Christ is the Head of that congregation as the husband is the head of the wife. This union and fellowship among the members are to be realized not only daily, but it should be realized and considered when the congregation is partaking of this meal with the Lord and each other. In fact, as we noted earlier, unless such a communion and fellowship exists among the membership, it matters not how often the bread and wine are administered to the congregation, there is no fellowship or communion with the Lord. Therefore, when a person misses the Lord's Supper (unless providentially hindered) he is not only saying that he does not desire to fellowship with the Lord, but he is equally affirming his disregard for the congregation as a whole and the individual member in particular.

Lastly, the sixth benefit of the Lord's Supper is that "worthy receivers ... spiritually receive, and feed upon Christ crucified, and all the benefits of his death." It is likely that the writers of the confessions were referring to the doctrines of transubstantiation and consubstantiation. Transubstantiation is the Roman Catholic doctrine that the bread and wine actually become the literal body and blood of Christ, while consubstantiation is the Lutheran doctrine that the body and blood of Christ comes along and with the bread and wine. Since the Protestants as a whole did not retain these views, we will not show the fallacy of these beliefs. Our purpose is to study somewhat of the positive benefits of partaking of the Lord's Supper.

Obviously, to receive and feed on Christ crucified and the benefits of His death are of a spiritual nature. That which is received is received in the soul. It is not something that necessarily edifies the human emotions and feelings of the recipient. It is of a deeper level. The Spirit of the Lord continually abides in the believer and he (the believer) does not *feel* anything going on inside of him on a daily basis. The reality of the indwelling of the Spirit of God is not on a natural or emotional level. The reality of the Spirit indwelling in the believer is the truth of the Scriptures. Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the

Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you," John 14:15-18. By this we know that the Lord Jesus, Himself, equally dwells in the believer by the operation of the Holy Spirit. But this not all, the Father, too, indwells in the believer. "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him," John 14:23. Therefore, the triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—indwells the believer. This is true whether the believer "feels" it or not. It is not a matter of feeling or human emotions; it is a matter of the truth of the Scriptures. Naturally, the evidence of this is how the believer is living; it is not how the believer is feeling or if some emotional sensation is pulsating through the cells or feelings of the person. Often people are confused because they have the idea that if they are not having some emotional experience which they judge to be caused by God then they are not fellowshipping the Lord. Yes, the believer does have and know something that is foreign to the natural man. He has fellowship with the Lord. For example, a natural man can read the Scriptures, know the meaning of the words, understand the principles of the various doctrines, and even argue the logic of the teachings of the Bible. On the other hand, when the believer reads and studies the Bible it speaks to his soul. There is something different going on in and with him. There is life (as it were) in what he reads. At times his spirit is lifted out of despondency while at other times he is condemned. In other words, the Scriptures speak to him. The Word of God is alive to and in him. His human emotions may or may not be affected, but his soul is affected and he is generally drawn closer to the Lord and enjoys fellowship with His Savior and Master.

I trust by this you are blessed to see the difference between human emotions and that of the soul partaking of the things of God. We must realize and know somewhat of the distinction between that of the natural flesh and that of the Spirit of God. Paul discussed this in Romans chapter seven. He spoke of the natural man and spiritual man. The spiritual man delights "in the law of God after the inward man" while in his flesh (i.e., in the natural man) dwells "no good thing," Study Rm. 7:14-23.

Our time is up for today, but the Lord willing we will continue discussing this sixth and final point of the benefits of partaking of the Lord's Supper. However, I believe it was important to try to make the distinction between soul fellowship with the Lord and human emotions. It is important that we understand the abiding presence of the Lord and that soul fellowship provides an abiding peace and consolation to the soul of the believer that the world does not know. As long as people are looking and striving for something to pacify the emotions and feelings they will never know

contentment and satisfaction in life.

The Lord's Supper (8th)

(Today we will continue discussing some of the benefits as listed in the confessions where both Protestants and Baptists agree.)
In our previous podcast, we were discussing the last and sixth benefit of the Lord's Supper. It is that "worthy receivers ... spiritually receive, and feed upon Christ crucified, and all the benefits of his death." We briefly noted the doctrines of transubstantiation and consubstantiation but since the majority of the Protestants did not hold to these views, we did not consider it expedient to show the fallacy of these beliefs. Also, before studying what it is to receive and feed on Christ crucified and the benefits of His death in a spiritual way, we endeavored to show somewhat the distinction between soul fellowship with the Lord and human emotions.
Now I would like to consider what is it to be a worthy receiver? At least two things are involved: (1) one who is legally constituted worthy by the righteous of God; (2) one who does not partake of the meal unworthily.
Clearly it is understood that if a person is not regenerated by the Holy Spirit of God and given a heart to receive and a mind and will to understand and obey the truth of the Scriptures he cannot be a fit candidate to partake of the Lord's Supper. Unless he understands and knows that his salvation is outside of himself and that he only stands before God in the justifying righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ he is not worthy to partake of the meal or fellowship with the saints in the congregation of God. It matters not how many times a person may be immersed in water or how many congregations he may have joined or how often he eats the bread and drinks the wine, if he is an unregenerate man he is unfit for the table of the Lord. He is not a worthy receiver.

Additionally, if one *is* a true believer and does not participate in the supper as ordained in the Scriptures, he is not a worthy receiver. I Corinthians 11:27, 29 says, "Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." (It should be understood that the word damnation in verse twenty-nine is literally judgment. We do not have time to do a word study of this Greek word. The translators and the Church of England believed that if one partook of the Lord's Supper unworthily that he would be damned to hell. This belief is a carry-over from the Roman Catholic teaching.) We need to be clear regarding the word "unworthily." This word is an adverb. Unworthy is an adjective. Unworthy describes the state or

condition of a person. Unworthily denotes how a person is engaging in an activity. In and of ourselves, no Christian is worthy to partake of the Lord's Supper. The believer is only worthy in Christ. However, if a believer partakes of this meal (as the Corinthians were doing) unworthily he is in violation of being qualified to eat. The Corinthians were divided. I Corinthians 11:18-22 declares that because of these divisions (notice the plurality of the word division) they were despising the congregation of God and shaming the poor, and, thereby, they could not lawfully engage in the communion service of the Lord. Because of this, verse thirty declares that some of the members were weak and sickly, and some slept; that is, some were dead. They were judged (chastened) of the Lord so that they would not be condemned with the world, I Cor. 11:32. (The word for judged in verse thirty-two is judgment as with the word condemned in verse twenty-nine. The word condemned in verse thirty-two is a separate word and rightfully means to be condemned.) Also, I reminded you that the Lord only chastens His people. The Greek word for chasten means child training. Hebrews 12:6-8 says, "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." Therefore, those Corinthians saints who were weak and sickly and who were killed for partaking of the supper unworthily were chastened so that they would not be condemned (damned) with the world (ungodly). Obviously, they were not focusing on the death of Christ; their attention was centered on their various factions or divisions. Therefore, we need to give heed to the warning in this passage and examine ourselves so that we are a worthy receiver when we come to the Lord's Table.

Next we find that we are to *spiritually* receive and *spiritually* feed on Christ crucified and all the benefits of His death. The question is what is meant by *spiritually* receiving and feeding? While we have looked at this somewhat previously in a different light, it is important that we have a proper understanding of this spiritual work of grace in the soul of the believer. The believer is a complex person. He is still in his natural or human body and affected by the senses and passions of the flesh. However, he is also a spiritual individual and there is a principle residing in him that causes him to be inclined to follow after the things of God. This is summed up well in Romans 6:14: "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace." Additionally, our Lord said that the believer has the Spirit of truth that dwells with and in him, John 14:17. He further stated that the Holy Spirit would teach the believer the truth of Christ, John 14:26. Therefore, how is it that we can discern the difference between that which is given to us spiritually by the Holy Spirit from our human and fleshly senses? The Scriptures tell us that our heart is

deceitful and desperately wicked and that we do not know it, Jeremiah 17:9. Is there some way that we can be assured that we are being spiritually led and not swayed by the spirit of the world, the flesh, or the devil?

Paul told the Thessalonians saints that he knew that they were elected by God and that they were being guided by the Holy Spirit. He knew that because they received the gospel and walked in the path of those who preached the gospel to them. They turned to the God of the Scriptures from serving idols. Further, they received the word of God as the true word of God and that it was not merely the word of men. Many other proofs could be supplied from the Thessalonians saints as well as like proofs from other congregations or individual believers throughout the New Testament. In other words, their lives and emotions were being affected by the truth of the Scriptures. When people are walking according to the course of the world in opposition to the Word of the Lord, they are not being led and guided by the Spirit of the Lord. They are being guided by that which is against the Scriptures. Likewise, when people are excited and their emotions are being stirred by doctrines and practices that are not taught in the Bible, they are being led by the flesh. People who are following another gospel that is not taught in the Scriptures are not being led by the Spirit of God. They are being led by another spirit. See Galatians 1:69.

Since we are to *spiritually receive* Christ crucified at the Lord's Supper, we are to know what the crucifixion of Christ involves. We are not talking about the historical facts of the crucifixion. This is important, but that is not central. We are to know what was the intent and purpose of the death of Christ. We must know that Jesus not only intended to do something by His death, but that He actually did it. How can one feed on the death of Christ if he does not know what was accomplished in it? If one has a false idea and concept about the crucifixion of the Lord, he has received a false premise and thereby it is not that which is taught by the Spirit of truth. By this we see that the Lord's Supper is not merely something in which believers participate by eating a small piece of bread and drinking a little wine. The doctrines involved in the Person and work of Christ are foundational to it: doctrines such as redemption, atonement, justification, the righteousness of God, satisfaction, resurrection, mediation, intercession, and many others to numerous to mention at this time. It is obvious that we cannot receive (not even spiritually) Christ crucified if we do not know what was accomplished by that crucifixion.

We are not only to spiritually *receive* Christ crucified, but we are to *spiritually feed* on Christ crucified. Obviously, it is one thing to know something, but it is entirely different to enjoy or delight in that which is known. However, our time has come to an end for today. The Lord willing, we will enlarge on what it means to

spiritually feed on Christ crucified and the benefits of His death in our next study. I pray this lesson will be blessed of the Lord to help you feast on Christ as you fellowship Him in the Lord's Supper.

The Lord's Supper (9TH)

(Today we will conclude discussing some of the benefits as listed in the confessions where both Protestants and Baptists agree.)

In our last podcast we ended saying that we are not only to spiritually *receive* Christ crucified, but we are to *spiritually feed* on Christ crucified. Obviously, it is one thing to know something, but it is entirely different to enjoy or delight in that which is known. As we saw previously, when the confessions speak of spiritually receiving or feeding, it must be that which is aligned to the Scriptures and not something produced by the natural senses or emotions.

In John 6:48-51, 53-58, Jesus said, "I am bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. ... Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meet indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as you fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread live for ever." It is clear that our Lord was not teaching cannibalism. Equally, He was not teaching about the Lord's Supper here, but what is being taught is important to understand what it is to feed spiritually on Christ.

When we study these verses in the context, we understand that the Lord is teaching about believing. Previously, the Jews asked Him about doing the work of God and Jesus said to them that the work of God was to believe on Him (Jesus) Whom God had sent into the world, Jn. 6:28-29. Later Christ told them that He was that bread and those who comes to and believes on Jesus will never hunger or thirst, Jn. 6:35. Here we see that coming and believing are synonymous. He enlarges on this by telling them that they had seen Him but did not believe on Him, but all that the Father gave to the Son comes (i.e., believes) on Him, Jn. 6:36-37. Jesus later pointed

out that the prophets taught that all of the children of God (the elect) shall be taught of God the Father and that all who are taught will go to (i.e., believe on) Christ, Jn. 6:4445. Then as we come to the passages quoted at the beginning of our study today the Lord turns to eating and drinking of this bread from heaven (the body and blood of the Lord). Before this, it was believing on and coming to Christ that one has (note, present tense) life; now it is eating and drinking that one has life and shall not die. In verse forty-seven (and afterwards), our Lord speaks of believing and coming to Christ. Consequently, the idea of feeding on Christ is believing, coming, eating, and drinking. These things are not one time incidents; they are a process, a way of life. Many analogies can be supplied to further explain this, but I would like to draw your attention to John 15:1-11 where Jesus teaches about abiding in Him and, thereby, abiding in the Father.

Listen to the passage: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every *branch* that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye *are* the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast *them* into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and *that* your joy might be full."

Regardless of all that is taught in this passage, it is certain that the central point is abiding (living) in the vine; that is, living (abiding) in Christ. The word *continue* in verse nine is the same Greek word as abide. This gives us insight as to how we are to abide in Christ. We are to continue or keep the commandments of the Lord. As our Lord said in verse three, it is by the word that we are cleansed. The Greek word for abide is me,nw and it is found one hundred and twenty times in one hundred and five verses. While it refers to one's place of dwelling or that of remaining in a place for a period of time, it is frequently used in relation to the believer abiding (dwelling) in God (all three Persons in the trinity) or of God dwelling (abiding) in the believer. By studying this word, we find that abiding in Christ involves living (abiding) in the

Scriptures, walking in obedience to the commandments of God, loving the brothers, believing in the Lord, living a life of bearing good fruit to the glory of God, and many other similar activities. In other words, to spiritually feed on Christ will involve one to read the Scriptures on a continual basis (ideally, daily), to read good and sound literature that honors the Lord, to meditate on the truths of the Scriptures and the truths of God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), to love and faithfully attend the assembly of the saints, to fellowship and love the saints, and many other things as previously mentioned. Allow me to supply a list of a few verses for you to study this word for abide: Jn 5:38; 6:27 (endure), 56 (dwelleth); 8:31 (continue); 12:46; 14:16-17; 15:16 (remain); I Tim. 2:15 (continue); II Tim. 3:14 (continue); Heb. 13:1; I Jn. 2:6, 10, 14, 17, 19, 24 (abide, remain), 28; 3:6, 9 (remaineth), 3:14, 15, 17 (dwelleth), 24 [2x]; 4:12 (dwelleth), 13, 15, 16 [2x]; II Jn. 2 (dwelleth), 9 [2x].

By this we find that by partaking of the Lord's Supper one is expressing his person relationship and fellowship with the Lord and His people. It is not merely attending a congregation and participating in an ordinance by eating a small piece of bread and drinking a little wine. Also, the things we have presented concerning "spiritually receiving and spiritually feeding" on Christ should be revealing as to why so many take part in this ordinance of the Lord but do not "get anything out of it." If one is not living in communion and fellowship with the Lord Jesus prior to the Lord's Table, obviously he will not immediately commune with Him as he eats some bread and drinks some wine. Likewise, if one is not living in communion and fellowship with the saints of God (particularly with his fellow church members) then there is no communion with the people of God. Such a person is merely sitting with a group of people, many (if not most) of whom he does not know and cares little for and, thereby, his affections (if he has any) for the people around him are cold and distant.

The last part mentioned regarding the crucifixion of Christ is that we are to spiritually receive and feed on all the benefits of the death of Christ. Sadly, many (if not most) people today only think of being saved from their sins and by this will be with God in heaven after they die. This is no small benefit of the death of Christ, but there are many more things that should bless our souls on a daily basis. In fact, there are too many things to list or study about in this study. I pray this will motivate you to seek out these benefits as you learn more about them. We should not merely wait until we are to partake of the Lord's Supper and then try to cram our souls with emotions and thoughts that will cause us to have some spiritual experience with the Lord. What we find here is that it is a way of life, and unless we are living this daily, we cannot expect to sit at this meal and flip on a switch and fellowship the Lord and His people. It just will not happen. Can it happen? Yes, the Lord could do that, but

He has commanded us how we are to live and unless we are following His directions we cannot expect Him to do otherwise. Just as a husband and wife, or friends, have to continually work to have a rich fellowship and life together, so likewise we must apply ourselves to have a rich communion with Christ. As the farmer must till the ground, plant the seed, and remove the weed to expect an abundant harvest, so likewise we much break up the fallow ground and draw nigh to the Lord to enjoy the love and friendship of the Lord. Abraham was not called the friend of God because he did not walk with the Lord. No, Abraham "staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able to perform," Rm. 4:20-21. Scripture further says that Abraham is "the father of all them that believe," Rm. 4:11. What better way to show yourself as a child of Abraham (a believer in Christ) than by walking as Abraham did?

I pray that your soul has been exhorted and encouraged to live in such a way so that when you come to the Lord's Supper that you will be blessed to receive and feed on Christ, as well as delight in the fellowship of the saints.

Ecclesiastical Government (1st)

(Today we will begin our subject of "Ecclesiastical Government" by looking at some reasons why this subject has become confused and clouded.)

It may be wondered what is meant by "ecclesiastical government"? It is to draw our attention as to how the congregation of God is to be governed. Much discussion has been given regarding this, and one may well find a plethora of writings regarding this subject today. We do not intend to discuss in depths all of the different ideas and opinions presented, though we will try to give a simple overview of the major ones before we try to discuss the primary views between the Protestants and the Baptists. However, before doing this, one thing should be mentioned. We do not find any such thing as a denomination in the New Testament. The idea of a governmental body ruling over independent congregations is foreign to the Scriptures. Equally, since the New Testament congregation is not anything like the Old Testament under the theonomic rule of the nation of Israel, we must not impose that governmental system on the assembly today. We are under the new covenant and it is not an extension of the old covenant as discussed in previous podcasts. Therefore, denominational headquarters with a ruling structure, imposing laws and regulations as to how a congregation is to function is totally unscriptural. Likewise, under a loose construction of various congregations that are associated together for fellowship purposes, it is unscriptural for a group of ministers or other members to enforce

governmental or theological regulations on individual congregations. By this we see that denominationalism as is generally practiced today is totally unscriptural. Naturally, when a group of congregations are likeminded in doctrine and practice they are often denominated, either by themselves or by others, by some term or name. Often the name assigned to an individual congregation will denominate it. For example when a congregation incorporates a word like Baptist, Presbyterian, Methodist, or some other word in its name, it is denominated. Even when using a non-generic name such as "Such and Such Church" it is distinguishing it from all others; that is, it is denominated as not being anything else because the basic definition of denominate according to Webster's 1828 Dictionary is "to name." In fact, the word itself is of Latin origin which means "to name." The dictionary further defines the word as follows: "To name; to give a name or epithet to; as, a race of intelligent beings denominated man. Actions are denominated virtuous, or vicious, according to their character." The reason I am enlarging on the obvious is because some people or congregations will say something like, "I am (or we are) not of a denomination. I (we) don't belong to anything." While I understand what is meant by such statements, the fact that they associate with a certain theological ideology or practice, they have denominated themselves as such. Therefore, we need to be clear when we use the word so that we do not mislead those who do not understand the difference. With this being said, allow me to emphasize again that denominationalism and denominational hierarchy as is practiced today among people who profess New Testament Christianity is unbiblical. Scripturally, there is no highest ecclesiastical authority. Scripturally, the only ecclesiastical authority is the New Testament congregation.

I believe a further confusion regarding this subject is the use of the English word "church" in the New Testament. *Webster's 1828 Dictionary* gives nine different meanings to this word. For the first and primary definition is "A house consecrated to the worship of God, among Christians; the Lord's house. This seems to be the original meaning of the word. The Greek, to call out or call together, denotes an assembly or collection. But, Lord, a term applied by the early Christians to Jesus Christ; and the house in which they worshipped was named from the title. So church goods, *bona ecclesiastica*; the Lord's day, *dies dominica*."

A Dictionary of the English Language by Joseph E. Worchester, 1864, p. 241, gives the following:

> Church, n. [Gr. kuriakh, or kuriakon; kurij, lord; A.S. *circe*, or *cyrice*; Dut. *kerk*; Ger. *kirche*; Sw. *kyrka*; Dan. *kirke*; Scotch *kirk*. This word appears to have been originally derived from the Greek, through the Anglo-Saxon. The Goths on the Lower Danube, as stated by Dr. Trench, were first converted to Christianity

by Greek missionaries from Constantinople, who imparted to them the word kuriakh or kuriakon, *church*; and the Goths lent the word to other German tribes, including the Anglo-Saxons. "The passage," says Dr. Trench, "most illustrative of the parentage of the word is from Walafrid Strabo (about 840), who writes thus: 'Ab ipsis autem Graecis *Kyrch a Kyrios*—et alia multa accepimus. Sicut domus Dei Basilica, i.e. Regia *a* Rege, sic etiam Kyrica, i.e. Dominica *a* Domino nuncupatur.'"].

Then Worchester gives the first definition as "A building consecrated to Christian worship and ordinances."

Even the 1970, Unabridged-Second Edition of the *Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary of the English Language* says that this word is "ME. *chirche*, *cherche*; A.S. *circe*, *cyrce*; Late Gr. *kyriakon*, a church, from Gr. *κψριακϵ* (supply *doma*, house), the Lord's house, from *κψριακοσ*, belonging to the Lord or Master; *κψριοσ*, lord, master; *κψροσ*, supreme power, authority." Found on page 324.

Since the English word "church" comes from a combination of two Greek words κύριος (lord) and oikoj (house), how is it that this word was used as a translation of the Greek word ἐκκλησία? This Greek word, according to Joseph Henry Thayer's *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* is defined as "Properly it means *a gathering of citizens called out from their homes into some public place; an assembly;* so used **1.** among the Greeks from Thucydides (423 B.C.) [c.f. Herodotus (484-408 B.C.) 3, 142] down, an *assembly of the people* convened at the public place of council for the purpose of deliberating, Acts 19:39. **2.** in the Sept. often equiv. to lh'q', *the assembly of the Israelites*, Judg. 21:8; I Chron. 29:1, etc., esp. when gathered for sacred purposed, Deut. 31:30; Josh. 8:35; etc.; in the N. T. thus in Acts 7:38; Heb. 2:12. **3.** *any gathering* or *throng of men assembled by chance or tumultuously*; Acts 19:32, 41." Then Thayer continues by supply the general meanings as under a fourth point designated as the Christian sense. Sadly, many people today supply a meaning to the word derived from the etymology of the word (i.e. ἐκκλησία." ἐκ meaning "out of" and kale,w meaning "to call." However, Thayer shows that from the time of Thucydides (423 B.C.) and Herodotus (484-408 B.C.) its use and meaning was *a gathering of citizens called out from their homes into some public place; an assembly*. Additionally, William Tyndale translated the Greek word evkklhsi,a as "congregation" in every place where it is found in the New Testament—one hundred fifteen times.

How is it that this Greek word which means an assembly or congregation of people was translated church? The answer is found in the rules that King James gave the translators. He would not allow some words to be translated. Listen to *Rules 3*

and 4 which was given to the translators. “The third rule requires ‘the old ecclesiastical words to be kept,' such as ‘church' instead of ‘congregation.' The fourth rule prescribes, that where a word has different meanings, that is to be preferred which has the general sanction of the most ancient Fathers, regard being had to ‘the propriety of the place, and the analogy of faith.'” *Translators Revived*, Alexander McClure, p. 67. (As a side note, this is also why the Greek word for baptism was not translated dip or immerse instead of being transliterated so that other views could be inferred as to what biblically constitutes New Testament baptism; but that is another subject.) Please do not misunderstand me here because I personally believe that the King James translation is the best English translation of the Holy Scriptures. However, its influence by retaining the Catholic ideology along these lines has gone a long way in clouding the true meaning and idea of ecclesiastical government, as well as other doctrines.

In summary, with the Greek word ἐκκλησία being substituted with the English word church and so many different meanings are assigned to the word church (especially by the so-called ancient fathers, meaning the Catholics), then it is no wonder that there is great confusion not only about ecclesiastical worship and practice, but also why there are different ideas and opinion as to how it should be governed. If one would read the word congregation or assembly when he sees the English word church in the New Testament, I believe a majority of the confusion associated with this subject would fade away. As was previously indicated, when the word “church” is used today most people do not know what the speaker means by it. Unless the listener knows what the speaker believes (or unless the speaker plainly says what he is talking about) he (i.e. the listener) is left to his own opinion as to what the speaker means.

However, our time is up today. With this introduction to the subject, it should better prepare us to clarify what our Lord would have us to understand about how the congregation is to be governed as we study the New Testament. The Lord willing, we will discuss this further in our next podcast.

Ecclesiastical Government (2nd)

(Today we continue studying the subject of “Ecclesiastical Government” and will show the basic distinctions between the government of the Baptist and Protestants.)

Previously, we noted that denominationalism that is generally practiced today is not scriptural. Likewise, we saw that the English word church was derived from the Greek word that means the house of the Lord or that which belongs to the Lord.

Further, we discovered that this English word church was substituted for the Greek word ἐκκλησίά which means congregation or assembly. Today we will begin by discussing the fundamental differences of ecclesiastical government between that of the Protestants and the Baptists.

It is true that there are many different forms of ecclesiastical government. There are various structures of catholic governments (such as, Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Coptic, and others), a range of hierarchical structures where an overarching governmental structure rules over independent congregations (i.e., Methodists, Pentecostal, Assembly of God, and such like), congregations where a ruling body of ministers (generally designated as elders) that rule over the congregations, and then is a form where a group of people meet together and virtually have no organized structure of government and, yet, such groups still follow the leadership of one or more individuals. Obviously, there are many different shades of governments in between these extremes; however, our study is primarily focusing on the basic differences between that of the Protestants and the Baptists. Sadly, many congregations today that identify themselves as being Baptists often follow a modified form of Protestant government.

Chapter thirty-one, of the *Westminster Confession of Faith* says, "For the better government, and further edification of the Church, there ought to be such assemblies as are commonly called Synods or Councils." The confession further states that "magistrates may lawfully call a synod of ministers, and other fit persons, to consult and advise with, about matters of religion" and that "[i]t belongeth to synods and councils, ministerially to determine controversies of faith, and cares of conscience ... to set down rules and directions for the better ordering of the public worship of God, and the government of His Church." Many other functions are described regarding synods and councils. Also associated with the *Westminster Confession of Faith* is a document entitled "The Form of Presbyterial Church-Government." In this confession as published by the by the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland in 1970, "The Form of Presbyterial Church-Government" declares that "church government" is given under various kinds. After discussing various officers and their duties within a "particular congregation," it says, "It is lawful, and agreeable to the word of God, that the church be governed by several sorts of assemblies, which are congregational, classical, and synodical." (It should be noted that church here is not capitalized as in Chapter thirty-one of the confession.) Further, it is stated, "Synodical assemblies may lawfully be of several sorts, as provincial, national, and oecumenical [*sic.*]. It is lawful, and agreeable to the word of God, that there be a subordination of congregational, classical, provincial, and national assemblies, for the government of

the church." These assemblies and synods are of various types and may be limited to a congregation, or over a group of congregations, or over a province, or even over domination. As with the Anglican Church of England, it would be over a national church and may involve magistrates. All of this is confusing and I doubt that the average member of such religions is able to understand the functions and duties of each of these different ruling bodies.

The 1643/1644 *London Baptist Confession of Faith*, Chapter thirty-three, says "Jesus Christ hath here on earth a spiritual kingdom, which is His Church, whom He hath purchased and redeemed to Himself as a peculiar inheritance; which Church is a company of visible saints, called and separated from the world by the word and Spirit of God, to the visible profession of faith of the gospel, being baptized into that faith, and joined to the Lord, and each other, by mutual agreement in the practical enjoyment of the ordinances commanded by Christ their head and king." Then in Chapter thirty-six, it states that "every Church hath power given them from Christ, for their wellbeing, to choose among themselves meet persons for elders and deacons ... for the feeding, governing, serving, and building up of His Church; and that none have any power to impose on them either these or any other." (It is to be noted that in this confession the word church is capitalized in every place. Even the word "churches" is likewise capitalized.) The 1689 *London Baptist Confession of Faith* and adopted as the *Philadelphia Confession of Faith* in America in the early 1700's, says that "each of these churches thus gathered according to his mind" (that is, the mind of Christ) "declared in his word, he hath given all that power and authority, which is any way needful for their carrying on that order in worship and discipline, which he hath instituted for them to observe, with commands and rules for the due and right exerting and executing of that power." To avoid being further wearisome, I will not give other quotes. Needless to say, that the Baptists have a simple form of government in that the congregation has all its authority from the Lord and nothing outside the congregation has any power over it. I might add that we shall further show that there are no auxiliary organizations other than the congregation as instituted by the Lord for the work of propagating the gospel and defending the faith. The only authority instituted by the Lord is the congregation. Now that we have given the basic positions of the Protestants and the Baptists, we shall study the Scriptures and see what God would have us to believe and practice.

Since the Protestants assert that there are various kinds of assemblies, councils, synods, and other forms of governments that rule over congregations, we shall look at their basic scriptural references and see if these governmental types are supported by the New Testament. We must bear in mind that we are discussing the New

Testament congregation and the governmental authority is to be found in the New Testament and not in the theocratic government of Israel in the Old Testament.

The first passage given from the *Westminster Confession* to support synods or councils is Acts 15:2, 4, 6. These verses are as follows: "When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question. . And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, and *of* the apostles and elders, and they declared all things that God had done with them. . And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter." While there are other things to consider from this chapter to know the full matter of this situation, let us look at these verses and see what is stated in them. Actually verse one through verse thirty-three are to be considered for the full picture.

Verse two makes no sense unless we read verse one and the ending verses of chapter fourteen. Some men from Judea went to Antioch in Syria and were teaching one could not be saved unless he was "circumcised after the manner of Moses." Paul and Barnabas opposed this teaching. Verse two says that "they determined" that Paul, Barnabas, and others go to Jerusalem concerning this matter. Who were the "they" that sent Paul and the others? Obviously, Paul and the others did not send themselves. It was the congregation at Antioch. Verse four declares that Paul and the others from Antioch were received not only by the apostles and elders, but by the congregation at Jerusalem. Verse six implies that only the apostles and elders (Paul and his company are not mentioned in this verse) considered the matter.

When we study these verses in context we find that this was not an independent council or synod separate from the congregation. This was an issue between two separate congregations—Antioch and Jerusalem. The congregation at Antioch sent Paul and the company to Jerusalem since the Judaizers came from there. It is worthy of note that as Paul and the company passed through Phenice and Samaria nothing is mentioned about this "church trouble." However, they did declare about the conversion of the Gentiles. We should learn from this. When there are issues between two congregations the matter should not be shared with others. The principle of Matthew 18:15 should be followed. Many congregations, as well as their members, would be spared of troubling issues if this was practiced and Christianity would be a better witness to the world. Allow me to say again that this situation was between two independent congregations and, therefore, the matter should be settled between them. This was during the early days of Christianity and the New Testament apostles were still alive and living in Jerusalem and functioning in (and not over) the

congregation there. Obviously, their presence gave weight to what was resolved in this meeting.

I regret to say that our time is up for today and we will have to continue with this issue in our next podcast. I pray this study is a blessing to you. Farewell.

Ecclesiastical Government (3rd)

(Today in our study on the subject of "Ecclesiastical Government" we will show that the council at Jerusalem in Acts chapter fifteen included the whole congregation and was under its authority.)

In our previous study, as we closed, we were studying Acts 15:2, 4, and 6 because these verses were supplied by the Protestant confession to support synods or councils. We noted that to get the full context, the latter part of chapter fourteen to verse thirty-three of the fifteenth chapter of Acts must be studied. From the context it was determined that "certain men" from Jud«a arrived at Antioch in Syria and taught that unless one "be circumcised after the manner of Moses" he could not be saved. (Obviously, if this were true females could not be saved since they could not be circumcised, but that is another topic.) The congregation at Antioch sent representatives comprised of "Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them" to Jerusalem to discussed this matter with the apostles and elders of the congregation at Jerusalem "about this question." (Verse twenty-two tells us that the discussion included the whole congregation at Jerusalem.) Therefore, this was an issue between two separate congregations—the congregation of Antioch in Syria and the congregation at Jerusalem. Since this was still in the early days of Christianity, the apostles were still living at Jerusalem. Previously, the apostle James was killed by King Herod. Though Herod attempted to kill Peter at that time, he was blessed to escape and go into another place (Acts 12:17) for a while. Now at the time of this conference at Jerusalem, Peter was back since he at one point addressed the audience. Acts 15:4 declares that Paul and those with him were received not only by the apostles and elders, but of the congregation at Jerusalem.

The Protestants would have us believe that issues were considered and resolved by the council at Jerusalem composed of apostles and elders alone. After all, do not verses two and six indicate this? Verse two says "Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them" were to go "to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question," and verse six says that "the apostles and elders came together for to consider this matter." After much discussion, Peter spoke. Then Barnabas and Paul

spoke. Following these, James, who by some believe to be the pastor of the congregation at this time, spoke. Many believe him to be the apostles designated as James the less or James the son of Alphaesus. However, after this, we read, "Then pleased it the apostles and elders, ***with the whole church***," [emphasis mine-JKB] to select Judas Barsabas and Silas to accompany Paul and Barnabas and, obviously, those that came with them, back to Antioch with a letter. (The KJV supplies "letters" but though several people were involved in writing the consensus of the meeting, there is no indication by the Greek text that more than one letter was constructed.) What is generally omitted or overlooked in this meeting is that the conclusion was not by the apostles and some elders of unknown origin. It was with the approval of the whole congregation of Jerusalem, Acts 15:22. They, the congregation, made it clear that they did not send out the judaizing Pharisees (cf. Acts 15:1, 5). While the letter was to "the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia," it was written in such a way to include all Gentiles. Judas and Silas were to go as messengers of the congregation at Jerusalem with the letter to testify of the truth of its contents. Though the judaizing Pharisees were spreading their perverted gospel wherever they went, this meeting was a result of the congregation at Antioch sending messengers to the congregation at Jerusalem inquiring if they (the Jerusalem congregation) had sent them out. The council in Acts chapter fifteen was not some independent synod or council ruling over a congregation or congregations. The authorized delegates from the congregation at Antioch were sent to Jerusalem to question that congregation if they had sent out those who were troubling the people with words and subverting the souls (Acts 15:24) of the congregation at Antioch. The Jerusalem congregation, along with the apostles who were there at that time, sent the letter and messengers to the troubled congregation at Antioch saying that they did not send them out. Acts chapter fifteen was a matter that involved two separate congregations and was resolved by the representatives from Antioch and the congregation at Jerusalem. Again, we say that the council in Acts chapter fifteen was not some independent synod or council ruling over a congregation or congregations. It definitely was not called by civil rulers or magistrates. It was not called and resolved by a group of ministers. It was not classicial, synodical, provincial, national, or ecumenical. It was not an issue resolved by a ruling body of elders within a single congregation, nor was it resolved by a ruling body of elders of two independent congregations. It was an issue between two congregations and resolved accordingly.

The *Westminster Confession* in the *second* article of Chapter XXXI affirms that civil "magistrates may lawfully call a synod of ministers" or other "fit persons" to meet together. Some passages of Scripture are referenced, but they have nothing to

do with the government of the congregation. The closest passage is that of the conference at Jerusalem as given in Acts chapter fifteen and we have already studied it. Definitely, civil magistrates did not call together those that attended that meeting. The confession also referenced I Timothy 2:1-2 where we are to pray for "kings, and for all that are in authority," but that was given to us by the Apostle Paul and not by any civil authority. Also this passage was not for the purpose of a synod or any other council. We are exhorted to pray for rulers so that "we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty." The Lord Jesus Christ distanced His kingdom from that of worldly governments when He told Pilate that His "kingdom is not of this world," John 18:36. Caesar has no place in the congregation of the Lord. (As a side note: allow me to say that the congregation of God does not have to go to Caesar for authority to exist and those that receive their 501c3 governmental status have subjected themselves to Caesar's authority. However, that is another study which we do not have time to do at this time.) Worldly organizations and governments are not to be connected with the congregation of the Lord. We are not to be entangled with the world because we have been called out of the world (John 15:19); therefore, why should the magistrates of the world have the authority over the congregation of the Lord. Besides, the Scriptures tell us that the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God (I Corinthians 3:19) and that the congregation is not to go before worldly judges and rulers to govern over it, I Corinthians 6:1-5. The Lord's house is not to be governed by the wisdom or authority of the world. The congregation of God is to govern over its own affairs.

In the *third* article of Chapter XXXI of the *Westminster Confession* in addition to Acts chapter fifteen, Acts 16:4 and Matthew 18:17-20 are given to support synods and councils for government of the congregation. Obviously, the Protestant confession considers denominational organizations and structures in addition to the congregation to be a church, but as previously discussed in earlier podcasts the Greek translation should be congregation or assembly instead of the English word church.

Acts 16:4 says, "And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem." Though this verse says that the decrees "were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem," we must not forget that "the whole church" (congregation) was included (Acts 15:22). In other words, the congregation at Jerusalem wanted everyone to know that the judaizing Pharisees were not sent out by them and that what the judaizing Pharisees were teaching was not believed by the congregation at Jerusalem. Equally, since the apostles were residing at Jerusalem at that time and were ministering in the congregation there, they equally agreed with

conclusion. It is true that the ministry of the apostles was unique, but they in no way lorded over the congregations. (We plan to show this more conclusive in future studies.) Since the letter to the congregation at Antioch was also addressed to those in Syria and Cilicia (Acts 15:23), Paul and Silas went through those regions and confirmed those congregations, too, Acts 15:41. After leaving those regions, they traveled to other congregations previously established by Paul and Barnabas and shared with them what was determined at Jerusalem. Certainly, these meetings were not a synod or any other such like council. We know that the judaizing Pharisees no doubt were in those areas too because Paul reminds the congregations in Galatia about him confronting Peter when he was distancing himself from the Gentiles. (See Galatians 2:11-21.) Therefore, it was essential that Paul and Silas relate to the congregations wherever they went what took place at Jerusalem and assured not only Antioch but congregations in every place that the judaizing Pharisees were not sent out by the congregation at Jerusalem.

However, our time is up for today. The Lord willing, we will take up our next podcast with Matthew 18:17-20 as we continue studying this subject.

Ecclesiastical Government (4th)

(We are continuing our study of why the Protestants believe in synods and councils that rule ecclesiastically over independent congregations.)

In our previous lesson, we stopped as we were considering the verses assigned to article *three* of Chapter XXXI of the *Westminster Confession*. Our time expired before we could study Matthew 18:1720. Let us study this passage and see if it supports the ideas of synods or councils that are outside the congregation of the Lord. To better set the passage in context let us begin with verse fifteen: “Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear *thee, then* take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell *it* unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” Obviously, this passage refers to a congregational setting. To deny this is to deny all reason and

general understanding. As noted in a previous podcast, the congregation at Corinth was rebuked for going to the civil authorities regarding differences between members and not settling the matter within the congregation, I Corinthians 6:1-6. Paul put the matter before the saints at Corinth with a question: "I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?" Note that the verse points out that the "brethren" are those "among you"; that is, among the congregation at Corinth. Therefore, to assume that the Holy Spirit would have inspired Paul to teach the saints at Corinth differently from what Matthew recorded of the words of the Lord Jesus would be a dichotomy of the unity of the Scriptures. Our Lord taught that if one is offended then he is to go to the offender and seek reconciliation. However, if reconciliation was not achieved, the offended party is to take one or two others, but if there was still no resolution it should be reported to the congregation. The idea that an independent synod or council outside the congregation is involved is not consistent with the context.

Article *four* of the *Westminster* Confession does affirm that "all synods or councils ... whether general or particular" are to be "used as a help" to "the rule of faith, or practice." The scriptural references supplied here are Ephesians 2:20; Acts 17:11; I Corinthians 2:5; and II Corinthians 1:24.

I am at a loss as to why Acts 17:11 was referenced to support any kind of synod or council of ecclesiastical government in the New Testament assembly. Paul and Silas were sent by the saints at Thessalonica to Berea. In Berea they went into the synagogue as was their custom and preached the gospel. The texts say, "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." Who were the "these" in Berea? They were Jews in the synagogue. A New Testament congregation was not in existent in Berea at that time. Surely, no one would suggest that Jews in a synagogue have any authority to form a synod or council to rule over or instruct a New Testament assembly. While it is true that all Christians, even an entire congregation, should search the Scriptures and receive the truth of the gospel as did those Berean Jews, but this passage of the Scriptures in no way teaches anything about a synod or council as advocated by the Protestants.

Since the other three passages are related to the work of the apostles relative to the New Testament assembly, we shall look at them together. Ephesians 2:20 says, "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." I Corinthians 2:5 states, "That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." And then II Corinthians 1:24 reads, "Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy:

for by faith ye stand."

It goes without saying that the Lord Jesus Christ and his apostles were the foundation of structure and formation of the New Testament congregation. In fact, the first congregation was comprised of apostles and those who accompanied them with the Lord. The writer of Hebrews in chapter two verse twenty-two quoted Psalm 22:22 which declares that our Lord sang in the midst of the congregation. The only place recorded in the Scriptures where Jesus sang was the night he instituted the Lord's Supper, Matthew 26:30. Equally, when the three thousands were converted on the Day of Pentecost, it says that they were ***added*** to the congregation, Acts 2:41. Therefore, not only was the congregation in existence prior to Pentecost, but it was in existence that night in the upper room. The apostles were indeed essential and the first gifts to the household of faith (I Corinthians 12:28) but they did not lord it over any assembly. As Paul so elegantly said to Corinth in the two passages quoted above, he (along with the other apostles) ministered so that their faith would be in the power of God and not in the wisdom of men, and that they (Paul and other apostles and elders) would not have dominion over their faith but were their helpers. The idea behind the word helper is that of a fellow-laborer. These passages do not give any indication of a synod, council, or any kind of assembly that is separate from that of the "local church"—the congregation of God. These passages do not teach that there is some ecclesiastical hierarchy ruling over individual congregations.

From the *Westminster Confession* under "The Form of Presbyterial Church-Government," it is stated, "The scripture doth hold forth, that many particular congregations may be under one presbyterial government." It further asserts that this proposition is proved by various instances. The *first* assertion for proof of this is that "the church of Jerusalem ... consisted of more congregations than one, and all these congregations were under one presbyterial government." We must remember that the English word "church" is not a translation of the Greek word evkklhsi,a. When Jesus used the Greek work evkklhsi,a in Matthew 16:18, He did not stop and say that He was meaning something different from the common usage, meaning, and understanding of the day. The English word "church" is derived from the Greek word for "the house of the Lord," and King James gave certain rules to prevent evkklhsi,a being translated congregation. Therefore to say that "the church of Jerusalem . consisted of more congregations than one" is to say that the congregation of Jerusalem consisted of more congregations than one. This is confusion to say the least and utterly nonsense to say the most. However, the writers give various passages to support this but one has to assume the premise because no verse plainly supports their position. They maintain—that because believers were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria under Saul's persecution (Acts 8:1), that Peter stood up in the

midst of disciples in Acts 1:15, that three thousand were added on Pentecost and they continued daily in the temple and from house to house afterward (Acts 2:41, 46-47), that five thousand were added later (Acts 4:4), including men, women (Acts 6:14) and a "number of disciples" along with "a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith (Acts 6:1, 7)—that all of this supports more than one congregation in Jerusalem. But oddly the Scriptures declare only one congregation. Then Acts 9:31 is supplied where years later that Paul was sent to Tarsus and it says "Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea, and Galilee, and Samaria, and were edified; walking in the fear of the Lord, and the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied." However, this passage teaches the opposite of the confession's premise because the region is not limited to Jerusalem. It says churches (congregations) "throughout all Judea . Galilee, and Samaria." To affirm that because there were congregations throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria indicates they were under or comprise the congregation at Jerusalem is mere assumption and reading into the Scriptures. Then Acts 21:20 is added in conjunction with Acts 9:31 as further support that the "church of Jerusalem consisted" of multiple congregations. When James and the other elders said to Paul that "many thousands of Jews there are which believe" etc., this does not imply that many congregations were under one so-called church.

The *second* premise to support the Protestant belief that the "church of Jerusalem" consisted of multiple congregations is that there were "many apostles and other preachers in the church of Jerusalem." Their proof-text for this is Acts 6:2. This text does not prove any such things. There were many congregations in that day, as well as there are today, that have multiple ministers. In fact, I co-pastored for about fifteen years in a single congregation. Multiple ministers in a congregation is no proof of a hierarchical ecclesiastical government as believed by the Protestants.

Our time is up for today, the Lord willing well will continue with this topic in our next lesson.

Ecclesiastical Government (5th)

(We are continuing our study of why the Protestants believe in synods and councils that rule ecclesiastically over independent congregations as found in the *Westminster Confession* under "The Form of Presbyterial Church-Government.")

In our previous podcast, we were reviewing "The Form of Presbyterial Church-Government" from the *Westminster Confession* and why they maintain that "the church of Jerusalem ... consisted of more congregations than one, and all these congregations were under one presbyterial government." We examined the first two

arguments under this first point. They were (1) a multitude of believers; (2) a multitude of ministers. Now we will consider their *third* reason as to why they believe the "church" of Jerusalem consisted of more than one congregation. It is "the diversity of languages among the believers, mentioned both in the second and sixth chapter of the Acts." In Acts chapter two, we find Jews from about fifteen different countries gathered at Jerusalem attending the feast of Pentecost. While they were Jews it is not unreasonable to think that in addition to the language of the country where they were living that they also knew the Hebrew language. Paul was not only a Jew, but a Roman citizen from the city of Tarsus; therefore, it is likely he knew Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. In fact, in I Corinthians 12:18, he said that he spoke "with tongues" (languages) "more than" all of them. However, those that preached on the day of Pentecost spoke in the language of the various countries from which the Jews lived. Nevertheless, the three thousand converts (Acts 2:41) were added to the one hundred twenty (Acts 1:15) composed one evkklhsi,a (congregation) at Jerusalem. There is nothing said in Acts chapter two to indicate different assemblies aligned with individual languages. This has to be assumed to fix a preconceived form of ecclesiastical government. The idea of different languages from Acts chapter six can only be derived from the Hebrews and Grecians in verse one and the synagogue of the Libertines, Cyrenians, Alexandrians, Cilicia, and Asia that were disputing with Stephen. However, the synagogue was not a New Testament congregation but it appears they were not speaking different languages in their synagogue worship or wherever they were disputing with Stephen. It has to be read into the text to assume that Stephen was discussing with the people from all those different countries in different languages. As for the Hebrews and Grecians in verse one, this was a description of styles and customs and that the Grecians did incorporate the Greek language into their lives whereas the Hebrews generally did not, but there is no indication of separate congregations because of this. If there were separate congregations with each its own language, why was there murmuring that the Grecians widows were neglected and why is it that the seven men (generally assumed to be deacons) that were selected all Grecians as indicated in the Greek language by their names?

"The Form of Presbyterial Church-Government" *second* premise that the "church of Jerusalem" consisted of more than one congregation is "All those congregations were under one presbyterial government." Then four points are supplied to support their argument.

The *first* point is, "They were one church." Since the word church should be congregation or assembly, why the distinction? In other words were the formers of the confession saying it was a church of churches, or a congregation of

congregations? No, they were intending to force the English word church to mean something separate from congregation as practiced by the Catholics for hundreds of years and adopted by the Protestants to support their hierarchical ecclesiastical government. Let us keep in mind that our Lord Jesus Christ set up His New Testament congregation to be the pillar and ground of the truth (I Timothy 3:15) and to maintain the keys of the kingdom (Matthew 16:18-19). Our Lord did not establish some ecclesiastical authority to rule over and govern the individual candlestick in which He dwells (cf. Revelation 1:12-15, 20). Christ is not honored and glorified in ecclesiastical hierarchies; He is worshipped, honored, adorned, and glorified in the congregation of God as the gospel is proclaimed and the ordinances preserved according to the truth of the Scriptures.

The *second* point to support that "All those congregations were under one presbyterial government," is "[t]he elders of the church are mentioned." By this the writers of the confession are saying that the elders of the "church" are separate and above the congregation. However, a multiplicity of elders or ministers of any kind do not infer a multiplicity of congregations. There are many congregations that have more than one elder or pastor. As I previously stated, I was blessed to co-pastor a congregation for approximately fifteen years. Even Acts 20:17 states that Paul "called for the elders of the church" (congregation) at Ephesus. To say (by implication) that the word "church" in Acts 20:17 includes more than one congregation at Ephesus, then why did the Holy Spirit say in the letter to the Galatians "the churches of Galatia" and not to the church of Galatia? Equally, our Lord distinguished between the church (congregation) of Ephesus from that of Smyrna, Pergamos, and the other churches (congregations) of Asia. (See Revelation chapters one through three.) In fact, the Holy Spirit inspired John to write to the seven churches (congregations) and then singled out each church (congregation) in the singular. One has to assume what is not stated in the Scriptures to infer anything differently. To assume or imply synods or any kind of council or assembly as an ecclesiastical authority over individual congregations from Revelation chapters one through three is to read it into the Holy Scriptures. Let it be emphasized, the congregation at Ephesus in Revelation is the same congregation that had "elders" in Acts 20:17, and it is the same congregation to whom the letter to the Ephesians was written. And the congregation at Ephesus was just as much a "body of Christ" as the congregation at Corinth, cf. I Corinthians 12:27. Remember that this passage reads "ye are the body of Christ." Since the definite article is not supplied before the word "body" in the Greek text, it may well be interpreted "ye are ***a*** body of Christ" (Emphasis mine— JKB.)

The *third* argument to support that "All those congregations were under one

presbyterial government," is as follows: "The apostles did the ordinary acts of presbyters, as presbyters in that kirk; which proveth a Presbyterian church before the dispersion, Acts vi."

Obviously, the apostles were serving as ministers to the congregation in the early days of Christianity, but this in no way proves that they function as a separate ruling body over the congregation of Jerusalem. As I Corinthians 12:28 states, the Lord set the gift of apostle in the congregation first. Acts 6:2-3 reads, "Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples *unto them,* and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business." Notice that it was the "twelve" that called the disciples. Remember in Acts chapter one, the congregation of "an hundred and twenty" were assembled together and Peter advised them (the hundred and twenty; not the eleven apostles) to select one to replace Judas. Matthias was selected as an apostle by the congregation. (Remember that according to Acts 2:41, 47 the baptized believers on the Day of Pentecost and afterward were added to the "church" [congregation]; the congregation of "an hundred and twenty" in chapter one.) In other words, the apostles were in the congregation and, as was Matthias, and he was selected by the congregation. The apostles were not a ruling body over and above the congregation; they were of the congregation.

We must bring to your attention that this *third* argument speaks of "presbyters in that kirk." (By the way, the Greek word for "presbyter" is translated as "elder.") *Wikipedia* (which summarizes it well) gives the basic meaning and etymology of kirk as follows:

> As a common noun, *kirk* (meaning 'church') is found in Scots, Scottish English, Ulster-Scots and some English dialects, attested as a noun from the 14th century onwards, but as an element in placenames much earlier. Both words, *kirk* and *church,* derive from the Koine Greek **KupiaKov (8o^a)** (kyriakon (8o|ia)) meaning *Lord's (house),* which was borrowed into the Germanic languages in late antiquity, possibly in the course of the Gothic missions.

Again we find that the idea of an ecclesiastical hierarchy under the identity of "kirk" is proclaimed by individuals who desire to follow the meaning of the Greek word κυριακόν instead of ἐκκλησία for the congregation. This mixing and swapping of words instills confusion among the people of God and causes them to be enslaved to an ecclesiastical hierarchy that rules over them and brings them into captivity to rules, regulations, and auxiliaries that were never instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ. Is it any wonder that there are so many ideas and opinions about ecclesiastical

government? But out time is up for today. The Lord willing we shall continue this study in our next broadcast.

Ecclesiastical Government (6th)

(We are continuing our study of why the Protestants believe in synods and councils that rule ecclesiastically over independent congregations as found in the *Westminster Confession* under "The Form of Presbyterial Church-Government.")

Today we will continue looking at the Protestant position supporting their views of hierarchical synods, councils, and assemblies to rule over congregations as found in "The Form of Presbyterial Church-Government" from the *Westminster Confession*. We ended our previous podcast looking at the *second* premise that the "church of Jerusalem" consisted of more than one congregation which was that "All those congregations were under one presbyterial government." We reviewed three of the four points to support their argument, and today we will continue by considering the *fourth* reason which is, "The several congregations in Jerusalem being one church, the elders of that church are mentioned as meeting together for acts of government; which proves that those several congregations were under one presbyterial government."

It should be noted again that the writers of the confession makes a distinction between the words "church" and "congregation." Assuming you have followed our studies, you must remember that the English word "church" is derived from the Greek word for the "house of the Lord" and not from the Greek word evkklhsi,a which should have been translated congregation and not church. Therefore, for the Protestants to assume that the word "church" means something different from the word "congregation" is confusing and misleading at the least and dishonest at the most. *Secondly*, in the fourth reason, the Protestants assume that there were "several congregations in Jerusalem," but this is not stated anywhere in the Holy Scriptures. *Thirdly*, they wrote that "the elders of that church are mentioned as meeting together for acts of government; which proves that those several congregations were under one presbyterial government." This, too, assumes that the "church" is something other than congregation and that the elders were members or officers of that ecclesiastical hierarchical and not of a congregation. They reference Acts 11:30; 15:4, 6, 22; 21:17-18 to support their position. The first passage is Acts 11:30. This verse must not be removed from the context because Barnabas was in Antioch because the congregation at Jerusalem sent him there, Acts 11:22. The elders did not send him. While he was there, he went to Tarsus and found Saul (Paul) and brought

him to Antioch. After prophets from Jerusalem went to Antioch and told of the drought that was to come on Jerusalem, the congregation at Antioch determined to send financial support to Jerusalem by Barnabas and Saul. Notice that verse twenty-nine says, "Then the disciples ... determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judea." Therefore, those that sent Barnabas and Saul were the "brethren" or "disciples" and not an ecclesiastical hierarchy separate from the congregation at Antioch. (A study of the words "brethren" and "disciple," especially in the book of Acts, will show that it often refers to the congregation at a particular place.) That verse thirty says they sent it to the "elders" is no proof that these elders were some officers separate from the congregation at Jerusalem.

Too much cannot be made that the congregation at Antioch determined to send to the brethren in Judea by saying that it included more than Jerusalem. In Acts 12:19, it says that Herod went from Judea to Caesarea. By studying the context, clearly Herod went from Jerusalem to Caesarea. The second passage given is Acts 15: 4, 6, and 22. We previously studied this passage and found that the council in Jerusalem was not some ecclesiastical hierarchy composed of apostles and elders apart from the congregation at Jerusalem. Acts 15:22 says, "Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church ." In other words, the apostles and elders were with the congregation at Jerusalem and not separated from or over it. Again, the passage in Acts 21:17-18 includes the brethren or congregation at Jerusalem.

This concludes the *first* position that "many particular congregations may be under one presbyterial government," which was that the "church of Jerusalem . consisted of more congregations than one."

The *second* reason given to support that "many particular congregations may be under one presbyterial government" is "[b]y the instance of the church of Ephesus." Their support for this is that Paul was there "for the space of three years," "special effect of the word is mentioned," "a distinction of Jews and Greeks," "that Paul stayed there until Pentecost," and "of a particular church in the house of Aquila and Priscilla, and then at Ephesus." Their scriptural references for these points are Acts 20:31; 19:18-20; 19:10, 17; I Corinthians 16:8-9, 19; Acts 18:19, 24, and 26. Since the first four points are only assumptions supplied by the writers and there is nothing in the passages given to sustain multiple congregations, there is no need to use valuable time in showing that these can equally apply to a single congregation. It is interesting that since a distinction is made by the confession between "church" and "congregation," and the congregation is supposedly under the church, that the confession reads "a particular church" was in the house of Aquila and Priscilla. Obviously, the "particular church" in their house was a congregation, but the

Protestants would have us to believe that the word “church” is something different from the word “congregation.” They can't have it both ways. By doing so it only adds to the confusion that is generally found among professing believers, and the world, regarding “the church” and what it is. While the Scriptures do not say that there was a congregation in the house of Aquila and Priscilla at Ephesus, it is affirmed in Romans 16:3-5. (From Romans chapter sixteen, it appears that there were multiple congregations at Rome. Also, the epistle to Rome was addressed to “all that be in Rome, beloved of God, etc.,” while the epistles to Corinth and others were often designated as a “congregation” and where a letter was addressed to multiple congregations it was made clear; for examples as follows: Galatians 1:2, “unto the churches of Galatia”; Revelation 1:4, “to the seven churches which are in Asia.” Even Acts 9:31 makes such a distinction: “Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria.”) However, while there was a congregation in the house of Aquila and Priscilla in Rome does not necessarily mean that such was the case in Ephesus. If there was a congregation in the house of Aquila and Priscilla in Acts chapter eighteen, it could have been the nucleus of the congregation at Ephesus which was later built up after Paul was there for the “for the space of three years” as found in Acts chapters nineteen and twenty. (You will notice that the confession references verses from these chapters before chapter eighteen.)

I find it interesting that when such arguments are made by the Protestants that the first three chapters of Revelation are ignored. There it is stated clearly that that letter was written and to be given to the “seven churches” (congregations) in Asia. One of those congregations was Ephesus. Surely, no one would suggest that there were seven denominations in that small area of the world. Also when Paul wrote to the church (congregation) at Colosse, he said that they should share their letter with the “church of the Laodiceans” and that the congregation at Colosse read the epistle he wrote to Laodicea, Colossians 4:16. These were individual congregations and not synods or some ecclesiastical hierarchy ruling over congregations. (Notice that the congregation at Colosse met in the house of Nymphas, Colossians 4:15; therefore, it is not unreasonable that the small congregation at Ephesus likewise met in the house of Aquila and Priscilla when they lived in Ephesus.) When our Lord addressed a congregation in the Book of Revelation He used the singular, but when He included more than one He used the plural. Can anything be clearer? Why read into the Scriptures of synods and other hierarchical systems to rule over individual congregations unless a denominational ladder or chain of command is intended to bring the masses under one ruling body for control? Such a structure did not come from the Scriptures, it does appear to be a version of and a continuation from the Catholics. Remember that the Protestants were trying to reform the Catholics; their

intention in the beginning was not to start a new denomination or denominations.

When the Lord Jesus Christ established His congregation, it was not for the purpose of establishing an ecclesiastical hierarchy or a ruling body of ministers to lord it over the congregation. In fact, shortly before His crucifixion, two of His apostles, (James and John) wanted ruling authority, which caused the other ten to be "much displeased," Mark 10:41. Listen to the words of our Lord: "Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." If this was given to the apostles (the first gifts) what does it say of ministers, pastors, elders, and even deacons today? No we are not to form some ecclesiastical hierarchy to rule over the congregations. The congregation is the only authority which our Lord gave. But we will have more to say of this later because our time is up for today.

Ecclesiastical Government (7th)

(Our study today is the conclusion of why the Protestants believe in synods and councils that rule ecclesiastically over independent congregations as found in the *Westminster Confession* and under "The Form of Presbyterial Church-Government" of that confession.)

We left off in our previous study reviewing the *second* reason as found in "The Form of Presbyterial Church-Government" to support that "many particular congregations may be under one presbyterial government" ... "[b]y the instance of the church of Ephesus." Their *first* support for this is (1) that Paul was there "for the space of three years," (2) "special effect of the word is mentioned," (3) "a distinction of Jews and Greeks," (4) "that Paul stayed there until Pentecost," and (5) "of a particular church in the house of Aquila and Priscilla, and then at Ephesus." We saw that these suppositions and the scriptural references given do not support their "Presbyterial Church-Government" declarations.

The *second* and *third* reasons for asserting that the "church of Ephesus" was composed of more than one congregation are (1) "that there were many elders over these many congregations, as one flock," and (2) that the congregations "were under one presbyterial government." For believing that there were multiple elders at Ephesus, Acts 20:17, 25, 28, 39, 36, and 37 were referenced. It is obvious that the congregation at Ephesus, as well as other congregations, had a multiple of elders. For

example, the epistle to the congregation at Philippi included the "bishops and deacons," Philippians 1:1. (That the word bishop and elder are one and the same office will be addressed later.) Are the Protestants willing to equally affirm that there were multiple congregations in Philippi because "deacons" is likewise used in this verse with the word bishop? To make such an argument for the use of the word "elders" in Acts chapter twenty, why not do likewise with the word "deacons" in Philippians 1:1? Nevertheless, the premise of a plurality of elders was previously addressed and it would be redundant to do so again here. Acts 20:28 says, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." These elders (plural) were to minister to the flock (singular). If there were more than one congregation in Ephesus, why did the Holy Spirit inspire the writer of Acts to write flock (singular)? This would be an excellent place for the Lord to clarify the Protestant affirmation by simply supplying the word flocks instead of flock. (By the way, the word "overseer" is the same Greek word for "bishop" in Philippians 1:1. We plan to discuss this later.)

Some use Acts 20:28 to say that it includes more than a single congregation because it says that God purchased the "church of God," and since Christ died for more than a single congregation the "church of God" must literally include more than that. This is not necessarily so because, as we have seen before, I Corinthians 12:27 designated that congregation at Corinth as "the body of Christ" or as the Greek text bears out "a body of Christ." Therefore, each New Testament congregation is "a body of Christ" and "of God." Equally, Christ died for each congregation. It is sad that the ideal of globalism is affecting the interpretation of the Scriptures by placing emphasis on the whole family of God at the expense of the "house of God," I Timothy 3:15. (Notice that this verse uses "house"—singular and not plural.)

The *third* reason for believing "many congregations were one church, and that they were under one presbyterial government" is supposed to be supported by Revelation 2:1-6 connected with Acts chapter 20:17, 28. We have previously address the use of the English words "church" and "churches" in Revelation and will not burdened the listener by doing so again.

Since we have addressed *Of Classical Assemblies* from *Westminster Confession* under "The Form of Presbyterial Church-Government," we will devote some time to the section entitled *Of Synodical Assemblies*. Since it is not too large, we shall supply the whole section.

> The scripture doth hold out another sort of assemblies for the government of the church, beside classical and congregational, all which we call *Synodical*.

[Referenced here is Acts 15, 2, 6, 22, 23.]

Pastors and teachers, and other church-governors, (as also other fit person, when it shall be deemed expedient,) are members of those assemblies which we call *Synodical*, where they have a lawful calling thereunto.

Synodical assemblies may lawfully be of several sorts, as provincial, national, and oecumenical [sic.].

It is lawful, and agreeable to the word of God, that there be a subordination of congregational, classical, provincial, and national assemblies, for the government of the church.

As you may have noticed, the only paragraph with a scriptural reference is the first one and the verses given are from the conference held in Jerusalem in Acts chapters fifteen. There is no need to address that since it was previously discussed. When reading from the second paragraph regarding the members of such assemblies it referenced pastors, teachers, and other church-governors, (as also other fit person, when it shall be deemed expedient).” I remember reading recently of an incident in the life of Archibald Alexander. When he was a “young and promising pupil” (not an elder or yet an ordained minister) a Presbyterian minister by the name of William Graham desired Alexander to attend with him at the General Assembly in Philadelphia in 1791 as “a ruling elder.” Though Alexander “was little satisfied with the arrangement,” he “acquiesced.” *The Life of Archibald Alexander, D.D.* by James W. Alexander, pp. 90-91. I do not think this is generally practiced by the Protestants, but I believe is worthy of note that it has been done.

I am surprised to say the least and astonished to say the most that people will go to such lengths to try to support the idea that our Lord authorized or approves of His kingdom as functioning today in the New Testament congregation under any kind of “subordination of congregational” government. We must never forget that the Lord made it clear that His kingdom is not of this world (John 18:36) and that the congregation is to govern over its own affairs and not to include civil authorities, I Corinthians 6:1-8. Also, when James and John had their mother to ask the Lord to allow them to sit on His right and left in authority over others (Matthew 20:20), He (the Lord) was “much displeased,” Mark 10:41. Our Lord further instructed them that they were not to “exercise dominion” over one another as the Gentiles, Matthew 20:25-28. Instead of exercising authority over each other they were to be ministers and servants. Even the apostle Peter instructed in his epistles that the elders are not to take the oversight of the flock by “constraint” and neither are they to be “lords over *God's* heritage.” I Peter 5:1-3. It might also be noted that Peter referred to himself as an elder and not some hierarchical officer setting in authority over the

people of God, nor of a congregation. The passage further says that the elder is "among" the flock and not over the flock as some ecclesiastical hierarchy. They are to live among the flock of God as an example of how the flock is to live. Today there are too many ministers, deacons and various designated officers in congregations and denominational headquarters that are poor examples of a disciple of Christ. Too often the message proclaimed by such men follows the proverb of "Don't do as I do; do as I say." While the apostle Paul would not claim to be sinless, he did say, "Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me," and "Be ye followers of me, even as I also *am* of Christ," I Corinthians 4:16; 11:1. There are other passages where Paul gave exhortations of this kind to other congregations.

Ecclesiastical Government (8th)

(Today's podcast is the beginning of studying the Scriptures to see what is taught regarding the government of the New Testament congregation.) Previously we reviewed what the Protestants believe concerning the government of the church and congregations as found in the *Westminster Confession* and under "The Form of Presbyterial Church-Government" of that confession.

Now we will look somewhat at the *London Baptist Confession of Faith* as adopted in England in 1689 and later adopted by the Baptists in America in earliest days of this nation. The Philadelphia Baptist Association had Benjamin Franklin print it in 1742. Chapter twenty-six, article seven states: "To each of these churches thus gathered, according to his mind declared in his word, he hath given all that power and authority, which is in any way needful for their carrying on that order in worship and discipline, which he hath instituted for them to observe; with commands and rules for the due and right exerting, and executing of that power." Notice that God gave to each congregation "all … power and authority" to carry on "that order in worship and discipline, which he hath instituted for them to observe," as ordained by the Scriptures. Therefore, as we previously stated, the congregation is the only ecclesiastical authority instituted by the Lord. The scriptural passages referenced to support this premise are Matthew 18:17-18; I Corinthians 5:4, 5, 13; II Corinthians 2:6-8.

The passage in Matthew chapter eighteen deals with an offended brother (obviously a fellow member of the congregation) seeking reconciliation with the offender. The verses referenced concludes by saying, "And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church:" (congregation) "but if he neglect to hear the church," (congregation) "let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Therefore, when a

congregation follows the Scriptures in ecclesiastical government it is ordained and sanctioned by God. The Lord did not place His assembly under any synod or council, ecclesiastically or civilly, to rule over it. (Please know that we are not saying that a congregation is to ignore and disregard other congregations and brethren or act so independently that it does not care what anyone else says or believes. Obviously, like-minded brethren and congregations should have fellowship and care for each other. However, the ultimate authority is the congregation and not some ruling board or power over it. Clearly, Caesar [or any and all worldly governments] has no authority over the congregation of the Lord. We shall have more to say about these things later.) This passage in Matthew should be clear to all that there can be no higher power than heaven, and since heaven (i.e., God) recognized that the congregation has the final word there can be none above it. In addition to this passage, it should be noted that when our Lord said that He would build His congregation and that the "gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18), He further declared "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Therefore, Matthew 18:18 and Matthew 16:18 are simply affirming the same truth concerning the authority of God on earth, and that authority is found in the congregation of the Lord as it governs and rules according to the testimony of the Holy Scriptures.

The second place to support the congregation being the only ecclesiastical authority comes from I Corinthians chapter five. The report was of a sin that was worse than what was practiced among the Gentile world. It was the sin of fornication where a man was sleeping with "his father's wife," I Corinthians 5:1. If that was not bad enough, the congregation was "puffed up" or proud of it. Verse six says that they were "glorying" or bragging about the sin. The apostle Paul instructs the congregation to excommunicate or exclude this man from the congregation. Verses four and five says, "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." Notice that the Holy Spirit did not inspire Paul to write to that a synod or some council was to be formed to exercise discipline on the man. The Lord directed that the congregation was to perform this discipline. Paul, as an apostle, did not demand the congregation to perform this exclusion, though he had "judged already" (I Corinthians 5:3) regarding the matter. Paul said that when the congregation were assembled ("gathered together") with the same disposition ("spirit") that he had, then they were to perform the discipline on the man. Also, notice that this discipline was with the "power of" the "Lord Jesus Christ," and that the day of judgment was in view. In connection with this, verse thirteen, says, "But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that

wicked person." Since this man was "among" the congregation, they (the congregation) were to put him away. It was not a committee, synod, group of ministers, the state, or any authority apart from, or over, the congregation that exercised this power. It was the congregation collective that performed this function. The authority of the congregation to discipline this man was not only with the power of the Lord to remove him from membership, but he was also delivered "unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." Regardless of what all is involved by this action, I believe it can be said that modern so-called evangelical religion knows very little, if any, of the power and authority of the congregation of God. Many, if not the majority, of members of a congregation today do not believe that anyone, much less the congregation, has any right or business to judge them for anything.

They believe they can live their lives as they want and no one has any right to say anything about it.

Sadly, hardly is it heard of today when any congregation performs discipline of any kind. We seem to be living as Israel was in the day of the judges: "every man did that which was right in his own eyes," Judges 21:35. The Lord inspired the apostle Peter to say "that judgment must begin at the house of God," I Peter 5:17. It seems that the congregation of God, as a whole, has lost its power and authority, and it is enslaved to denominational hierarchies and worldly organizations and functions according to business (and governmental) guidelines, and have cast off the holiness of the Lord as ordained by God in the Holy Scriptures. Too many ministers, as well as the members, are violating all of I Corinthians 5:13. They are judging and preaching about how bad the world is (those that are without), and they are failing to scripturally judge those within and, thereby, filling up their congregations with "wicked" people.

The third passage supplied by the *London Confession* is II Corinthians 2:6-8. It says, "Sufficient to such a man *is* this punishment, which *was inflicted* of many. So that contrariwise ye *ought* rather to forgive *him*, and comfort *him*, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow.

Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm *your* love toward him." Obviously, our Lord would have us to think of the discipline performed by this same congregation as recorded in chapter five of the first epistle. We see from this passage that the punishment inflicted on this man was "of many." This Greek word means "more in quantity" or by the majority. In other words, the man in I Corinthian chapter five was disciplined by a majority vote. It appears that the man repented of his sin and was in deep sorrow for it. The Lord has Paul to instruct the congregation to restore the man lest he be "swallowed up with overmuch sorrow." This was to be done by the congregation and not by any ecclesiastical authority over and above the congregation. It appears from II Corinthians 7:12 that congregational discipline is as much, if not more, for the health and benefit of the congregation as it is for the guilty

or offended party. It says, “Wherefore, though I wrote unto you, *I did it* not for his cause that had done the wrong, nor for his cause that suffered wrong, but that our care for you in the sight of God might appear unto you.” The objective of congregational discipline is not only for the health and benefit of the erring individual but for the strength and soundness of the congregation.

When congregations are functioning according to the teachings of the Word of God, maintaining the government as ordained by the Lord, proclaiming the gospel truth, and performing the ordinances as commanded by God, it is indeed “the house of God, … the church” (congregation) “of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth,” I Timothy 3:15.

Ecclesiastical Government (9th)

(The study for today begins looking at the officers in the congregation that the Lord Jesus Christ appointed and their particular function.)

In our previous study we found that the New Testament church is a congregation of the Lord and that Christ gave all power and authority to each congregation as well as everything “needful for … carrying on that order in worship and discipline, which he hath instituted … to observe, with commands and rules for the due and right exerting and executing of that power.” This is so affirmed by the Baptist confessions in the earliest days of Europe and America as stated in the *London Baptist Confession of 1689* and also adopted by the early Baptist in America by the Philadelphia Association.

Chapter twenty-six, Article eight, of this confession says, “A particular church, gathered and completely organized according to the mind of Christ, consists of officers and members; and the officers appointed by Christ to be chosen and set apart by the church (so called and gathered), for the peculiar administration of ordinances, and execution of power or duty, which he entrusts them with, or calls them to, to be continued to the end of the world, are bishops or elders, and deacons.” Noticed that the officers are (1) appointed by Christ; (2) chosen and set apart by the congregation; (3) for administration of the ordinances; (4) for execution of power or duty which God entrusts with, or calls them to; (5) that these officers are to continue to the end of the world; and, (6) that such officers are bishops or elders, and deacons. Nothing is said of any other officer within or apart from the congregation. Nothing is said of any auxiliary organization, institution, society, association, synod, council, or group for ecclesiastical authority.

Allow me to digress at this point and say that a congregation may seek the advice of a minister or a group of ministers from separate congregations, or even seek the wisdom of other congregations regarding a matter, but in the end, the final word is

within the congregation itself. This is what was seen with the congregation at Jerusalem in Acts chapter fifteen; the whole church (congregation) was involved.

I would also say that this appeared to be the purpose of associations in the early days of the Baptists in America, but, sad to say, later often associations assumed powers over various congregations. However, congregations working together for the mutual benefit of a godly cause is encouraged, but the cause must never be deemed more important than the congregation. In other words, it is good to provide support to "mission work," but when such support fails to support the pastor or pastors of the congregation or the poor and needful within the congregation it is wrong. Yes, "As we have … opportunity, let us do good unto all men," but "especially unto them who are of the household of faith," Galatians 6:10. While Paul collected money for the saints at Jerusalem, he equally taught those congregations that the ministers are to be supported, cf. I Corinthians chapters nine and sixteen. This principle equally applies to poor widows and others within the assembly. I would draw your attention here that the "missionary congregations" (congregations established by mission work as Corinth, Philippi, and others) contributed to the so-called "mother" congregation at Jerusalem. How many "missionary congregations" do you know of that ever send support to congregations from which the ministers were sent to establish or build up the so-called missionary assemblies? Is it any wonder that Christianity, as a whole, is backward from what is taught in the Scriptures? Please do not misunderstand me. I am not condemning what is called "mission work"; far from it. May the gospel be proclaimed throughout the entire world. I only desire that we are not guilty of letting a good thing be used contrary to the health and benefit of the congregation as established by the Lord Jesus. Obviously, if we fail to function as our Lord ordained in the Holy Scriptures we fail to honor and glorify Him as He ordained.

Let us return from our digression back to the subject at hand. We find, first, that the officers are appointed by Christ. This is to say that the officers within (not over) the congregation are appointed by Christ. In other words, officers who are constituted by man are not of God. Obviously, the ministers should be called by God, but we must remember that deacons are included in the list. While deacons must meet certain qualifications prior to ordination, we must not think that because a man has all the qualifications for being a deacon he must be recognized or ordained as such. When the congregation at Jerusalem selected the seven men in Acts chapter six we must not conclude that they were the only men that were "of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom," Acts 6:3. Therefore, when the confession says that "the officers appointed by Christ," it means those listed are the officers that God or Christ ordained which are bishops or elders and deacons. There are no other officers and we will continue with this premise. However, the Lord willing, we will study these officers in detail later.

The second thing listed is that they are "to be chosen and set apart by the church (so called and gathered)." It is clear that the "church" intended is a congregation. Therefore, no Bible college or seminary or denominational hierarchy has any authority to designate or ordain any man to the ministry or deaconship. Additionally, when a congregation has appointed and ordained a man to either office, it is not obligatory that such an individual maintain the same position in another congregation. In other words, if a man is a deacon in one congregation and if he moves to a different location and become a member in another congregation, the second congregation is not obligated to appoint him to be a deacon. The second congregation may already have sufficient number of deacons. The same may be said regarding the office of eldership or pastor in the second assembly. It is left to the discretion of the congregation as to whether an individual may function within the congregation. Because a person functions as an officer in one congregation, he should not expect to function accordingly in another congregation, and he should not take offence when he is not recognized as such. We must all remember that it is Christ that has the preeminence and that each member of the congregation is there for the honor and glory of the Lord. On the other hand, if a transfer of membership takes place of an officer and the subsequent congregation has a need for such an officer she is a liberty and has the authority to recognize the officer.

The Scriptures plainly show that the congregation is to appoint the officers. It is generally accepted that Acts chapter six is when the office of deacon was established. Acts 6:3 plainly says that the congregation was to look out among them for such men to fill the office. The qualifications of a deacon are more specifically outlined in I Timothy chapter three.

Acts 14:23 equally declares that elders are selected by the congregation. It says that Paul and Barnabas "ordained elders in every" congregation. The word "ordain" is the Greek word ceirotone,w ,χηειροτονō. and means "to be a hand-reacher or voter (by raising the hand). Therefore, it was not Paul and Barnabas that selected and established the elders in the congregations in their missionary travels; the congregations selected the men to be their elders. Obviously, synods or any other ecclesiastical authority did not establish the elders in the congregations.

The third item given above declares that the officers are "for the peculiar administration of ordinances." Generally, both Baptists and Protestants agree with this. However, for those young in the faith it might be beneficial to review this for their edification.

As previously stated, Acts chapter six is normally considered the time when deacons were established within the congregation of God. It is recorded that those seven men were set apart (appointed or ordained) to "serve tables," Acts 6:2. According to the context, the tables under consideration were those of the Grecian

widows, Acts. 6:1. Some advocate that the tables refer to the table or tables used during the Lord's Supper. Though the deacons certainly may be useful and expected by the congregation to assist and support the pastor during the Lord's Supper, the context of Acts chapter six extends to other duties. I Timothy chapter five outlines the qualifications of widows that are to be supported and cared for by the congregation. However, as previously stated, we shall study the office and function of deacons in more detail later. But for now, we find that while the functions of the deacon are many, it may (and often does) assist the minister with the "administration of the ordinances," not only the Lord's Supper, but equally with baptism. It is generally believed among all branches of Christendom that the minister of the congregation administers the ordinances. We plan to discuss this more fully when we review the offices and functions in depth. Since our allotted time is used up, we will continue in our next session.

Ecclesiastical Government (10th)

(The study for today continues looking at the officers in the congregation that the Lord Jesus Christ appointed and their particular function.)

In our last broadcast, we were reviewing Chapter twenty-six, Article eight, of the *London Baptist Confession of 1689.* We covered that the officers are (1) appointed by Christ; (2) chosen and set apart by the congregation; (3) for administration of the ordinances. The ***fourth*** item listed is "for execution of power or duty which God entrusts with, or calls them to." Obviously, no officer has the right or authority to function in any capacity that is not authorized by the Holy Scriptures; for example, no minister or deacon has the power to rule over any congregation in which he does not pastor or reside. Neither are there denominational heads or officers authorized by the Lord, but we plan to discuss this more when we specifically look at the officers individually.

While the pastor is to be a shepherd (i.e., Christ's under-shepherd) and watch for the souls of the people under his care, he must not be a lord over them to dictate every event of their lives. For example, while it is the minister's duty to teach modest dress, it is not his job to regulate colors and other trivial matters of dress. Also, the deacon is to be a help and support to the ministry, but it is not his function to regulate what the minister is to preach and teach the congregation. If the officers of the congregation would continually bear in mind that they are servants of, and to, the congregation, I believe, it will go a long way in preventing them from exceeding their duties and obligations in honoring the Lord. With this being said, they must execute the duty entrusted them by God. They must not shirk their responsibility.

They must preach and teach ***all*** the counsel of God. Too often, many ministers fail to preach certain subjects because it will cause them hardships or they will lose popularity. For example, there have been times when ministers agreed with me in private about a sensitive matter to later oppose me in public when discussing it because they wanted to go along with the majority. They did not want to the people to think ill of them. They desired the praises of men more than being faithful to the truth of the Word of God.

They failed to execute their duty to the Holy Scriptures. The minister must maintain the proper balance of being faithful to the Lord and His Word on the one hand, but he must not lord it over the conscious of the saints on the other. Sometimes this is extremely difficult, but for the honor of the Lord and the purity of the house of God, it must be done.

The ***fifth*** point given is "that these officers are to continue to the end of the world." By this we find that these are the only officers that Christ gave to the assembly and that no others are to be added.

Equally, this point declares that the congregation of God will be in existence somewhere on this earth until the return of Christ. I Corinthians 11:26, when speaking of the Lord's Supper, declares that this is showing "the Lord's death till he come." Various congregations come and go, but there will be at least one (I believe there will be more) congregation that is truly contending for the faith when our Lord Jesus Christ returns to this earth. Obviously, there must be an assembly practicing this ordinance when the Lord returns. Since the congregation will be here when our Lord returns, likewise His officers will be present until that time.

Now we come to the ***sixth*** item listed which declares "that such officers are bishops or elders, and deacons." This is the heart of the matter regarding the officers that Christ established for the congregation to properly function. Therefore, we shall give specific attention to these words and their use in the New Testament. Though there are many words used to describe these officers and the office they occupy, there are basically three that we will consider. The Greek words are as follows: for bishop the word is evpi,skopoj; for elder the word is presbu,teroj; for deacon the word is dia,konoj. To see that the words for bishop and elder refer to the same office, see Acts 20:17, 28. Verse 17 says, "And from Miletus he" (i.e.

Paul) "sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church" (congregation). In verse 28 Paul said, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feel the church" (congregation) "of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." The Greek word for overseer is evpi,skopoj from which bishop is translated. Therefore, when Paul addressed his epistle to the congregation at Philippi saying, "Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops

and deacons," he was identifying the two officers of the congregation: bishops (or elders) and deacons.

Before looking at the Greek words behind these offices, it must be noted that nothing is said in the Scriptures about qualifications for women officers in the congregations. In fact, the Word of God is plain regarding this subject. I Timothy 2:11-14 states, "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression." Why is this? First is because God said so. Second is because Adam was first created and, therefore, the man is to have the leadership role. Third is because the basic nature of the woman is of such that she is more easily deceived than the man. Notice that God said that the man was not deceived, but the woman was deceived in the garden. Equally, the Lord instructed the congregation at Corinth regarding the role of women in the assembly. He said, "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church." While this is not popular with many people, these passages should satisfy any Bible believing Christian.

We are well aware that the general trend of modern religion teaches contrary to this; even many professing Christians believe today that women should have equal role in the congregation. However, nothing can be plainer than what God has given. Obviously, the older women are to teach the younger women in a domestic setting (Titus 2:2-5), and women such as Phebe, Clement, and Priscilla and others have their place in the kingdom (see Romans 16:1-4; Philippians 4:3; Acts 18:26), but there are no official offices ordained by the Lord in the house of God; no, not even women missionaries. I Corinthians 9:5, says "Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?" Though Peter and others had wives that travel with them, nothing is mentioned of their wives being officers in the congregation or preaching and teaching the Scriptures as they traveled with their husbands. And since the Sunday school program is a modern invention of men it, too, is not authorized by the Lord for men or women to teach. Again, I want to be clear. Women do have an important role in the kingdom and their work is extremely valuable. The Lord willing, I may say more about this later, but our subject matter is ecclesiastical government in the congregation and the role of the officers ordained by the Lord.

As previously stated the Greek word for bishop or overseer is evpi,skopoj and the basic meaning is superintendent. It is found five times in the New Testament: Acts 20:28; Philippians 1:1; I Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:7; and I Peter 2:25. To fully understand

the office with the use of this word, there are two related words that should be considered. They are evpiskope,w and evpiskoph , and the *first* word is found in Hebrews 12:15; I Peter 5:2; the *second* word is found in Luke 19:44; Acts 1:20; I Timothy 3:1; and I Peter 2:12, respectively. We previously noted that the word overseer in Acts 20:28 and bishop in Philippians 1:1 are the same Greek word, ἐπίσκοποὺ In I Timothy 3:1-2 and in Titus 1:7 we see that evpiskoph , and evpi,s kopoj are used together regarding the qualifications of this officer. It is interesting that the character and conduct of the man is given far more than his ability to stand before an audience and preach a sermon or teach a lesson. In fact, the only qualifications given for teaching or preaching are (1) apt to teach, I Timothy 3:2; (2) hold fast faithful words taught to him so that he is able by "sound doctrine" to exhort and convince gainsayers, Titus 1:9. The word evp iskoph as found in Acts 1:20 refers to Judas' office as an apostle. This lends to the idea that while the apostolic office was unique and limited to the age of the New Testament, the function of that office was much like that of the bishop or elder in the congregation. It was an office that functioned as an overseer *within* the congregation and did not rule *over* it. We saw this previously as we discussed the conference at Jerusalem as found in Acts chapter fifteen and in I Corinthians chapter five regarding the instructions given to the congregation at Corinth by the apostle Paul regarding the discipline of the man who was sleeping with his father's wife. The word evpiskope,w is found in I Peter 5:2 where Peter teaches that the elder is to take the oversight of the flock. The word *oversight* is from this Greek word. Notice the context of I Peter 5:1-3: "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight *thereof*, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over *God's* heritage, but being ensamples to the flock." While the elder or bishop is to take the oversight of the flock, it is to be done in such a way that he is not a lord over the flock; he is to do so in such a way that he leads by example. Notice that Peter not only makes a connection of eldership and overseeing the flock, but includes himself in this office and does not elevate or separate himself as an apostle to govern over the congregation. However, our time is up for today, but the Lord willing, we will discuss this passage more in our next broadcast.

Ecclesiastical Government (11th)

(The study for today continues looking at the officers in the congregation that the Lord Jesus Christ appointed and their particular function. This session concludes the study of bishop and begins studying the word for elder.)

We closed our last podcast while studying I Peter 5:1-3 and saw in this passage some of the duties of this office: (1) feed the flock of God; (2) to do it willingly with a ready mind; (3) not to do it for filthy lucre; (4) not to be a lord over the flock; and, (5) to be an example to the flock. The Greek word for feed is poimai,nw and means to tend as a shepherd. It is revealing how God uses this word in the Scriptures. It is the same word translated feed in John 21:16 where the Lord instructed Peter to feed His sheep and in Acts 20:28 where the elders/overseers are to feed the congregation of God. It is also translated feed in Revelation 7:17 where the Lamb of God is to feed those "which came out of great tribulation." I think it is interesting that this same Greek word is translated rule in Matthew 2:6 where Christ, as the Governor of God, is to rule over His people. The governorship of Christ is that of a loving shepherd rather than a boss or an administrator over the house of God or residing in some denominational headquarter. Yes, in both cases ruling is involved but the type or kind of ruling is different. The bishop or elder is to do so in such a way that the flock of God, the congregation of the Lord, is being nourished and fed and strengthened as described in Ephesians 4:12-16: "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, *even* Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." Also, notice that the bishop/elder is to feed the flock "which is among you." He is not to feed the flock beneath him. He is *among* the flock. In Romans 1:1, Paul stated that he was *separated* unto the gospel of God and not *elevated*. The officers are separated to a work among the congregation; they are not elevated to some superior position above the flock of God. *Secondly*, the minister is to do it willingly. In other words, it is not just a job. It is a work that he willfully does; he enjoys laboring to nurture souls as they live in this world of sin and endure great trials.

Thirdly, he does not do the work for personal gain (filthy lucre). Without doing a full study of the word used, filthy lucre means any kind of personal gain: money; fame; prestige; or anything to climb the social ladder.
Fourthly, the bishop or elder is not to exercise dominion over the sheep of God using physical or psychological force. Listen to the instructions given by our Lord when James and John desired a superior position over their fellow disciples. He said to them, "Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." (Matthew 20:25-28. See also Mark 10:42-45.) *Fifthly*, the officers within the congregation are to live before the membership so that their lives can be seen and they are to be examples of a true follower of Christ. The Greek word for ensample or example in this passage is τύπος. It comes from the Greek word for a die, as a stamp or some likeness.
Our English word *type* comes from this word. The minister is to so live among the congregation so that he can say with the apostle Paul, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ," I Corinthians 11:1. Previously, he had instruction the congregation at Corinth in his fatherly manner by saying, "Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me," I Corinthians 4:16. May the Lord Jesus Christ give us ministers after His heart that lead by example and not drive the sheep like a harsh taskmaster. Some person acting as ecclesiastical officer hid away somewhere in a denominational (or congregational) office never to be seen by the congregation (with possible exception of an hour or two during the week) is not the idea portrayed in the Scriptures. It is the idea of a shepherd or a servant living among the people or sheep of the Lord so that the people will emulate him as he seeks to be like Christ. Also, allow me to remind you that it is a calling that he does willingly.
Now let us begin looking at the word for elder. The Greek word is presbu,teroj and the basic meaning is one who is older in age or carries the idea of senior in rank. A great deal of history is behind this word and its interpretation and or usage within Christianity. For our purposes, we must limit our study to the New Testament as to its meaning within the congregation of the Lord. The Greek word is used sixty-six times in the New Testament. Thirty-five times it refers to the religious leaders in Israel which were generally considered to be older men. Twelve times this word is used to designate heavenly creatures in the book of Revelation. Two times (I Timothy 5:1 and I Peter 5:5) it appears to be used regarding older men in the congregation. Seventeen times it refers to officers in the congregation of God.
The first place we find this word used to indicate an officer within the assembly of the Lord is in Acts 11:30 when the congregation in Syrian Antioch sent assistance to

the brethren in Judea by Barnabas and Paul. At first glance it might be assumed that these elders were those in Jerusalem since verse twenty-seven mentioned prophets from that city that came to Antioch. However, the dearth or drought extended beyond Jerusalem and Acts 9:31 informs us that there were congregations "throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria." Therefore, it is likely that this support was distributed among various congregations in Judea and so designated by referring to the ministers or bishops of the assemblies. It is not uncommon to hear of a congregation being so designated as where pastor "so and so" preaches or as pastor "so and so's" congregation. Obviously, it is the assembly of the Lord Jesus Christ, but so designated by the pastor(s) or officer(s) who minister there.

Secondly, we find "elders" mentioned in connection with the New Testament assembly in Acts 14:23.

Paul and Barnabas went back through the various territories and cities of Asia Minor "confirming the souls" and "exhorting" the believers "to continue in the faith" and endure the trials and afflictions of the gospel. At that time they "ordained … elders in every church" (congregation). Likewise they prayed and fasted and commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed. This passage gives us insight as to how men were placed in the assembly as elders. The Greek word for "ordained" is ceirotone,w [cheirotonéō / khi-rot-on-eh´-o] and means to stretch or reach forth the hand as in voting. It is the same word used in II Corinthians 8:19 where a certain brother was "chosen of the churches to travel with" Paul. (It is not certain who this brother was.) Nevertheless, it appears from the use of the word in Acts that the congregations voted on who they wanted to oversee them. And it is not unlikely that these men were generally (though not always) older men as from the meaning of the word for elder and the qualifications as listed in I Timothy and Titus. It is generally agreed that as the congregation at Antioch in Syria acted this way in sending Paul and Barnabas as recorded in Acts 13:1-4. The congregations in Asia Minor chose men that they believed were called by the Lord to oversee or guide them in the Scriptures.

Congregations, denominational boards, Bible colleges, seminaries, missionary societies, or any other institution do not make a biblical New Testament minister. He must first be called by God. Afterward, the congregation (and only the congregation) may ordain or choose him as a minister. If a congregation makes such a selection and the man has not been called by the Lord for such functions, the assembly has only put a man in office that God has not called. Therefore, the Lord does not sanction the action of the assembly and does not consider him as a "God called minister." As stated before, the only ecclesiastical authority is the congregation as it functions according to the teaching of the Holy Scriptures. Anything else is manmade and not of God. Also, this passage clearly indicates that the officer (elder or bishop) was

selected from among the congregation, by the congregation, and to minister within the congregation.

This concludes our time for today. The Lord willing we will continue our study of elders in the New Testament assembly in our next lesson.

Ecclesiastical Government (12th)

(The study for today continues looking at the officers in the congregation that the Lord Jesus Christ appointed and their particular function. This session continues studying the word for elder.) Today we will continue our study of the word for elder (πρεσβύτερος) that we began in our last session by looking at Acts 15:2, 4, 6, 22, 23. This chapter is generally referred to as the "Jerusalem conference." It is often believed that this conference was an assembly composed by apostles and elders and that it established a ruling by them separate from the congregation. However, as noted previous podcasts, the reason for this meeting was because "certain men" from Judea went to Antioch in Syria and said, "Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved," (Acts 15:1) and Paul and Barnabas opposed them and they "had no small dissension and disputation with them" (Acts 15:2). Then the congregation at Antioch sent Paul, Barnabas, and certain others of the congregation to Jerusalem "about this question." In other words, this was an issue between the assembly at Antioch and the congregation at Jerusalem. Acts 15:4 says that the messengers from Antioch were received by the congregation and the apostles and elders within the congregation. The meeting was not composed of only apostles and elders, but included the whole assembly, Acts 15:22. Furthermore, it appears that James, the elder or pastor at Jerusalem, had the final word and summation of the meeting with the recommendation of the letter of explanation. (It is believed by many that this James, the brother of the Lord, was not an apostle and was the pastor at Jerusalem at this time. See Acts 12:17; 21:18; Galatians 1:19; James 1:1.) Therefore, this meeting was not some council separate from the congregation and that it was performed within and under the authority of the entire congregation at Jerusalem. Even the letter sent out was not only by the apostles and elders, but included the "brethren" (Acts 15:23) or congregation and it was sent to the assemblies (brethren) "in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia." Acts 16:4 is the next passage under consideration and it cannot be interpreted separate and apart from the context of Acts chapter fifteen. In other words, the "decrees" "ordained of the apostles and elders" were not something determined without the authority of the congregation at Jerusalem. Also, it must be noted that the Greek word translated "ordained" is kri,nw and has the idea of judgment. This word is used one hundred and fourteen times in the New Testament and is only translated ordained in this passage. It is translated as "judge" eighty-eight times. However, regardless of the action and conclusion of the meeting at Jerusalem,

we must never conclude that it was a function of a ruling body of elders, with the apostles, outside or separate from the whole congregation, Acts 15:22.
The next passage that has the word "elder" in connection with an officer is found in Acts 20:17.
When we previously reviewed the term bishop we found the word for it is translated "overseer" in verse twenty-eight. Therefore, since the "elders" (as found in verse seventeen) are designated "overseers" in verse twenty eight, the two words simply refer to the same office. Obviously, these elders or overseers were to lead and guide the congregation, but only according to the principles as given by the Holy Scriptures. They did not have any authority to rule over the assembly and set up denominational guidelines or rules as to how the body or assembly is to be governed.
Again we see the term "elder" mentioned in Acts in chapter twenty-one, verse eighteen. Verse seventeen declares that the "brethren" (a term used throughout the New Testament to designate a congregation or assembly) at Jerusalem received Paul and his company gladly. Then verse eighteen tells us that Paul and others went to see James and the other elders with him. During the meeting, they discussed how Paul might bring some unity and peace among some of the believing Jews by taking a Jewish vow. Though Paul followed their advice, this meeting could in no way be considered as a ruling body separate from the congregation that instituted some regulation or bylaw to be observed by the congregation. Next we find the Greek word for elder (πρεσβύτ ερος) in I Timothy 5:1. It appears from the context that it is used here simply to refer to older men since the feminine form (presbu,tera) is used in verse two designating older women. (This should satisfy any Bible believer that women are not ordained by the Lord to fill the office of elder.) The word for elder (as used in verses seventeen and nineteen) does refer to the office as suggested by the context; therefore, let us see what can be learned about the office from the context. First, from the context of the epistle of I Timothy overall, we see that the apostle Paul had Timothy to abide at Ephesus for the purpose of instructing the congregation there concerning various doctrinal issues and practical matters regarding genuine faith. (Remember that Paul requested the elders/bishops from this congregation to meet with him at Miletus as recorded in Acts chapter twenty.) As previously noted, chapter three teaches specifically about the offices of bishop and deacon. In I Timothy 3:15, Paul says that the things he told Timothy to teach were for the purpose of knowing how a minister is to behave "in the house of God" which is the congregation of the Lord, "the pillar and ground of the truth." Second, the context of our verses in chapter five gives some specific insights regarding the work of the ministry and how such are to be thought of by the congregation. They are to (1) rule well; (2) labor in word and doctrine. Regarding such officers, the congregation is to (1) give honor to them; (2) give double honor to those that labor well; (3) not to listen to gossip and false

accusations against the elders without substantial proof; (4) publicly rebuke those who live sinfully; and, (5) not to quickly ordain one to the ministry.

The Greek word for ruling well is προΐστημι ,προῖστα῾μεε. and means "*to stand before*, i.e. (in rank) to preside, or (by implication) to practice." It is translated *maintain, be over, rule*, and is only used eight times in the New Testament with four times in I Timothy 3:4, 5, 12; 5:17 and all related to officers within the assembly of God. It is also used in I Thessalonians 5:12 where it, too, is associated with officers in the New Testament congregation. Likewise, by implication, Romans 12:8 speaks of those that "ruleth," which may refer to officers within the congregation as well. It is translated *maintain* in Titus 3:8, 14, which likely refers not only having a good and lawful trade, but also, as John Gill says, "every good work, every branch of duty, moral, civil, and religious." Obviously, the elders are to rule, oversee, supervise, and manage the assembly, but not as a separate ruling body outside the authority of the congregation. Just as a loving father does not rule over his house in a domineering and dictatorial way that would separate him from the fellowship and companionship of the family, so likewise, an officer or elder (or a deacon, see I Timothy 3:12) does not govern in the house of God in a superior or haughty fashion. Equally, by studying all the passages where this word for rule is used, we find that it describes one who is functioning among and within the congregation and not in some special council or synod separate from the assembly. Also it does not include some office in a denominational headquarter officiating over a group of congregations.

When I Timothy 5:17 speaks of ministers or elders who "labor in the word and doctrine" being honored, it is not referring to elevating them to some exalted position above the other members. It is simply speaking of the support and maintenance given to them. Obviously, godly ministers and deacons should be respected and treated with admiration and high esteem. While in some cases the officers within the house of God are elevated beyond the proper place, too often in our day they are not respected or honored as they should. I well remember as a child when the minister was highly esteemed and admired.

This may be because ministers in days of the past conducted themselves with sobriety and gravity and arrayed themselves in clothes that manifested one that occupied a position as an ambassador of the Lord of glory. Today the general décor of men professing to be an elder or bishop in the house of the God is that of the casual man on the street. Too many ministers are so occupied with the activities and entertainment of the world that they have no time for laboring in the word or doctrine. It is true that dress does not make the man, but even the ambassadors and politicians of the governments of the world outwardly show more reverence and respect for the their office than most ministers do for the office in the house of God. Sadly, this, too, is fading so much that there is a general lack of respect in every area of society. It is feared that the world has more influence among professing Christianity than the

house of God does in the world. May we never forget that the congregation is the house of God and not some man-made society or organization. We are to have as much reverence in midweek worship services or on Sunday evening as the Sunday morning worship. It is the same God we are worshiping and He deserves the same reverence and respect in every worship service.

However, our time is up for today and, the Lord willing, we will continue this study in our next publication.

Ecclesiastical Government (13th)

(The study for today continues looking at the officers in the congregation that the Lord Jesus Christ appointed and their particular function. This session continues studying the word for elder and his relationship within the assembly.)

We closed our last podcast while studying the function of elder in I Timothy 5:17 and the following verses. The context of the epistle must include the passage in Acts chapter twenty since the information given to Timothy was for the congregation at Ephesus. Though Timothy did not have "the care of all the churches" as Paul did as an apostle (II Corinthians 11:28), he, like all faithful men, was concerned for the congregation wherein he was laboring, as well as all other congregations, especially those of which he knew. We saw in previous lessons that the congregation was to be knowledgeable not only of the qualifications of the men they appointed to be their leader, but how they were to be honored and respected as they faithfully fulfilled their office. From this passage (I Timothy 5:17ff.), we discovered that the congregation is to (1) give honor to them; (2) give double honor to those that labor well; (3) not to listen to gossip and false accusations against them without substantial proof; (4) publicly rebuke those who live sinfully; and, (5) not to quickly ordain one to the ministry. Again, I remind you that these instructions were not given to a ruling body apart from or over the congregation; they were given to the assembly— the house of God. In our last broadcast we discussed: (1) to give honor to them; (2) to give double honor to those that labor well.

Let us now consider number three: not to listen to gossip and false accusations against them without substantial proof. Ministers live in glass houses. Not only does the world seek any opportunity to expose and denigrate the office of the ministry, and especially defame a faithful minister, but often people within the congregation search for opportunities to vilify a faithful man of God. Yes, there are false ministers as well as false professors of Christians. This is not new. In the early days of Christianity, Paul spoke of such who were "false apostles, deceitful workers," "dogs," "evil workers," and "the concision" (II Corinthians 11:13; Philippians 3:2), just to name a few. Therefore, it is no wonder that there are such people seeking and attaining

positions of authority within organized religion today. What is amazing is that it appears that modern professors of Christianity gravitate toward such impostors and professional entertainers more than to faithful ministers who live a godly lifestyle and proclaim the truth of the Scriptures. It is faithful ministers that are under consideration in our text, though the principle of not accepting gossip and incriminations against anyone without proper witnesses is a good practice in every circumstance.

The lives of many people, especially ministers, have been greatly wounded, if not destroyed, due to the spreading of rumors that often were misleading and sometimes totally false. I Timothy 5:19 says, "Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses." The Greek word for "accusation" derived from the Greek word for a complaint at law, and the word for accusation is used for the one who brings the accusation. Oddly, our English word "category" comes from this word. See Luke 6:7; John 18:29; and, Titus 1:6 for the other uses of this Greek word. Titus 1:6 is apropos since it is also associated with the eldership in that he is to have "faithful children not accused of riot or unruly." In other words, an accusation is not merely some imaginary view or some objectionable opinion that someone has against the minister. It must be a "lawful charge" against him as the scribes and Pharisees sought against the Lord Jesus Christ, Luke 6:7. Therefore, if a lawfully charge of a sin is presented before the congregation, there must be two or three witnesses of the sin for proof of the iniquity committed. This is in harmony with that of any other member as taught by the Lord Jesus. See Matthew 18:15-20. If such were truly practiced today there would be more unity and harmony in the congregation. This reminds me of a practice by an older minister as he related it to me several years ago. His practice was when he went to a new congregation he would tell the congregation at the beginning that if someone came to him and said something to him about another member he would immediately take that individual with him to the person in question to discuss the matter. Upon such an occasion, the accuser would generally back down and the whole matter was dropped. I asked him how often something of that nature occurred. He said it only happened once because when the news got around to the other members that he meant what he said they didn't approach him with such gossip and allegations. I have found this to be profitable throughout my own ministry. However, too often we listen to things and become engaged in degrading conversation against someone (especially if it is a person that we don't particularly care for) and corrupt communications proceed out of our mouths. Instead, we should cut off such discussions and only speak of good things that promote, edify, and minister grace to the hearers, Ephesians 4:29. See also Philippians 4:8. We must ever remember that it is the house of the Lord and we are to so live and act so that the Lord will be honored and exalted. May we always seek to display the beauty of Psalm 133:1 in the assembly of the saints: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for

brethren to dwell together in unity." Regarding the charge against the elder, I think the comments of the Baptist, John Gill, would be good to give. He said, "**Against an elder receive not an accusation**, A charge of any crime: **but before two or three witnesses**; good sufficient ones, who are capable of well attesting the fact: a charge against a pastor of a church is not to be easily received; it should not be listened to privately, unless it clearly appears by such a number of witnesses; nor should it be brought publicly before the church, until it is privately and previously proved, by a sufficient number of credible witnesses, that it is really fact. The sense is, not that judgment shall not pass against him but by such a number of witnesses, or that the evidence upon his trial shall consist of such a number; for this is no other than what ought to be in the case of a private member, and of every man, according to **De** 19:15. But the sense is, that the affair of an elder shall not be put upon a trial, much less sentence pass, until it has been privately proved against him, by proper testimonies, beyond all exception; only in such a case, should a church admit a charge against its elder. The reason of this rule is, because of his high office and the honour of the church, which is concerned in his, as well as of religion; for it carries in it some degree of scandal for such a person to be charged, even though he may be cleared; as also because of his many enemies, who through envy, malice, and the instigation of Satan, would be continually pestering the church with charges, could they be easily admitted." Obviously, when one has sinned, he is to be rebuked before the entire congregation. This not only administers the proper discipline for the crime committed, but it instills a proper fear in the whole congregation. Notice it did not say to publish it to the denomination, to the world, or to the community in which he dwells. Obviously, some sins may warrant this especially if the sin is of a civil nature; however, this will generally be made know by the civil authorities. The business of the congregation of the Lord is not that of Caesar's business. See I Corinthians 6:1-6. Too often, when a minister has committed such a sin, friends and love ones do not want to embarrass him or his family and it is quietly dismissed or swept under the rug. He then generally moves away and later carries on in a ministry in a different location. This is not to say that such a one may not genuinely repent and be restored to the ministry. That is another subject entirely. The point is that under this situation, the proper discipline was not administered and the house of the Lord suffers and it may likewise never bring the proper peace and reconciliation within the family of the minister, too. Lasting injuries often abide in both houses: the house of God and the house of the minister. It is God's house and we should follow the directions and guidelines laid out by Him if we expect Him to bless the congregation and/or bring restoration to the sinning brother. Remember, he (the minister) too, is a part of the congregation. He is not some outside individual; he is subject to the congregation and should be lovingly administered to as prescribed by the Lord for the good of his soul. It is not for the assembly to quickly sweep everything under the rug and carry

on with “business as usual” as if nothing ever happened. No. It is serious business and like any sickness, often a long and arduous process is necessary for proper healing to occur. For the health of the congregation and the welfare of the minister (and all involved), it is essential that sin within the congregation be handled skillfully and wisely for, *first*, the honor and glory of the Lord; *second*, for the good of the congregation; and, *third*, for the benefit of the minister. All of this further solidifies the truth that the eldership is within and under the authority of the congregation and not some ruling body apart from it, and definitely it is not under the power of some denominational ecclesiastical authority.

Sadly, our time is up for today. The Lord willing we will continue with this topic in our next broadcast.

Ecclesiastical Government (14th)

(The study for today continues looking at the officers in the congregation that the Lord Jesus Christ appointed and their particular function. This session concludes studying the word for elder and his relationship within the assembly and found in I Timothy chapter five.) In our previous two podcasts we have been considering I Timothy 5:17 and the following verses.

These verses clearly manifest that the instructions given are congregationally related and that the elders are under the authority of the assembly and not a synod or some council separate from the congregation, nor residing in some denominational headquarters. The elders are to labor in the Holy Scriptures and teach them to the people within the assembly. It is the people within the congregation who know the lives and labors of the elders that are to support them in a financial way. If there is some accusation made against an elder, it is the house of God that is to investigate and, if needful, to administer the proper discipline before the whole body of believers so that proper reverence, honor, and fear be established within the congregation to the honor and glory of the Lord. Paul further instructs Timothy to see that no partiality be shown among the elders and that all receive the same attention in all matters. The elect angels are mentioned in verse twenty-one which equally demonstrates that instructions given are within the bounds of the body of Christ, the congregation of the Lord. (For a further study of angels in attendance at the worship of the assembly, see I Corinthians 11:10; Ephesians 3:10; I Peter 1:12.) Verse twenty-two states, “Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men’s sins: keep thyself pure.” Obviously, for a body of believers to be able to follow this advice, a man would have to live among them and his life well known to avoid a sudden induction to the office of eldership. Too often a young man will have a talent for

public speaking and holding the attention of an audience and he is quickly ordained into the ministry to the harm of the congregation as well as himself.

Having covered briefly the passage overall, I would like to return to verses seventeen and eighteen and comment on them somewhat. They read as follows: “Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer *is* worthy of his reward.” In connection with these verses, I will include I Timothy 2:2 and Titus 1:9. They read as follows: “And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also.” And, “Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.” There are two things that I would like to particularly discuss: (1) the honor to be given; (2) the studies of the elder or minister.

The *first* point listed is difficult in some ways due to the modern idea that the ministry is categorized as a profession like other businesses of the world. Too often, ministers are paid large salaries along with various perks, amenities, and benefits of the denomination. Also, these men are deficient in their understanding of the Holy Scriptures and appear to be a public relations man for the congregation more than an ambassador of Christ. They are often wise in administrative functions, psychological counseling (generally with worldly wisdom), and articulate in public speaking and entertaining of the audience, but they are ignorant of theology and the doctrines of the Holy Scriptures. However, the Lord instructs that the elders that are to be honored are those “who labour in word and doctrine,” hold “fast the faithful word” as taught by faithful men, and that they teach “no other doctrines,” I Timothy 1:3. Ministers who do not know sound doctrine and correct theology are often paid too much. But those that fulfill the conditions are to receive “double honour.” What is meant by “double honour”? The Greek word for honor ,τιμη΄. basically carries the idea of monetary value, though it is also used to indicate admiration or respect.

We find it in Matthew 27:6, 9 where it is used to designate the price of blood in the fulfillment of Christ being betrayed by Judas. However, it is also used in Roman 12:10 regarding showing affection and honorto fellow believers. Again, it is used to display the value of our redemption in I Corinthians 6:20 and 7:23 where we are told that we are “bought with a price.” It is interesting that the Lord inspired Paul to use this word four times in this epistle (I Timothy 1:17; 5:17; 6:1, and 16). There is a parallel passage regarding this subject found in I Thessalonians 5:12-13. It reads, “And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake. *And* be at peace among yourselves.” The word “highly” is a most interesting word. It ,περισσῶς. means “superabundantly,” and additionally, the word

before it "very" is the Greek word ὑπέρ which mean over or above, etc. Putting the two words together is like saying in our modern vernacular "super duper abundantly." In other words, the minister is to so live and conduct himself so that his life reflects one who knows the Scriptures but the people are to have a great deal of respect for them. They are to be esteemed highly and venerated greatly. No. They are not to be worshiped or exalted above measure and they should be approachable. This balance is important. However, in the society today the average minister is merely a "good old boy" who wants to get along with everyone and hardly labors in the Word of the Lord and should have little, if any honor. The true minister is to be looked upon with admiration to the honor and glory of the Lord. And for such ministers, they are to receive "double honor," even to double pay, for their labor in the Holy Scriptures.

As previously stated, "the Lord instructs that the elders that are to be honored are those 'who labour in word and doctrine,' hold 'fast the faithful word' as taught by faithful men, and that they teach 'no other doctrines,' I Timothy 1:3." This brings us to our *second* point: the studies of the elder or minister. They must not simply know the text but to be able to give the sense of the Scriptures, Nehemiah 8:4-8.

Theology and doctrine are essential to the understanding of the Scriptures. A. T. Robertson, one of the most knowledgeable (if not the most notable) Greek scholar of his day said regarding Acts 2:38 that the controversies involved with the phrase "for the remission of sins" and its relationship to baptism cannot be settled by knowing the Greek. He said, "One will decide the use here according as he believes that baptism is essential to the remission of sins or not." Doctrine is essential and the principles a person holds influences his way of life and it clearly identifies how the elder lives and what he teaches the people. It is crucial that the bishop labor in the Word of God and that he knows the doctrines that exist in it. Sadly, the modern pulpit today publishes very little, if any, doctrine to the audience. The worship services generally provide a casual atmosphere of dress, with songs set to worldly music, and a message of self-esteem and positive attitudes for success in life. There is little reverence in the assembly of the saints for God and His Son, and there is little (if any) teaching on the vital doctrines of the Scriptures such as the attributes of God, the Person of Christ, justification, adoption, reconciliation, and other God honoring subjects.

Ministers who fail in this area do not deserve to be honored.

Before leaving this subject regarding the honor and respect that is to be given to the elders or bishops within the congregation, I would like briefly to direct your attention to Hebrews 13:7, 17. They are as follows: "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of *their* conversation." And, "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that *is* unprofitable for you." While

the elders are not a ruling body over the congregation that establishes guidelines of doctrines, practices, and discipline for the assembly, they are to function as faithful ambassadors of the Lord and deliver the truths of the Scriptures to the people so that the body of the Lord will be established in the Lord and directed as to how they are to live in this world of sin. Equally, the elders are to so live before the congregation that their faith and conversation (manner of life) is to be considered to illustrate the Christian lifestyle, verse seven. Faithful ministers watch for the souls of the people of God, especially those among whom they labor, and thereby in their prayers for them before the Lord an account is given. Dear Christian, what kind of report are the elders of your assembly giving to the Lord regarding your obedience to God and His gospel? It is a serious matter to disregard the faithful minister. His life and ministry is to be seriously considered and as he teaches the truths of the Scriptures. By rejecting him and his ministry one is not merely rejecting the minister, he is rejecting God, See I Samuel 8:7.

This concludes our study of the eldership from I Timothy chapter five. The Lord willing we will consider the use of the word elder in the other books of the New Testament.

Ecclesiastical Government (15th)

(The study for today continues looking at the officers in the congregation that the Lord Jesus Christ appointed and their particular function. This session concludes studying the word for elder and his relationship within the assembly and begins looking into the office deacon.) Today we will conclude our study of elder as we look at the remaining verses where the word is found in the New Testament. In Titus 1:5, Paul instructed Titus to “ordain elders in every city” in Crete.

If we only had this passage to consider regarding the ordination of elders we might conclude that Titus received some special office to qualify him to make the appointments himself. However, this would violate what is previously revealed in the Scriptures thus far. Though Paul and Barnabas ordained elders in the cities or congregations in the regions of Antioch in Pisidia and the surrounding areas (Acts 14:23), we discovered that it was done by the congregations by way of voting and not by Paul and Barnabas acting independent of the assemblies. Equally, such that were to be ordained were men who had been taught (Titus 1:9) obviously by other ministers and members within the various congregations already established on the island. The passage in Titus does not support the idea of an independent minister or synod setting up elders for the work of the ministry.

The next passage in order is found in James 5:14: “Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil

in the name of the Lord." There are various lessons to be learned from this verse and the other passages associated with it in the context; however, they are not directly related to our current study. The passage itself does not support any particular view regarding the subject at hand. It only affirms, as other passages, that there was generally a plurality of elders or bishops in the early congregations. This verse does not give any insight as to the functions associated with the eldership.

The following verse where elder is located is in I Peter 5:1. Though this passage was included somewhat in previous lessons, we shall review it somewhat briefly. Peter, an apostle of no mean standing, not only spoke of the elders among the saints (and not over them), included himself among the elders. He did not indicate that he was superior to elders that were among the flock in which they were to feed. It is admitted that the apostles were a unique gift within the congregation of God—indeed the first gift (I Corinthians 12:28)—they did not hold some rank or superior status over and above the other ministers or the assembly of the saints. And though Peter instructs the elders to take the oversight (functioning as a bishop) it was for the purpose of feeding "the flock of God" that was among (not beneath) them. Equally, the elders were to so live among the flock in such a capacity that they were examples to the flock or congregation. As elder is also mention in verse five, some maintain that it may refer to the office, but it is generally believed that in this verse it only refers to old men. Sadly, in our modern times, this practice is lost in our society. Too often the younger people do not show respect and honor to the older generation. It is extremely alarming that all too often the children of today do not give the proper esteem and reverence to their parents. Obviously, when this is lost in the home and in society in general, is it any wonder that the servant of the Lord, the elders in the house of God, are treated as they are in our current environment?

The last two places where the Greek word for elder ,πρεσβύτ ερος. are found in the first verse in II and III John. While various commentators have differing opinions regarding the "elect lady and her children" in II John "the wellbeloved Gaius" in III John, that does not give insight regarding the status and function of an elder.

The only other passage with reference to the word elder is I Timothy 4:14 where the Greek word πρεσβυτέριον is used regarding the presbytery or group of elders at the ordination of Timothy. (This particular word is used in three other places but it is not relative to the office within the New Testament congregation. They are Luke 22:5 and Acts 22:5 regarding the elders of Israel.) In verse twenty-two inchapter five of this epistle, the congregation is instructed not to ordain (lay hands on) any man suddenly.

Obviously, this refers to the elders or bishops of the congregation and not to some other ecclesiastical officer in a denominational hierarchal structure. It is not known when the presbytery set aside Timothy as an officer in the assembly, but in Acts chapter sixteen and verses one through three, Timothy was "well reported of by the

brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium." Likewise we know that his mother and grandmother were believers, (See Acts 16:1 and II Timothy 1:5.) and he was taught from his youth the truth of the Holy Scriptures, II Timothy3:15. Therefore, it is likely Timothy was ordained in a congregation at Derbe or Lystra or Iconium. He may have been one of the elders ordained during Paul and Barnabas' first journey in that area as found in Acts 14:23.

The only other words related to the subject would be presbu,thj as found in Luke 1:18; Titus 2:2; and Philemon 1:9 which refers to older men, and presbu,tis which refers to older women. That there is a separate word designating women should be another proof that the elders within the New Testament congregation are men and not women.

Now that we have reviewed all the places where the words for bishop and elder are found in the New Testament and studied them in their relation to the office within the congregation of God, we did not find any synod or councils to suggest any ecclesiastical authority or any denominational hierarchal structure over individual congregations. Nor did we find a separate body of elders from the pastor or pastors within any congregation that ruled over the body of Christ. We did find bishops and or elders laboring within the congregation of the Lord, even with apostles at times.

There are other Greek words that are translated as minister, teacher, pastor, shepherd, feed, evangelist, servant, steward, preach, speak, exhort, rebuke, etc., along with fellow laborer and fellow soldier that are associated with the bishop or elder, but they are essentially word that describe the functions and labors of the office instead of the name for the office itself. As is generally believed from the understanding of Ephesians 4:11 the pastor-teacher is descriptive of the bishop or elder within the congregation in our day. Paul did not designate Timothy as an evangelist; he simply told Timothy to "do the work of an evangelist," II Timothy 4:5. In other words, an evangelist is simply an elder or bishop within the congregation engaged in a particular type of service under the authority of the local assembly.

Now we will begin considering the other office within the house of God; it is the office of deacon.

The Greek word central to this office is διάκονος. Though it is only translated deacon three times (Philippians 1:1; I Timothy 3:8, 12) out of the thirty times used in the New Testament, the other uses will give insight as to the function of the office. It is translated minister twenty times and servant seven times.

It is interesting that the majority of the times this word is used it is with reference to ministers of the gospel such a Paul, Apollos, Timothy, Tychicus, Epaphras, and other ministers. It is used a couple of time to refer to false apostles or ministers of Satan. It is even used twice in reference to Christ. Also twice it refers to civil authorities; other times to household servant; and once to followers of Christ. Therefore, our study of the office of deacon is to center around Philippians 1:1; I Timothy 3:8, 12;

Acts 6:1. Also, since the word is used with reference to Phebe in Romans 16:1, we must study this word and its connection with the teaching of the New Testament relative to the place of women within the New Testament congregation.
Before studying the office of deacon *per se*, we will consider the passage in Romans 16:1. It states, "I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea." Verse two further explains how she ministered. It says that she had "been a succourer of many, and of myself also." The word for "succourer" is used only in this passage in the New Testament and means to be "a patroness" or "assistant." Regardless of what all was involved in Phebe's labors in the congregation at Cenchrea, it is obvious that she was not operating under an office or in a teaching capacity. The assembly at Corinth, some eight or nine miles away, were instructed that the women were to "keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but *they are commanded* to be under obedience, as also saith the law," I Corinthians 14:34. Note this injunction was not just for Corinth; it was for all "churches." Equally, I Timothy 2:11-12 declares, "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence." Equally, I Timothy 3:12 speaks of the deacon being the husband of one wife. No Bible believer can deny or rightly argue against the plain teachings of the Scriptures regarding this that there is no office of deaconess within the house of God.

However, we have exhausted our time for today. The Lord willing, we will study the office of deacon more specifically in our next broadcast.

Ecclesiastical Government (16th)

(The study for today continues looking at the officers in the congregation that the Lord Jesus Christ appointed and their particular function. This session continues to study the office of deacon.) We closed our last broadcast while looking at the use of the Greek word διάκονος which is translated for deacon. After a summary of how the word is translated and used overall within the New Testament, we discussed its use with reference to Phebe and concluded that there is no office of deaconess found in the congregation of the Lord. Now we will consider the office of deacon as it is function within the assembly of the saints.

That there is an office of deacon operating in the congregation of God is clear from Philippians 1:1. It says, "Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons." While the Greek word for deacon is used in various ways prior to this verse, this is the first time that the English word deacon is found in the New Testament. Not only did the King James translators translate this as deacon, essentially all English translations use the

word deacon as well. The general consensus of Christianity is that this is a separate office that resides within the congregation of Christ. And while the word is not found in the book of Acts, it is generally agreed that the seven men that were selected by the congregation at Jerusalem, as recorded in chapter six, were deacons, or that the office of deacon grew out of this event. Let us examine the passage. It reads as follows:

And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples *unto them*, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid *their* hands on them.

From this passage we learn several things regarding deacons. The *first* thing to consider is that the congregation was to select the men to appoint to this position. The brethren; that is, the congregation, were to "look ye out among you," Acts 6:3. It was not a synod or a ruling body of elders that made the selection.

Second, it was the presbytery within the congregation that set aside the men for the work. Though they were apostles, we saw from previous studies, especially from chapter five of I Peter, apostles worked as elders within the house of God. Equally, we previously, noted that the word for deacon was applied to apostles. Therefore, the apostles did not function as some ecclesiastical body separate from or over the congregation.

Third, there were seven men selected. This is not to teach that each congregation should have at least seven deacons. The congregation at Jerusalem was composed of several thousands. We know that on the day of Pentecost that about three thousands were added to the congregation, and others were added on a daily basis, cf. Acts 2:47. Later, in Acts 4:4 it is stated that about five thousand men were later added.

Therefore, when considering both men and women, it could easily have been upward of ten thousand believers in Jerusalem at that time. It appears until the time of Acts chapter six that the apostles were doing what would be considered "deacon work." Acts 4:35, 37, and 5:2, state that the money for the possessions sold and given to the congregation was laid "at the apostles' feet." Though there were twelve of them, they were trying to "serve tables" and minister "the word of God" at the same time. This was not only too much for them to accomplish since some of the "widows were neglected in the daily ministration," but it was causing them to "leave" or forsake

“the word of God.” Therefore, seven men were to be selected. In other words, only enough men necessary to administer the business at hand for the assembly were selected. In some congregation, one or two deacons may only be needed while there may be more men that have the qualifications.

The *fourth* thing we note is that men were selected and not women. From our previous studies, we noted that the Scriptures clearly established that only men are to hold this office and it should not be necessary to repeat this again.

The *fifth* thing to consider is that according to the names of the men selected it appears they were all Grecians, or Hellenist Jews since they had Greek names. The Hellenist Jews or Grecians were Jews who spoke the Greek language and adopted some of the Greek culture. Therefore, since Grecian widows were the ones being neglected, we see the wisdom of the congregation to choose such men to help remove any idea of prejudice and establish peace among the brethren.

The *sixth* consideration is that deacons were for the purpose of serving tables. The Greek word for serve is diakone,w and is from the Greek word dia,konoj that is translated deacon, and it is the same root for the Greek word diakoni,a in verse one and translated ministration. This gives further support that this incident is the beginning of the office of deacon in the New Testament congregation. Prior to this time, it is apparent that this work was being done by the apostles, but discretion required that an office be established for this work. The meaning of serving tables immediately referred to seeing that the Grecian widows were provided for from the money and other supplies that were being collected on a daily basis.

However, as the assembly continued to mature, no doubt the meaning of serving tables included many other things. Allow me to quote from the Baptist John Gill regarding this: [T]he tables of the poor, collect for them, inspect into their several cases, and circumstances, and distribute accordingly to them; which required a good deal of time, care, thought, and circumspection, especially in such a church, where the numbers were so large. From hence we learn what is the business of deacons, who were afterwards appointed to take this part of the apostles’ work off of their hands, and attend to it; which is to serve tables: the table of the Lord, by providing the bread and wine for it; receiving both from the minister, when blessed, and distributing them to the members; and collecting from them for the poor, and the defraying the charge; and observing what members are missing at the ordinance, whom they are to admonish; and if their admonitions are not regarded, to report it to the church: and they are likewise to serve the minister’s table, by taking care that he has a sufficient competency for his support; and it belongs to them to stir up the members of the church to their duty in communicating to him; and what they receive of them, they are to apply to his use: and also, they are to serve the poor’s table; to whom they are to distribute of the church’s stock, with all impartiality, simplicity, cheerfulness, and sympathy.

Regardless if you agree with everything Gill outlined or not, I believe it can be agreed that the work of the deacon was to be a support and an aid to the ministry for the benefit of the congregation. It is sad, that too often there have been tension and sometimes open opposition between the elders and the deacon within the assembly of the saints. This ought not to be! However, on a positive note I have witnessed and currently know of several occasions where the fellowship and joint labors of the pastors and deacons are harmonious and a delight to behold as they labor together for the good and well being of the congregation and thereby honor the Lord and the offices He established in the house of God. While there is no direct scriptural support for deacons to be supported financially by the congregation as are the elders, I can believe it might be beneficial for large congregations to do so as the need and work might demand. I know this may be a radical idea, but when a congregation is large and there are many widows and other poor members who may need a lot of attention, it would be extremely difficult for a deacon to devote the time for his daily occupation and have the proper time to dedicate to the needs of widows and other duties. Obviously, much wisdom and care would need to be exercised for this to be done, but if the congregations were caring for such people accordingly it may well be that fewer, if any, Christians would be dependent on government for their livelihood.
Our time is up for today, but hopefully, I leave you with something for your consideration and prayer.

The Lord willing we will continue our study of the deaconship in our next broadcast.

Ecclesiastical Government (17th)

(The study for today concludes our studies of the offices of the congregation and the overall subject of "ecclesiastical government.")

In our last broadcast, we closed as we were continuing to review the passage in Acts chapter six and the men set apart by the congregation of Jerusalem which appears to be the beginning of the office of deacon. So far we found that *first,* the congregation selected those to be ordained; *second*, it was the presbytery within the congregation that set aside the men for the work; *third*, seven men were selected; *fourth*, that men were selected and not women; *fifth*, the men selected were all Grecians, or Hellenist Jews since they had Greek names; and *sixth*, those selected were for the purpose of serving tables.
The *seventh*, consideration is that the men were to be of honest report. On the surface, this would seem to be obvious. Naturally, men who would be trusted with financial issues should be honest.

However, honesty includes more than financial accuracy with money and other commodities. In the case of the widows receiving proper support, as was the case in Acts chapter six, it would involve more than equally dividing the funds among all of the widows. As with widows today, each one is at a different place in life and her need would not necessarily be the same as another. Therefore, one may require more attention and support than another. Also, as established later, some widows who are cared for by their kin at home would not need the support of the congregation, and the younger widows are to marry and not be "taken into the number," I Timothy 5:3-16. Honesty not only requires the wisdom to know who should be taken care of and how much support should be supplied, but also it requires the strength, courage, and good judgment to administer these things and the finesse to oversee the office to the edification of the congregation.

The *eighth* quality is that the men were to be full of the Holy Spirit. It should be obvious that this does not mean that deacons are to have some extra measure of the Spirit of God that other men do not have. The command for all Christians are to be filled with the Spirit, Ephesians 5:18. Yet we know that this is not the case with each child of grace, especially, those newly come to faith. Sadly, many who have professed Christ for many years still are not filled with the Holy Spirit nor do they know what it means to be filled with the Spirit of the Lord. While many things could be supplied to illustrate what it is to be filled with the Spirit, we will simply state for our purposes here that it is being filled with the understanding and sense of the Scriptures. We do not mean by this, as some denominations teach, that the Scriptures are the Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, it is the Holy Spirit that gave us the Word of God through inspiring the men who wrote what God would have us to know. Obviously, men who study God's Word and know how it is to be carried out and live accordingly are men who are filled with the Spirit.

Ninth, the men were to be filled with wisdom. Though we separated wisdom from being filled with the Spirit, it appears from the text that they are joined together. I believe it is apparent that if one is filled with the Spirit of God he will equally be filled with wisdom. In short, wisdom is the ability to apply the knowledge and understanding a person has. Therefore, if one is filled with the Spirit through his study and learning of the Scriptures, by wisdom He will be skillful to put into practice the teachings of God. It is essential that deacons have godly wisdom to know when and how to fulfill their roles in the house of God. They not only need to know how to minister to the widows, but to all the membership and to support the ministry as the need requires.

Lastly, we find that these men were appointed "over this business." The Greek word for business is translated more often *need* or *necessity*; in fact, it is only translated business in Acts 6:3. Therefore, the work of the deacon is whatever is needed to be done. In other words, whatever need or issue the congregation requires to be done is

to be attended to by the deacon. Obviously, this does not include that which is to be done by the ministry or things which are to be accomplished by the continual Christian duties of the membership. In fact, this same word is used in Romans 12:13 where the Christian is to distribute "to the necessity" of the saints. And in Acts chapter six the particular necessity there was that of seeing to it that the Grecian widows were supplied with the proper support from the general funds.

Therefore, it appears that the deacons are to be in charge of the general funds. Often a congregation will have a treasurer appointed to collect the offerings, make the deposits in the bank, and write the checks.

This business is to be done by the deacons. There is no office of treasurer found in the New Testament congregation outside of the deaconship. Obviously, it is expedient that one man be the record keeper of the finances but the overall work is to be done by any and all deacons, otherwise, why put an individual into the office if he is not qualified for the work. Sometimes a congregation may be small and described as "a church essential, though not a church complete … for lack of officers," (as noted by *A Summary of Church Discipline*, by the Baptist Association in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1774, and reprinted in the book *Some Southern Documents of the People Called Baptist* as printed of the Society for Biblical and Southern Studies, 1995). With such a small congregation where deacons are lacking, this work may lawfully be done by the ministry since the apostles (ministers) were previously doing it in Acts chapter six. Though, it is good if a man in the assembly can perform this function to alleviate the minister and avoid possible complications or questions in a weak congregation. However, in either case, clear records should be maintained so that every cent is accounted for in its distribution.

Obviously, the office of the deacon is best described in I Timothy 3:8-13. I think it is noteworthy that verse eight begins with the word "likewise." This seems to say that the character and qualifications of a deacon are closely aligned and shadow those of the bishop. And since much of the work of the deacon is performed among the widows, it is extremely beneficial that his wife accompany him in the work to avoid any impropriety or appearance of immodesty. Sometimes the business that is needful in ministering to a widow is that which only another woman is qualified to do. This does not mean that an office of deacon is to be established for a woman. The wife of the deacon, as mentioned in verses eleven and twelve, can supply this need. Therefore, she is to be evaluated along with the man before he is ordained to the office.

While we do not have the time in this study to fully evaluate the qualifications and office of the deacon, I would like to draw our attention to a couple of things found in verse nine of this passage. It says, "Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience." Too often a man is ordained to the office of deacon simply because he is considered to be a good businessman, but he is lacking in understanding of the

Scriptures as a whole and in the beliefs of the congregation in particular. This ought not to be! While being a good businessman is not a bad thing and can be beneficial to the congregation of the Lord in particular and a blessing to the kingdom of the Lord as a whole, this is not the primary reason for ordaining a man to the office of deacon. Along with the other qualifications outlining one of good moral character and behavior, he must hold or be in possession of "the mystery of the faith." In other words, he is to be a man that knows the Scriptures and the various doctrines taught therein. He must know the truth of the Bible and understand the relationship of the different subjects and their connection with the salvation of God. Since the deacon is an officer of the household of faith, he must be proficient in the Word of God to not only assist the minister, but to aid in directing the congregation of the Lord in the mystery of God and its relationship "to the faith of God's elect," cf. Titus 1:1. This, too, is part of the "business" over which the deacon is to administer. But the second part of verse nine declares that the deacon is to have a "pure conscious." Regarding this, allow me to conclude by quoting first from Elder Walter Cash in his book *Practical Suggestions: A Treatise On The Labors of the Ministry And The Work of The Deaconship*:

Deacons are to hold "the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience" (1 Tim. iii. 9). They are not to be half-hearted in their endorsement of the truth, but are to have an experimental knowledge of it, for in no other way can it be held in a "pure conscience." If they have but a superficial knowledge of it, they cannot console the poor and needy with their conversation and presence, nor will they be able to encourage those who have a hope in Christ who ought to come into the church. The fact that they are not in hearty accord with the principles upon which the church is founded will render the work distasteful to them and unsatisfactory to the church. He must not be in doubt about the doctrines of the church nor the duties of the office, and should follow the promptings of a "pure conscience.'' And second, a quote from John Gill regarding a "pure conscience": With a conscience sprinkled by the blood of Christ; with a conscience void of offence both towards God and man; with a suitable life and conversation; a conversation becoming the Gospel of Christ, and by which it is adorned: and this part of their character is necessary, that such may be able to instruct and establish those who are weak in the faith, and oppose and refute the erroneous, and also recommend the Gospel by their own example; otherwise should their principles or practices be bad, their influence on others might be very pernicious and fatal.

As previously stated, much could and needs to be written regarding the office of deacon, but our time is up for today and we will close for now. This also concludes our study concerning "ecclesiastical government" of the congregation of the Lord.

The Christian and Civil Government (1st)

(Many will think this topic is not essential for our modern times, but in reality it is extremely important. In fact, many Baptists are following Reformed ideology more than the historic Baptist position.) First and foremost in this discussion is the fact that the kingdom of God is not of this world. When Pilate questioned Jesus concerning His kingship, our Lord replied, "My kingdom is not of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence," John 18:36. Indeed, Jesus is a king and He is first to every Christian. The Scriptures make it clear from the testimony of the apostles when they were commanded not to "teach in this name"; that is, in the name of Jesus, their answer was, "We ought to obey God rather than men." For the Christian, the kingship of Christ is before that of any earthly authority. This does not mean that Christians are to totally disregard civil authority. Romans 13:1-7 and I Peter 2:13-17 and other passages within the New Testament clearly declares that Christians are to be submissive to civil authority; however, when the civil authority is in opposition to the commands of Christ, the Christian is to obey Christ, the Lord of heaven and earth. Admittedly, there are times when there is a fine line of distinction and the line of demarcation is not easily determined. This problem arises regarding many other situations than that of the Christian's response to civil government and the best preparation for such situations in life as to know what and how to do in such circumstances is for the Christian to live continually his life in obedience to the teachings of our Lord and to live in close fellowship with God daily. Therefore, the purpose of our study is to determine what the Lord would have us to know and do as clearly stated and practiced in His Word. Since Israel was established by the Lord to function as theocratic kingdom, we must essentially confine our study to the kingdom of God as described in the New Testament. Obviously, general moral principles as taught in the Old Testament will equally apply to the Christian in the New Testament, but it is clear that Christ is "the mediator of a better covenant" which is "established upon better promises," Hebrews 8:6. It is clear from the confessions that there are differences between the Protestants and Baptists regarding the place of the house of God and civil government. Under the chapter regarding civil magistrates, the 1689 London Baptist Confession has three articles, while the Westminster Confession and the Savoy Declaration have four articles. (The Savoy Declaration is the confession of faith of the Congregational-Independents of 1658.) Articles one and two of all three confessions are essentially identical with variations with scriptural references. In order to show wherein both agree, I will summarize these two articles, though I may comment on some of the points later in our studies. These articles state (1) that

God has ordained civil authority; (2) that the civil authority is under or subject to God; (3) that civil authority is over the people; (4) that civil authority is for the glory of God; (5) that civil authority is for the public good; (6) God has given the sword for the defense of the public; (7) the sword is to be used for the encouragement of those who do good and for the punishment of evil doers; (8) that it is lawful for a Christian to serve in this office; (9) this civil authority ought to maintain justice and peace according to the laws of each commonwealth and kingdom; and, (10) that under the New Testament, it is lawful for civil authority to wage war on just and necessary occasions. The differences are the articles following articles one and two. Though they are somewhat lengthy for our studies, I believe it will be good to quote articles three and four of the Protestant confessions along with article three of the Baptist confession to set the stage for subsequent discussions. Here are the articles for the Westminster Confession: Article 3, Civil magistrates may not assume to themselves the administration of the Word and sacraments, or the power of the keys of the kingdom of heaven; yet he hath authority, and it is his duty, to take order that unity and peace be preserved in the Church, that the truth of God be kept pure and entire, that all blasphemies and heresies be suppressed, all corruptions and abuses in worship and discipline prevented or reformed, and all the ordinances of God duly settled, administered, and observed. For the better effecting whereof, he hath power to call synods, to be present in them, and to provide that whatsoever is transacted in them be according to the mind of God. Article 4, It is the duty of people to pray for magistrates, to honor their persons, to pay them tribute or other dues, to obey their lawful commands, and to be subject to their authority, for conscience' sake. Infidelity, or difference in religion, does not make void the magistrates' just and legal authority, nor free the people from their due obedience to them: from which ecclesiastical persons are not exempted, much less has the Pope any power and jurisdiction over them in their dominions, or over any of their people; and, least of all, to deprive them of their dominions, or lives, if he shall judge them to be heretics, or upon any other pretence whatsoever. Since article four of the Savoy Declaration is identical to article four of the Westminster Confession, I will only supply article three. Article 3, Although the magistrate is bound to encourage, promote, and protect the professors and profession of the gospel, and to manage and order civil administrations in a due subserviency to the interest of Christ in the world, and to that end to take care that men of corrupt minds and conversations do not licentiously publish and divulge blasphemy and errors, in their own nature subverting the faith and inevitably destroying the souls of them that receive them: yet in such differences about the doctrines of the gospel, or ways of the worship of God, as may befall men exercising a good conscience, manifesting it in their conversation, and holding the

foundation, not disturbing others in their ways or worship that differ from them; there is no warrant for the magistrate under the gospel to abridge them of their liberty. Here is article three of the Baptist confession: Civil magistrates being set up by God for the ends aforesaid; subjection, in all lawful things commanded by them, ought to be yielded by us in the Lord, not only for wrath, but for conscience' sake; and we ought to make supplications and prayers for kings and all that are in authority, that under them we may live a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty. As is readily seen, there are not only differences between that of the Baptist and the Reformers, but there are differences between the Protestants in article three. I believe the differences between articles three of the two Protestant confessions may be given briefly as such: (1) the Westminster focuses article three around the Church (which according to their "Form of Church-Government" is an umbrella over congregations) whereas the Savoy centers it around the "interest of Christ in the world"; (2) both affirm that civil government is to encourage, promote, protect, and preserve the gospel and professors of the gospel; (3) both affirm that blasphemies, heresies, corruptions, and wicked practices be prevented and that the truth of God be kept pure; (4) the Savoy allows some lead way so as "not disturbing others in their ways or worship that differ from them," whereas the Westminster does not allow such liberty of conscience; and, (5) the Westminster grants that the civil authority has "power to call synods, to be present in them, and to provide that whatsoever is transacted in them be according to the mind of God," where the Savoy does not allow. Obviously, the Baptist confession is greatly different from those of the Protestants. Our time is up for today, but the Lord willing we will continue our studies of this subject going forward.

The Christian and Civil Government (2nd)

(Today's study continues to examine various Protestant confessions to show not only some differences within them, but to demonstrate an acceptance of modern social issues within the Christian worship.)

In our previous study, we concluded by giving the differences between Protestants and Baptists by quoting from their confessions. We saw that there are not only differences between that of the Baptist and the Reformers, but there are differences between the Protestants in article three. The differences between articles three of the two Protestant confessions were given as such: (1) the Westminster focuses article three around the Church (which according to their "Form of Church-Government" is an umbrella over congregations) whereas the Savoy centers it around the "interest of Christ in the world"; (2) both affirm that civil government is to encourage, promote,

protect, and preserve the gospel and professors of the gospel; (3) both affirm that blasphemies, heresies, corruptions, and wicked practices be prevented and that the truth of God be kept pure; (4) the Savoy allows some lead way so as "not disturbing others in their ways or worship that differ from them," whereas the Westminster does not allow such liberty of conscience; and, (5) the Westminster grants that the civil authority has "power to call synods, to be present in them, and to provide that whatsoever is transacted in them be according to the mind of God," where the Savoy does not allow. This greatly differs from the Baptist confession where article three states "Civil magistrates being set up by God for the ends aforesaid; subjection, in all lawful things commanded by them, ought to be yielded by us in the Lord, not only for wrath, but for conscience' sake; and we ought to make supplications and prayers for kings and all that are in authority, that under them we may live a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty." While it is not our intention to produce confusion by supply more quotes, but in order to provide an overall picture of our study, I believe it is important to show a change in some Protestant confessions since the *Westminster Confession of 1647* and the *Savoy Declaration of 1658*.

The *Confession of Faith of The Presbyterian Church in the United States* as ratified by the General Assembly at Augusta, GA, December, 1861, was identical in articles 1, 2, and 4 as the 1647 confession and the 1658 Savoy Declaration. However, Article Three is as follows: Civil magistrates may not assume to themselves the administration of the Word and sacraments; or the power of the keys of the kingdom of heaven; or, in the least, interfere in matters of faith. Yet, as nursing fathers, it is the duty of civil magistrates to protect the church of our common Lord, without giving the preference to any denomination of Christians above the rest, in such a manner that all ecclesiastical persons whatever shall enjoy the full, free, and unquestioned liberty of discharging every part of their sacred functions, without violence or danger. And, as Jesus Christ hath appointed a regular government and discipline in his church, no law of any commonwealth should interfere with, let, or hinder, the due exercise thereof, among the voluntary members of any denomination of Christians, according to their own profession and belief. It is the duty of civil magistrates to protect the person and good name of all their people, in such an effectual manner as that no person be suffered, either upon pretense of religion or of infidelity, to offer any indignity, violence, abuse, or injury to any other person whatsoever: and to take order, that all religious and ecclesiastical assemblies be held without molestation or disturbance.

The Presbyterian Church USA confession as printed in 2014 only had one section with two paragraphs regarding "Civil Magistrate." It is as follows: We confess and acknowledge that empires, kingdoms, dominions, and cities are appointed and ordained by God; the powers and authorities in them, emperors in empires, kings in their realms, dukes and princes in their dominions, and magistrates in cities, are

ordained by God's holy ordinance for the manifestation of his own glory and for the good and well being of all men.

We hold that any men who conspire to rebel or to overturn the civil powers, as duly established, are not merely enemies to humanity but rebels against God's will. Further, we confess and acknowledge that such persons as are set in authority are to be loved, honored, feared, and held in the highest respect, because they are the lieutenants of God, and in their councils God himself doth sit and judge. They are the judges and princes to whom God has given the sword for the praise and defense of good men and the punishment of all open evil doers. Moreover, we state that the preservation and purification of religion is particularly the duty of kings, princes, rulers, and magistrates. They are not only appointed for civil government but also to maintain true religion and to suppress all idolatry and superstition. This may be seen in David, Jehosaphat, Hezekiah, Josiah, and others highly commended for their zeal in that cause.

Therefore we confess and avow that those who resist the supreme powers, so long as they are acting in their own spheres, are resisting God's ordinance and cannot be held guiltless. We further state that so long as princes and rulers vigilantly fulfill their office, anyone who denies them aid, counsel, or service, denies it to God, who by his lieutenant craves it of them.

Lastly, we shall quote from the *Confession of Faith of 1984* of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

The Cumberland Presbyterians are the "New School" Presbyterians from the division of the Presbyterians in and around 1832. While the "Old School" Presbyterians essentially followed historic Calvinism, the "New School" graduated to a more liberal and Arminian theology. Likewise, there was a division of the Baptist into "New School" and "Old School" at this same time in history. The following is from Sections/Paragraphs 6.29, 6.30, 6.31, and 6.32:

Civil government and persons elected to civil office may not assume control over or administration of the church in matters of faith or practice. Yet their duty is to protect the religious freedom of all persons and to guard the right of religious bodies to assemble without interference.

The covenant community, governed by the Lord Christ, opposes, resists, and seeks to change all circumstances of oppression--political, economic, cultural, racial--by which persons are denied the essential dignity God intends for them in the work of creation.

The covenant community affirms the lordship of Christ who sought out the poor, the oppressed, the sick, and the helpless. In her corporate life and through her individual members, the church is an advocate for all victims of violence and all those whom the law or society treats as less than persons for whom Christ died. Such advocacy involves not only opposition to all unjust laws and forms of injustice but even more

support for those attitudes and actions which embody the way of Christ, which is to overcome evil with good.
God gives the message and ministry of reconciliation to the church. The church, corporately and through her individual members, seeks to promote reconciliation, love, and justice among all persons, classes, races, and nations.
The purpose for all of these quotes is to not only to illustrate the original distinction between that of the Protestants and the Baptist, but to show the change of the Presbyterians in America in later years with the influence of "social justice" of the more liberal Protestants. The Lord willing, I plan to demonstrate how such social ideologies have invaded the Baptist camps as well. Nevertheless, the concept of civil government having anything to do with the house of God is due to the idea and theology of what is called "church and state" as established by the Catholics and somewhat adopted by the Protestants at the reformation. However, our premise is that the kingdom of God is not of this world and Caesar has no place in the congregation of the Lord.

We will have to stop for today because our time is up.

The Christian and Civil Government (3rd)

(In our study today, we summarize the issues from the previous two podcasts regarding this topic. We introduce briefly the foundations of modern religious involvements in civil government that has resulted in the government becoming more active in defining acceptable religious worship and working to set the guidelines for it.) In our previous podcasts regarding Christianity and it connection with civil government, we initially quoted from the major Protestants confessions being the Westminster Confession and the Savoy Declaration and the contrast of the Baptist London Confession of 1689. From these we discovered that while articles one, two, and four were essentially the same (though there are only three articles in the Baptist confession), there were differences with article three of the Protestant confessions. The differences between articles three of the two Protestant confessions were given as such: (1) the Westminster focuses article three around the Church (which according to their "Form of ChurchGovernment" is an umbrella over congregations) whereas the Savoy centers it around the "interest of Christ in the world"; (2) both affirm that civil government is to encourage, promote, protect, and preserve the gospel and professors of the gospel; (3) both affirm that blasphemies, heresies, corruptions, and wicked practices be prevented and that the truth of God be kept pure; (4) the Savoy allows some lead way so for others who differ from them by saying "not disturbing others in their ways or worship that differ from them," whereas the Westminster does not allow such liberty of conscience and freedom of worship; and,

(5) the Westminster grants that the civil authority has "power to call synods, to be present in them, and to provide that whatsoever is transacted in them be according to the mind of God," where the Savoy does not allow. We further noted that these differ from the Baptist confession where article three simply states "Civil magistrates being set up by God for the ends aforesaid; subjection, in all lawful things commanded by them, ought to be yielded by us in the Lord, not only for wrath, but for conscience' sake; and we ought to make supplications and prayers for kings and all that are in authority, that under them we may live a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty." Subsequently, in our second podcast, we further quoted from latter Presbyterian confessions to verify that while these confessions give broader latitudes for other denominations, yet they affirm that civil government continues to have a role in the affairs of the congregation of the Lord. They further assert that the house of the Lord is to be involved in the affairs and environment of society. We will summarize them by the following: (1) while affirming that all denominations should be free in their worship, they say, "as nursing fathers, it is the duty of civil magistrates to protect the church of our common Lord"; (2) as late as 2014, the Presbyterian Church of USA stated "that the preservation and purification of religion is particularly the duty of kings, princes, rulers, and magistrates. They are not only appointed for civil government but also to maintain true religion and to suppress all idolatry and superstition. This may be seen in David, Jehosaphat, Hezekiah, Josiah, and others highly commended for their zeal in that cause"; and, (3) that while the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, too, affirmed religious freedom for all denominations, it further declared that the church is to be an advocate for all victims of violence and "to promote reconciliation, love, and justice among all persons, classes, races, and nations." Through various means, these confessions, while affirming freedom for all denominations, they affirm that civil government has some responsibility to the house of God for protection, the idea that the "purification" of true religion and suppression of "idolatry and superstition" be the duty of civil government. The question arises as to the definitions of "true religion" and of "idolatry and superstition." In other words, the implication is that civil government is to identify "true religion," and that "idolatry and superstition" be suppressed. This means that civil government is to determine what is "true religion" and it is to suppress anything else because it constitutes "idolatry and superstition." Furthermore, we saw that congregations are to be involved with the promotion of "reconciliation, love, and justice among all persons, classes, races, and nations." Here congregations are encouraged to be involved in civil government and society in every area of life. As can be seen from all the Protestant confessions from history to modern times, the role of a connection with civil government and congregations is

encouraged. No wonder religious institutions are involved in lobbying and other forms of influence for the purpose of establishing governments and laws regarding the various denominations and the advancement of their ideas. With such beliefs, is it any wonder that our current government is becoming more aggressive in seeking to define the ministry and the message and practice of all religions, especially by denigrating the gospel of Christ? Allow me to digress briefly and say that it is one thing for an individual, whether a Christian or not, to become involved in civil government, but it is entirely different for a religious assembly to do so. I encourage Christians to be involved in civil government, but only as a citizen and not as a representative for a denomination or a congregation unless it is to appeal to the government for the freedom of religious worship. (We plan to say more about this later.) The role of the New Testament congregation does not include involvement of civil government or of worldly organizations of any kind. With religious societies and denominations more and more being involved in the shaping and forming of civil government, is it any wonder that government is more and more striving to establish the boundaries of religious institutions? Also, when congregations and religious institutions run to the government to obtain their 501c(3) nonprofit status they were in effect allowing the government validate and or define them as to whether they are a house of God or not. Neither did Christ or the New Testament congregations go to Caesar for approval to exist. Likewise, the New Testament assemblies did not seek to establish the governmental laws of Rome or any other country. However, when the Catholic religions were formed they connected with civil government for aid in advancing their cause. Later, when the protestant reformation came about, the Protestants adopted this union of civil government. Likewise, in the early days of the United States of America, civil government in various states (and also the federal government, somewhat) sought to include laws for the advancement of religion and the Baptists appealed to the government in opposition to this. (As mention before regarding appealing to government for religious freedom, we plan to discuss this later.) Essentially, I believe, there are basically two questions or issues that need to be addressed: (1) what role should the civil government play in the New Testament congregation, or in any form of religion; (2) what role should the New Testament congregation (or any form of religion) be involved in civil government or in any worldly organization? As you can see, these questions relate to all religions and not only to the New Testament assembly. However, it is not our intentions to try to discuss or address all issues related to the topic or topics at hand. We only desire to address these questions with regard to the New Testament congregation. Historically, these questions and problems are not new, nor did they begin with the reformation or the protestant religions. They go back to the early days of Christianity. While there

were some who advance the cause of civil government having ties with New Testament Christianity before the time of Constantine, it became more solidified with him and the Catholics. Even Augustine (he lived from 354 to 430 B.C.), who is praised by Protestants and the reform camp in many ways, was instrumental in supporting the government in persecuting Christians. For information regarding this, see the last work of the famous Baptist historian David Benedict entitled History of the Donatists. Benedict did not include the Donatists in his earlier histories, but after further studies he wrote this history of them to validate their orthodoxy. We plan to document some of the consequences of that arose in history concerning those who aligned with civil government and believe it is to be "as nursing fathers" for the household of faith. Before doing that, we will direct our attention to what the Scriptures teach regarding this subject. In doing this we must essentially direct our attention to the New Testament because we are now under the new covenant that is a "better covenant" that is "established upon better promises," Hebrews 8:6. There is no question but that Israel was under a theocracy whereby God joined the priesthood with judging over the civil affairs of Israel. Therefore, it is imperative that we maintain a distinction regarding this under the New Testament economy as we do with the dietary laws, animal sacrifices, and other similar aspects of the kingdom of God today. There are times when we may draw lessons from those things, but there are clear differences between the worship activities and practices of the Old Testament and how those actions are to be carried out in the New Testament congregation. Our time is up for today. The Lord willing we will look more directly to the Word of God regarding this subject matter.

The Christian and Civil Government (4th)

(In our study today, we begin looking at the place of civil government as taught in the Scriptures and the role of the Christians related to this government.) In our previous podcast, we closed by saying we are going to direct our attention to what the Scriptures teach regarding this subject. We further said that we must essentially direct our attention to the New Testament because we are now under the new covenant that is a "better covenant" that is "established upon better promises," Hebrews 8:6. There is no question but that Israel was under a theocracy whereby God joined the priesthood with judging over the civil affairs of Israel. Therefore, it is imperative that we maintain a distinction regarding this under the New Testament economy as we do with the dietary laws, animal sacrifices, and other similar aspects of the kingdom of God today. There are times when we may draw lessons from the Old Testament economy, but there are clear differences between the worship and

practice of the Old Testament and how those actions are to be carried out in the New Testament congregation. We also noted in previous podcasts that the difference between the Baptists and the Protestants lay essentially in the third article of the confessions. However, in order to more fully understand the role of civil government and its relation to the believer and to the congregation of God, I believe it is needful to review the other articles of the confessions somewhat. I also believe it is important to note three passages of Scripture that are essential and fundamental to the whole subject matter. I am not intending an order of important in the arrangement of the list. It is likely they are of equal importance. The first is in Matthew 22:21 when Jesus said, "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's." In this Jesus clearly distinguished a difference or separation regarding civil government and the kingdom of God. The second passage is when Christ was before Pilate as recorded in John 18:36. He said, "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence." Again we find a dichotomy between the kingdom of God and the world which includes civil government. Christ equally affirmed that His kingdom was not to be established or maintained with the sword. The third essential principle or code to be maintained is Acts 5:29 when the apostles addressed the Jewish rulers who demanded that they stop preaching and said to them "We ought to obey God rather than men." Here we see that when man seeks to stop the Christian from obeying the commands of God, the Christian is under the higher law to God to obey Him. And because of the sinful nature of man, we must be certain that it is the command of God that we are doing and not some private preference or idea. As a quick example, in Matthew 17:24-27, we find where Christ plainly said that according to the regular law of tribute He and Peter should not have to pay the tax in question, but to avoid offending the tax collectors or government Peter was to go fishing and get the money to pay the tax. While it was a violation to extort the tax from them, it did not break any commandment of God to pay the unjust tax. There are times when a fine line of distinction may be as to when we are to take such a stand or not. Nevertheless, the law or commandment of God is first in the life of the Christian in every area of life which includes civil government. Therefore, we much remember that (1) Caesar has no authority over the things that belong to God; (2) the kingdom of God is not of this world; and, (3) obedience to God is paramount to obeying man. Since all of the confessions reference Romans chapter thirteen to support the first article, we will begin by studying it. It reads as follows: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they

that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour." There are several things taught in this passage which clearly affirms that not only is civil government a valid authority but it is ordained of God. In fact, all authority is of God which is a principle that this generation has rejected. We find that not only Christians, but "every soul" is to be in submission to all authority and this includes civil government. Furthermore, we see that when one resists any authority, even civil government, he is resisting "the ordinance of God" and is to receive judgment. The word damnation is used here because of the church state belief of the Church of England and the translators believed that violators of civil government (especially when religion was involved) were under the ultimate judgment of God. This passage also defines the role and purpose of rulers or civil government. Rulers are never to conduct themselves so that the citizenry who are living godly lives are to be terrorized. On the other hand, those who are violators of the civil laws should not only be afraid but they are to receive the proper and just punishment for the crime committed. The apostle Paul affirmed this principle when standing before the civil ruler Festus and said, "For if I be an offender, or have committed any thing worthy of death, I refuse not to die." He further declared that he was being held unjustly and should not be in judgment before the civil powers by saying, "but if there be none of these things whereof these accuse me, no man may deliver me unto them." Because he was not getting a fair hearing, Paul appealed to the highest court—to that of Caesar. See Acts 25:11. If there is one thing that is clear from Romans 13:3-4, it is that civil government is established by God for the purpose of good for those that do good works. Those who do that which is right are not to be afraid of the powers in authority. It is equally clear that civil government is to punish with the sword (which includes capital punishment) those who do evil. In fact, civil government is the justice of God when it justly executes wrath on the evil doer. Conversely, when civil government violates this principle it falls under the judgment of God as (I believe) we are witnessing in our country today. Romans 13:5 instructs the Christian that he is not to obey the powers that be from only a fear of judgment, but he is to obey the authority from a conscious of obedience toward God. Obviously, if the authority

requires the Christian to violate the Scriptures, he must obey God; that is, the Scriptures. But it is clear that a believer is one who seeks to obey civil government because his conscience is affected by God because of his regeneration. It is contrary to the Scriptures when a professing Christian can violate the speed limits, cheat on his income taxes, and other civil laws and it not bother his conscience. If this is the case, one must question if he is really a Christian at all. When the Lord gives spiritual life to an individual, his heart and will are so changed that he desires to be submissive to authority, even civil authority. Romans 13:6 informs us that taxes (tribute) must be collected to support civil government because they are "God's ministers." While some taxes may be unjust (cf. Matthew 17:24-27 as noted above), there is a valid reason for some taxes and the support of civil government is one just and lawful reason. They are God's servants. However, their role of ministering is solely within civil affairs and their functions do not include anything within the framework of the congregation of the Lord. Other lessons may be derived from this passage, but overall we see that the Scriptures plainly teach that there is a valid place for civil government and that the Christian is required by God to submit to this authority as long as it does not require him to violate the plain and obvious laws of God. However, our time is up for today. The Lord willing we will look more passages regarding this subject matter in future studies.

The Christian and Civil Government (5th)

(Today we continue looking at the relationship of civil government and the Christian as taught in the Scriptures. Today's study revolves around I Peter 2:13-17.) In our last study we reviewed Romans 13:1-7 regarding civil government because it is referenced in article one of the confessions verifying that civil government is ordained by God. Now we will consider the verses supplied from I Peter. Though the London Baptist Confession does not reference any verses from I Peter in article one, it does list verse seventeen in article three. The Westminster and the 1862 Presbyterian USA confessions give I Peter 2:13-14, while the Cumberland Presbyterian Confession lists I Peter 2:13-17. Therefore, we will now look at these verses regarding the Christian's duty to civil government. They are as follows: Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king. These

verses, along with following verses through verse seven of chapter three, refer to the subject of submission to authority in every area of life. I believe they are connected to verses twelve through nineteen regarding suffering, even at the hand of civil government. Obviously, there are other related passages within this epistle concerning these subjects, but we will limit our discussion to the passages referenced in the confessions. Before doing so, allow me to remind you that Acts 5:29, "We ought to obey God rather than men," must never be forgotten. The passage begins with the plain and simple command of God: "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake." This is an essential element for peace and orderliness in any society. It is clear that because of the violence and mob rule that is escalating daily, not only in our own nation but throughout the world, submission to authority has virtually vanished. Along with submission is giving respect (honor) to those in authority. Our text refers to all in authority and emphasizes king and governors. I am appalled at professing Christians, regardless of their political views, that often malign, ridicule, and make fun of our leaders in government. The rulers in Peter's day were as wicked and vile as we have today. In fact, the current king in power when Peter wrote this epistle was very likely Nero, who was an extremely harsh, wicked, vile, and unjust king, though it appears that the first five years of his kingship was good. Yes, John the Baptist condemned Herod for his adultery with his brother's wife; and Jesus called Herod a fox. They were in a unique setting that qualified them to act as they did. However, we never find any New Testament minister speaking disrespectfully of the civil authority in any way. Without question ministers are to preach against sin and condemn any and all sins regardless of the person committing them; however, unless the civil authority is a member of the congregation it is not to pass judgment on him. On the other hand, if the President of the United States (as well as any civil power) is the member of a congregation, that congregation should discipline him for any and all sins (especially the public sins generally associated with politicians) whether it be lying, fornication, adultery, railing, drunkenness, or any such sin. See I Corinthians 5:11-13. He does not deserve special treatment. But we do not find Christians in general or any congregation in particular in the New Testament showing disrespect for any office in civil government, nor did they march, protest, or fight against the government in any way. Why are Christians to live this way? For the Lord's sake and because we are servants of God. This is aligned with Romans 13:5 where Paul said that the Christian is to obey "for conscience sake." Though verses eighteen and following were not listed in the confessions, I believe they should be considered with the verses under consideration because of the context. The principle of submission was established in verse thirteen: "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake." Therefore, in verses eighteen through

verse twenty, servants are addressed to obey their masters. They were further instructed to not only obey the "good and gentle" masters, but they were to submit to the forward or difficult or harsh masters. Verse nineteen further says, "For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully." The Greek word for "thankworthy" is the same word that is translated "grace" in Ephesians 2:8: "For by grace are ye saved." And the word "acceptable" in verse twenty is the same Greek word. In short, when we suffer from the authority over us as a Christian; that is, when we do good and suffer unjustly for it (whether as a servant or a citizen under civil authority or in any situation of life) we are manifesting the grace of God in our lives. God, through the inspiration of Peter, stated in verse twenty that we are called to such and Christ is our example in such suffering. In fact, our Lord taught us that the life of a Christian is a life of suffering and so do the epistles. See Mark 10:30; Acts 14:22; II Timothy 3:12; I Peter 4:12-16, and other related passages. As we previously noted, in the days of Christ there were unjust taxes and yet He paid them to avoid offence to the civil authority; therefore, by paying unjust taxes today it does not prevent us from worshiping the Lord. However, if we pay them with a spirit of malice and hatred, or any unchristlike attitude, we do not honor God. Equally, when unjust laws are forced on us, we should seek every opportunity as a citizen of the country to change them within the lawful bounds of our government, but it is not the function of the house of God to seek to establish civil laws to advance the gospel of God. When we as a citizen seek to establish civil laws we should not think we are being persecuted as a Christian when others oppose us. However, when we are assembling to worship the Lord in His house and the civil powers work to stop us we must put the Lord first and consider it a blessing to be persecuted for His name's sake. See Matthew 5:10-12; Acts 5:41-42, and other related passages. Also, there are occasions when a congregation or congregations may unite together to appeal to the civil authorities when they are unjustly imposing religious laws on Christians and we plan to say more about this in later studies. For now, we are simply laying the basic foundation and principle regarding the relationship of the Christian to that of civil government. So far we find that though the Christian is to be submissive to the civil government, there are no indications that the civil government is to be involved in the affairs of the congregation of God. In fact, if there are issues within the membership of the assembly, God clearly said that it is to be settled within the congregation and to avoid the civil government, I Corinthians 6:1-8. The Scriptures teach that it is better to be wronged (literally, be treated unjustly) or defrauded than to go to the civil authorities which are often unbelievers and unjust people. If Matthew 18:15-18 and I Corinthians 6:1-8 were practiced among professing Christians it is likely the divorce rate would not be so

high among church members or more would be identified "as an heathen … and a publican." I Peter 2:15 plainly teaches that submission to civil government is "the will of God." Furthermore, it is with such "well doing" that the Christian stops the mouth of unbelievers. As servants of God, we are to live so that the cause of Christ is not wickedly or unjustly spoken against not only by the civil government, but by any authority. (Compare I Timothy 6:1 and Titus 2:5.) There is no place for the professing Christian to be boisterous or a loud mouth individual. While we are to pray for those in authority over us in civil government, it is so that we may "lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty," I Timothy 2:2. Peter followed up in his epistle that when we are asked to give an account of our faith, that we are to answer with "meekness and fear," I Peter 3:15. He further stated that when the opposition speaks evil of us as evil doers they will be ashamed in their false accusations of our good lifestyle in Christ, verse sixteen. In verse seventeen, he said, "For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing." In other words, when setting all of these verses in context with the Christian's relationship to that of civil government, our role is more that of living in submission to civil government than by a Christian lobby or political action group striving to enforce Christian principles on the government. The Lord willing, we plan to discuss this in more details in the future, but our time is up for today. May the Lord direct us with wisdom to live as Christians in every area of life.

The Christian and Civil Government (6th)

(Our study today is a break from our previous studies of this subject. It is an overview of the difficulties involved in seeking to draw the line of demarcation between that which belongs to Caesar and that which belongs to God.) When Jesus said, "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's," He set forth that there is a realm or territory that has boundaries of authority that belongs to Caesar (civil government) that differs from the kingdom or dominion of God. As previously stated in other podcasts, whatever those differences are, the Christian is obligated to "obey God rather than men," Acts 5:29, and that the kingdom of God (or Christ) "is not of this world," John 18:36. Equally, though the Christian is not of this world, he lives in it, John 17:14-16. The God under consideration is not a generic god of undetermined nature or being. He is Jehovah, the I AM of Exodus 3:14-15, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ. The things of Caesar (civil government) included rules, regulations, and laws different from those of other nations. Though there may be some laws of Caesar that are adopted by various countries today, the

overall structure of modern nations are different from those of Rome, but at the time of Christ, Israel was under the government and rule of Rome or Caesar. Nevertheless, Caesar or Rome stands as a representation of civil government. Another important consideration included in our study is that Christ established His congregation here on earth in the environment of the Roman government in a pluralistic society at a time when Caesar was established by the government as an object of worship. It was in this milieu or setting that the Lord gave His commission to preach the gospel in all the world, Matthew 28:18-20. Therefore, the ministry of the congregation of the Lord or of individual Christians is in no way antagonistic or threatening to civil government. Christianity as taught and practiced in the Scriptures aids and strengthens society. Sadly, there are many religions that profess to be Christian when in reality they are not, but we do not have time to address that whole issue. The incident as recorded in Matthew 22:15-22 is not limited to that of the Christian and Caesar (civil government). Neither is it limited to the distinction between the kingdom of God and civil government (Caesar). Jesus was not answering disciples or believers, nor was He speaking to a congregation of the Lord, He was speaking to unbelievers, to wicked Pharisees who were trying to "entangle him in his talk." Therefore, the principles involved with rendering to Caesar the things that belong to Caesar and rendering to God those things that belong to Him involve all men—both the believer and the unbeliever. The believer (as previously mentioned) has insights that the unbeliever may not have or does not apply to him: to obey God above man and the kingdom of Christ not being of this world. Therefore, living in a pluralist society composed of believers and unbelievers, including a multiplicity religions, and combined with many who either question the validity of a god or deny the existence of any god, much less the one true and living God (Jehovah), one can see the complexity of creating civil laws applicable and just for all. Recently, professing Christians posted and liked the following on social media: "America needs to shut down all Mosques and ban Islam." Another post presented by a professing Christian was as follows: "Upholding the Constitution means keeping government out of the church, not the church out of the government." Oddly, both posts were posted by men professing to be Baptist. Our Baptist forefathers who fought for religious liberty in the United States (men like Isaac Backus, John Leland, and others) would be astounded, but the Protestant forefathers would have no problem accepting these statements according to their confessions of faith and historical practices. However, the answers to the conflicting beliefs of religious liberty (not merely religious freedom) and obedience to civil government in a pluralistic society are not simple. (Technically, religious freedom is more binding than religious liberty, but that involves another study.) For the Christian, either the theocratic covenant as

established in the Old Testament is continued in the New Testament or there is a new covenant established on better promises in the New Testament, Hebrews 8:6-13. In either case, does this mean that the Christian is to work to establish civil government and laws according to the Scriptures? If so, what covenant is to be used as the foundation for civil government? If neither, then how are we to explain the clear teaching of the Lord when He said that the civil rulers are ordained ministers of God; and furthermore, to resist such rulers is resisting the ordinance of God? See Romans 13:1-7. If religious liberty is a fundamental right, does this liberty extend to all religions or is it limited to only some. If it extends to all then no individual is to be suppressed or denied his right to believe (or not believe) whatever he deems proper in society according to his conscious so long as he does not violate the laws of the land. However, if he steals, kills, vandalizes, or violates any law of the land he is to receive a just punishment for the crime committed, even unto death. See Acts 25:11. If religious liberty or limited freedom is only granted to a few, the government is obligated to established the guidelines and boundaries of what is to be believed and practiced in the country, state, province, county, parish, or city. Therefore, religious liberty is either granted to all or it is not. If not, which religion is to be established, protected, and maintained by the government? If we assert that the Christian religion is to be established and guarded by the government, the question quickly arises as to which "Christian" religion: Baptist, Presbyterian, Methodist, and the list could be expanded to the thousands of different groups that are classified as being Christian. If Baptist is the ideal religion then the question likewise is raised as to which branch of the Baptist is to be established by the government. The Protestant confessions affirm that the civil government is to make sure that "the truth is to be kept pure." This in itself forces the government to ascertain what is truth. This would include the truth about salvation, baptism, the Lord's Supper, etc. (the list is endless) and restrict that which is erroneous. Either civil government is to support and guard religious liberty and the freedom/liberty of conscious regarding religion for everyone or not. Then what about those countries that deny the authority of an eternal God (atheistic) or those governments that impose their brand of religion on the citizens? Is the Christian to go there and impose his brand of Christianity on such a country with the purpose of changing the government? Obviously, for time sake, we cannot answer all of these questions and many other related questions in this study. We will try to cover some of these questions in a broad way, but for a more indebt study I would suggest volumes 13, 14, 15, and 16 of the writings of John Owen, though I do not share all of his conclusions; or, better for a concise and more recent study regarding religious freedom in the United States of America, Documentary History of the Struggle for Religious Liberty in Virginia by Charles F. James with The Presbyterian

Church and Religious Liberty in Virginia by William Wirt Henry as published collectively by Sprinkle Publications in 2007. Our purpose is to seek to establish the boundaries for the individual Christian as well as for the congregation of the Lord and their role as they live within the world regardless of the particular government in which they dwell. As previously stated all mankind (the believer and the unbeliever) is responsible to render unto Caesar (civil government) that which belongs to it and to render unto God that which belongs to Him. As we stated at the beginning, the whole subject matter we are discussing is complicated and is often clouded when man seeks to impose civil government into the affairs of religion. Likewise, when congregations and religious denominations strive to include their religious ideologies into civil government it causes (and often forces) the government to set guidelines and establish principles that define valid religions or congregations. One example is the governmental status for freedom of taxation for congregations and or religious denominations under the 501c3 ruling of the Internal Revenue Service in the United States of America. On the surface this may seem innocent, but under such ruling the government either grants or denies a congregation or denomination as being valid or not to receive freedom of taxation. In effect, in this case the government is making a judgment as to the validity or not of the religious organization. Only God has the authority to make this judgment and not civil government. The contrast between civil government and of religion, particularly the Christian religion, may be summarized by quoting John Owen. All political government in the world consists in the exercise of principles of natural right, and their just application to times, ages, people, occasions, and occurrences. Whilst this is done, government is acted regularly to its proper end; where this is missed, it fails. These things God hath left unto the prudence of men and their consent; wherein they cannot for the most part fail, unless they are absolutely given up unto unbridled lusts; and the things wherein they may fail are always convenient or in convenient, good and useful or hurtful and destructive; not always, yea, very seldom directly and in themselves morally good or evil. In such things men's ease and profit, not their consciences, are concerned. In the worship of God things are quiet otherwise. It is not convenience or inconvenience, advantage or disadvantage, as to the things of this life, but merely good or evil, in reference to the pleasing of God and to eternity, that is in question." The Works of John Owen, ed. William H. Goold, (London: Johnstone & Hunter, 1850-1853; rep., London: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1967) volume 13, p. 476. Much more could be added to this discussion, but I trust this small overview might give some insight to the complexity and complication to the overall topic as man seeks to find the balance. For the Christian, while he lives in the world of a pluralistic society, he is guided and directed by the Word of the Lord. However, our time is up for today and in our next broadcast,

the Lord willing, we will return to our overview of the confessions and the references given.

The Christian and Civil Government (7th)

(Today we continue looking at the relationship of civil government and the Christian as taught in the Scriptures. Today's study is centered around II Samuel 23:3 and Psalm 82:3-4.) Our last study was a break from reviewing the scriptural references in the confessions to give an overview of the issues and the difficulties involved in seeking to draw the line of demarcation between that which belongs to Caesar and that which belongs to God. Today we will continue with where we stopped with the fifth session of this subject matter. Previously, we reviewed I Peter 2:13-17 regarding civil government because it too was supplied in the confessions regarding civil government. Now we will consider II Samuel 23:3 which says, "The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God." This passage is generally referenced with the second article of the confessions; oddly, it is identified with the first article of the Cumberland Presbyterian Confession of August, 2001. Since the Westminster confession and the 1689 London Baptist confession are essentially the same for Article Two, I will quote the first part of the article from the Baptist confession. It is lawful for Christians to accept and execute the office of a magistrate, when called thereunto; in the management whereof, as they ought especially to maintain justice and peace," [the Westminster supplies piety prior to justice and peace] "according to the wholesome laws of each kingdom and commonwealth" [the Westminster does not include kingdom]. As you can see, both Protestants and Baptists affirm that it is lawful for a Christian "to accept and execute the office of a magistrate." Equally, this would extend to the premise that a Christian may lawfully hold any position in civil government. The passage under consideration, affirms that not only a Christian should be "just, ruling in the fear of God," but that this should be the character of anyone who rules over men. Notice that the verse does not say that he should be a believer in the Scriptures or that he ought to be a believer, but that he must be just. In other words, he must rule in a just and equitable way in all situations. Sadly, too often this is not the case. When wicked men without any morals are in authority unjust decisions and actions are the results. Often unrighteous laws are established and imposed on society by unjust rulers. However, even under such situations the Christian is to obey those laws unless it is in violation to the truth of the Bible. Obviously, a Christian or just person cannot execute unjust rulings established by civil government. (This is why those in such positions should never accept gifts,

contributions, or assistance by anyone, but that is another subject. See Exodus 23:6-9.) When a Christian who is in leadership position or rules in civil government he cannot support, defend, or advance laws or regulations that are in violation of God's Word. For example, a Christian judge cannot rule in favor of abortion because it is murder. A judge may profess to be a Christian, but a Christian is one who loves Jesus Christ. Jesus said, "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." Jesus further said, "He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me," John 14:21, 24. The passage in II Samuel twenty-three says that the ruler is not only to rule justly, but he is to rule "in the fear of God." Obviously, David was speaking in the context of the God of the Old Testament— Jehovah. However, the general understanding of society in unchristian nations is that there is a supreme being that is to be honored and worshiped, and that moral standards of righteousness are to be maintained. Voluminous quotes could be multiplied to support this. John Gill gives some quotes from heathen writers to maintain that God is known of all men. Here are some of them. Cicero observes, "There is no nation so wild and savage, whose minds are not imbued with the opinion of the gods; many entertain wrong notions of them; but all suppose and own the divine power and nature." Seneca, "There never was a nation so dissolute, and abandoned, so lawless and immoral, as to believe there is no God." Plutarch, "If you go over the earth you may find cities without walls, letters, kings, houses, wealth, and money, devoid of theatres and schools; but a city without temples and Gods, and where is no use of prayers, oaths, and oracles, nor sacrifices to obtain good or avert evil, no man ever saw." Body of Divinity, "Of the Being of God," p. 1. As stated before many, many more quotes could be supplied to substantiate this truth. Yes, there are some who profess to believe that there is no God, but the Christian knows that the Scriptures are true when it declares of the whole human race "that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them," Romans 1:19. Furthermore, Romans 2:14-15 affirms that the Gentiles which did not have the law as given by God to Moses "do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscious also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another." Therefore, unbelieving rulers can and often do rule justly in the society in which they live seeking to enforce moral standards and execute just penalties for the crimes committed. It is generally accepted by all that murder, theft, and other such like actions are wrong and are to be punished. Also, much could be supplied to show that generally in every nation it is wrong to violate the liberty of

conscience especially with regard to religious worship. However, the text under consideration (II Samuel 23:3), affirms that rulers "over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God," but it does not teach that civil government is to be connected with the congregation of God or to rule within (or over) the New Testament assembly in any way. Even though David spoke of the "everlasting covenant" that God made with him in verse five, this covenant includes more than the New Testament congregation. Psalm 82:3-4 is also referenced with II Samuel 23:3 by both Baptists and Protestants to exhibit somewhat how rulers are to judge in a just way. These verses say, "Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy. Deliver the poor and needy: rid them out of the hand of the wicked." It is evident that civil rulers are to judge the poor and needy on the same scale and standard as the rich and noble. However, one has to read into these verses to infer that they teach that civil magistrates or civil rulers are to establish religious truth or that they have power to call synods or be at present in business of the congregation of God. When God instructed the congregation at Corinth by the writings of Paul to exclude the fornicator in chapter five, it was not suggested that Gallio (the Roman deputy of Achaia, Acts 18:12) be included. In fact, Gallio had no interest in the religion or laws of either the Jews or Christians, Acts 18:14-16. Furthermore, Paul rebuked the congregation at Corinth for going to civil government to settle their differences, I Corinthians 6:1-8. It is a sad day when professing Christians (even husbands and wives) go to civil governments when there is a difference among them instead of being submissive to the ruling of the congregation of God. See also Matthew 18:15-17. Time will not allow us to enlarge on this topic, but it is clear from these passages that there is no hint that civil government is to be in authority or involved in any form in the house of God. This concludes our study for today. The Lord willing we plan to address the issues of the Christian and civil government and their connection with war.

The Christian and Civil Government (8th)

(In this lesson, we continue to look at the relationship of civil government and the Christian as taught in the Scriptures. Today's study is concerning their relationship to war and the Christian soldier as referenced in Luke 3:14.) Today we will address the issues of the Christian and civil government and their connection with war. The confessions say, "… so for that end they may lawfully now under the New Testament wage war, upon just and necessary occasions." The verse of Scripture referenced by both Protestants and Baptists in their confessions regarding this matter is Luke 3:14. This is where John the Baptist addressed the question of the soldiers as to what they

should do. It reads as follows: “And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages.” Before we consider this verse it should be remembered that sin is the cause of all wars. While there are just wars, if it were not for sin there would not be any wars. Equally, war is a horrible thing. There is no virtue in the death of men or in the maiming of bodies as a result of war, especially when often wars are created by wicked and unjust men who do so for industrial profit. That is another story which we cannot discuss at this time. Nevertheless, war is often demanded and is essential in the society in which we live. Many say that the Bible is against war and that all wars are wrong. Time will not allow us to do a detailed study on the subject of war, but I would like to bring a few passages from the Scriptures to supply a brief introduction the topic. First and foremost, the Lord is described in Exodus 15:3 as “a man of war.” This is recorded in the song that Moses and the children of Israel sang upon the Lord destroying Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea. The song further describes the judgment of God in the destruction of the Egyptians in verses six through eight: “Thy right hand, O LORD, is become glorious in power: thy right hand, O LORD, hath dashed in pieces the enemy. And in the greatness of thine excellency thou hast overthrown them that rose up against thee: thou sentest forth thy wrath, which consumed them as stubble. And with the blast of thy nostrils the waters were gathered together, the floods stood upright as an heap, and the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea.” In the first chapter of Numbers, God identified and counted the men who were to go to war. And in Numbers chapter thirty-one, God instructed Moses to arm men to go to war against the Midianites, Numbers 31:3. Here we clearly see that God commanded war; and, every Bible reader knows that there were many other times where the Lord commanded Israel, as well as other nations, to go to war. As we know God judged Israel several times by sending wicked nations to destroy them and take them into slavery and captivity. The people in the land of Canaan were destroyed in war due to the wickedness of the various tribes living there. In fact, God told Abraham hundreds of years before that He would not only judge Egypt, but that his seed would not inherit Canaan until “the iniquity of the Amorites” was full, Genesis 15:14-16. (A study of the Scriptures show that when nations are involved in wars, especially unjust wars, it is an indication of God’s judgment on that nation. The nation may be conquering other counties, but ultimately it will be destroyed by the unjust hostilities.) God hardened the heart of Sihon, king of Heshbon, to go to war against Israel so that he would be destroyed, Deuteronomy 2:26-35. Later, during the time of the judges, God left some nations in Israel to teach war to the young men in Israel, as well as to teach them to obey the Lord. Listen to the Word of God: “Now these are the nations which the LORD left,

to prove Israel by them, even as many of Israel as had not known all the wars of Canaan; Only that the generations of the children of Israel might know, to teach them war, at the least such as before knew nothing thereof; Namely, five lords of the Philistines, and all the Canaanites, and the Sidonians, and the Hivites that dwelt in mount Lebanon, from mount Baal-hermon unto the entering in of Hamath. And they were to prove Israel by them, to know whether they would hearken unto the commandments of the LORD, which he commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses." Judges 3:1-4. The Scriptures teach us that war is in heaven, Revelation 12:7, cf. Daniel 10:1-13. I Kings 22:15-23 pulls the veil back and gives us a scene in heaven where God allows a lying spirit was sent to Ahab's prophets to persuade him to go into battle to be killed. Therefore, no Bible believer can say that the Bible condemns all wars following this short overview of the Scriptures concerning war directly. I further believe that other passages support this principle as well. I Timothy 5:8 says, "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." While this verse is teaching directly that widows should not be supported by the congregation when she has relatives that are capable of doing it, the principle of providing for the home is stated. Provision for the home or family is more than providing food, clothing, shelter, etc., but it included protection from foreign invaders. Such intruders may range from dangerous animals to thieves and other aggressors. I know some of late have taught that if a man breaks into your house and assaults your wife you should not do anything physically to protect or defend your wife. This is not only against the Scriptures but it is also against nature. Obviously, if an animal were attacking a loved one any caring husband or father would stop the intruder, so likewise, should those who act like brute beasts should equally be destroyed, cf. II Peter 2:12-13. If a home is to be defended from invaders, equally, the homeland or country is to engage in warfare to guard and protect itself from the enemy. Now we will look particularly at our text under consideration. Again, Luke 3:14 says, "And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages." As previously stated, this verse is referenced to support the confessions regarding civil magistrates waging "war, upon just and necessary occasions." While the verse does not specifically mention waging war, there is a truth affirmed by John that soldiers may lawfully be in the army and still honor God in the kingdom of heaven. Also, I would like to take this opportunity to discuss the role and lifestyle of a Christian soldier. Remember that John was preaching repentance in "all the country about Jordan," Luke 3:3. Many classes of people went to him to be baptized and he spoke to the multitudes (particularly the Pharisees and Sadducees, Matthew 3:7-10) saying, "O generation of

vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham," Luke 3:7-8. After this, "the people" and "the publicans" asked John what fruits should be in their lives that would manifest that they could be baptized. To the people, John said, "He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise," verses 10-11. Regarding the publicans (tax collectors), John declared, "Exact no more than that which is appointed you," verse 13. Afterwards, John answered the soldiers regarding their lifestyle. Notice that John did not say to the soldiers that they should get out of military service. He instructed them as to how they should live as a soldier to honor the Lord and manifest fruits of repentance. Three things were required: (1) Do violence to no man; (2) do not accuse any falsely; and, (3) be content with their wages. The Greek word for violence is only used here in the New Testament, though it is found in the Septuagint and in ancient Greek. It means to shake thoroughly. I believe John Gill gave a good description of the meaning here. He said, "or 'shake' him, or put him, into bodily fear, by threatening, hectoring, and bullying him, and drawing the sword upon him, which is usual, upon the least offence." The Greek word for falsely is unique in that it is a combination of two words. One is the word for fig and the other for to make known. It is used here where John tells the soldiers not to accuse anyone falsely and again in Luke 19:8 when Zacchaeus says he would restore fourfold anyone whom he had taken from him by "false accusation." A study of the origin of this word is worth the time but lest we stray too far from our purpose it is best, I believe, that we not do so at this time. However, the word came to mean to slander or accuse falsely. Our English word sycophant is derived from this Greek word. Among the many definitions, sycophant carries the meaning and idea of a "toady, leech, sponge, … flatterer or self-seeker" … a parasite that " applies to one who clings to a person of wealth, power, or influence or is useless to society." The Greek Demosthenes describes one as follows: "He glides about the market like a scorpion, with his venomous sting all ready, spying out whom he may surprise with misfortune and ruin, and from whom he can most easily extort money, by threatening him with an action dangerous in its consequences. … It is the bane of our city that it protects and cherishes this poisonous brood, and uses them as informers, so that even the honest man must flatter and court them, in order to be safe from their machinations." Word Studied in the New Testament by Marvin R. Vincent, Vol. 1, p. 285. Again, allow me to quote from John Gill regarding this. He stated, "or play the sycophant; who, in order to flatter some, bring malicious accusations against others; and which was a vice that too much prevailed among the Jewish soldiery;

who either to curry favour with the Roman officers and governors, would wrongfully accuse their fellow soldiers, or country men, to them; or in order to extort sums of money from them, that they might live in a more luxurious manner than their common pay would admit of." While we are reluctant to stop here while studying Luke 3:14, I believe it best not to extend our session beyond our normal time limit. The Lord willing, we will continue this in our next broadcast: farewell, and God bless.

The Christian and Civil Government (9th)

(Today we will continue our study of Luke 3:14 and the overview of a Christian soldier along with the role of the Christian and civil government.) We closed our last podcast while studying Luke 3:14 and the answer John gave to inquiring soldiers that went to him for baptism and fruits of repentance. In answer to their question, John told them that three things were required: (1) Do violence to no man; (2) do not accuse any falsely; and, (3) be content with their wages. We discussed the first two, and now we will take up the third: be content with their wages. It is not uncommon to hear of someone, whatever his occupation, complain that his wages should be more than what is given, and that of a soldier is of no difference. In fact, often it is reported that the pay for those in military service should be more than what is given. Nevertheless, here we find that John told the soldiers to be content with that given to them for wages. The Greek word for content carries the idea of being enough, or sufficient. It is only used eight times in the New Testament and translated as sufficient in II Corinthians 12:9 where the Lord told Paul that His grace was sufficient for him to endure the thorn in the flesh. It is also used in I Timothy 6:8 and Hebrews 13:5 where we are instructed by the Lord to be content with "food and raiment," and not to be covetous but to be content "with such things as" we have. The soldiers were to be satisfied with their wages. The word for wages originally meant anything that was cooked or bought. Therefore, anything given to the soldier which might include not only money but also the food given to them for their service. I have not been in military service, but I cannot remember talking to anyone who was in the service that spoke of the food as being satisfactory, especially rations given to them in the field. This is no small thing for anyone, but how much more when we consider this requirement for a soldier. From this alone, we see that the idea of a Christian soldier is not that of a complainer or one that is continually dissatisfied with not only his wages or life in general as a soldier. Allow me to digress somewhat from the specific theme of the lesson and discuss what a Christian soldier should be. Obviously, the overall lifestyle of a Christian should be the same for anyone regardless of his

occupation or position in life. The Scriptures do not teach a special set of rules for some people different from that of other Christians. Modern propaganda via the media, particularly in movies and other like entertainments depicts a good soldier as one who is macho and aggressive. He is often one who uses all kinds of filthy language and often takes the name of God in vain. It is not uncommon for professing Christians to talk about going to such movies and speaking of them in a positive manner. Some may mention that such a movie has some "bad" language, but not too much. My question is how can any Christian be content to be entertained with such filth and other speech that takes the name of God in vain? I even see professing Christians "liking" various posts posted by people in the military with such language. Yes, we live in a real world, but a Christian is not of the world, John 17:14-16. The Christian soldier who goes on leave does not seek out the saloons and other like establishments for the purpose of drunken entertainment, nor does he search for women to take advantage of them. He desires to treat women "as sisters, with all purity," I Timothy 5:2. Hardly, do we see role models of the Christian soldier as Robert E. Lee or Thomas Jonathan "Stonewall" Jackson be set forth today in any way. For those who would say that was a different generation and we live in different times. I remind you again, the standard for a Christian is the same in every age. However, I would like to give some modern examples of being a Christian soldier. One dear brother was oddly drafted into the Navy years ago and the ship to which he was assigned was a place of sore trials. To his knowledge, he was the only person on the ship that had any desires to love and serve the Lord. He was given an exceeding hard time and on the Lord's Day he would go to the bow of the ship alone with his Bible and song book and worship the Lord. When his last day arrived and he was walking off the ship and was on the gangway when he said the meanest and most vile man on the ship called out to him and asked him to stop for a minute. He said the man called him by name and said that "they had given him hell" all the time he was on the ship, but that every man on the ship respected him because of his Christian consistency. This dear brother said that that one thing was worth all the bad things he endured as a soldier. Another example is a dear brother who was drafted into the Vietnam War. While there it was a custom that on Friday a tub of beer on ice was given to the soldiers. However, he and one other soldier refused to partake of the riotous activities, and after a few times, there were some Pepsis included for them. This dear brother said that the Lord blessed him to be able to comfort other soldiers who were enduring hard times because of his Christianity testimony. In fact, one of his superior officers told him that he was one SOB that had not changed. I call this a compliment received through the back door. Another dear brother I know not only served in the Vietnam War, but later served as a drill sergeant in the army reserves.

He did not use curse words or other filthy language when drilling and instructing his recruits. On one occasion there was a dispute between him and another instructor regarding proper language of an officer. It was settled when their superior officer affirmed that the rules and regulations for officers was that they were not to use such language to their soldiers. Eventually, this Christian brother won the Drill Sergeant of the Year for the reserves during competitions at Fort Monroe, VA. One of the honors for this was an invitation to the Pentagon and a tour through it with his family. I asked this dear brother one time if he thought it was more difficult living as a Christian in the military. He said that he thought it was no more difficult than living in any other area of life, and this is the same testimony of the previous brother mentioned. However, today with a lot of changes and pressure by certain "special interest groups" that may be changing. It is reported more and more lately where Christians are being forbidden to express their faith not only in the military but also in society in general. There may well come a day in this country where laws are made against Christianity. Unless the Rules and Regulations for the Army have changed, their laws definitely rule against unwholesome and demeaning words used by the officers against those under them. Regardless of this, while a Christian may lawfully serve as a soldier, as previously stated, he is to live a godly and holy life in that environment. My question is, "Why would a young Christian man desire to join himself to an organization where there is an abundance of profane language and riotous living?" Patriotism is one thing, but actively placing one's self into a wicked environment is something different. It is one thing to be drafted into the service by the government but entirely something different to actively put one's self in such an atmosphere when our homeland is not being invaded. Indeed much more could be written regarding this topic, as well as the motive and cause of just wars. The law of this country, the United States of America, is the Constitution and unless we follow the rules and regulations for entering into a war as set by the Constitution for this nation we are in violation of the law. Nevertheless, let us return to the Scriptures. Luke 3:14 is not the only place where there is support for a Christian being a soldier. Cornelius, was a centurion living in the town of Caesarea. The Scriptures describe him as "A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway," Acts 10:1-2. In fact, in verse twenty-two, the Word of God describes him also as a just man, and in verse thirty we find him to be fasting and praying to the true God of heaven and earth. Cornelius was such an individual that an angel of the Lord (Acts 10:3) appeared unto him and directed him to send to Joppa for Simon Peter. This was unusual because in the history of the Scriptures, angels did not appear to Gentiles but only with the Jewish people. Peter preached to Cornelius and there is not a hint that he should cease being

a soldier. Clearly Cornelius was a repentant believer (cf. Acts 11:17-18). Also, there was other centurion in the Bible that is mentioned who appears to have faith in Christ and he was not instructed to cease being a soldier; in fact, our Lord commended him for his great faith. (See Matthew 8:5-13.) We will close our study for today. The Lord willing, we plan to continue reviewing the scriptural references as given in the confessions in our next study.

The Christian and Civil Government (10th)

(We will continue our study of reviewing some of the scriptural references as listed in the confessions in today's lesson. This lesson centers around I Timothy 2:1-2 and the Christian praying for in authority over us in civil government.) As we continue our review of the scriptural references of the confessions, our attention is now passages related to praying for those in authority over us in civil government. One clear passage regarding this is I Timothy 2:1-2. It reads as follows: "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty." While this passage does encourage Christians to pray for those in civil government that are over us, this is not the context of the overall passage. In fact, the context extents at least to verse six and the general subject matter is that of salvation, and though verse four speaks that God would "have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth," it does not imply universal redemption. The "all men" of verse four is instructing us that God would have all kinds (or types) of men (people) to be saved. That the "all men" of verse four does not include each and every human is obvious since there were people already dead and under the judgment of God prior to the death of Christ. There were people like the rich man of Luke 16, who had died and in a state or place of torment, prior to the death of Christ as well as when Paul wrote this to Timothy. Nevertheless, there are men of all kinds who are and will be saved, and this salvation extends to "kings" and "all that are in authority" as well. All too often people, and sad to say many Christians, spend more time griping and complaining about our leaders than praying for them. Can you imagine the difference our country would be if all (or even the majority) of our rulers were Christian? If lawmakers, representatives, and other civil authorities were Christians no doubt countries would be more peaceful and wars would likely cease. Likewise, if more professing Christians and congregations would spend more time praying for their leaders there would possibly be less bickering and backbiting among the population. It may well be noted that the passage did not say to pray for those that you agree with in their

political ideologies. It is obvious that the civil leaders in Paul and Timothy's days were not people who shared their views about life in general and especially regarding God. As when Peter exhorted those to whom he wrote in his first epistle and said to submit "to every ordinance of man" and to "honor the king," (I Peter 2:13-17) Nero was in power in the Roman government. Christians are to pray for those in authority in a dictatorial government as well as in a constitutional republic or democracy. Obviously, we are not to pray that the Lord would bless such leaders to be blessed in their wicked practices, but we should pray that the Lord might change their depraved hearts and cause them to bow to the sovereign Lord of creation. Equally, we can pray that if the Lord does not see fit to save them that He might at least restrain them and allow us to be blessed to live a life of peace and safety as we live godly unto the Lord. When Jeremiah prophesied of the judgment of God on Israel by the Babylonian government, the Lord had him to instruct Israel to "seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the LORD for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace," Jeremiah 29:7. After all, those in authority are there by the sovereign rule of God, Did not the Lord tell Nebuchadnezzar that when He was through with him that "the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whosoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men," Daniel 4:17? And later, the Lord instructed Daniel to inform Belshazzar that his grandfather, Nebuchadnezzar, was driven out to live like an animal until he "knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that he appointeth over it whomsoever he will," Daniel. 5:21. This same God removed the kingdom from Babylon and gave it to the Medes and Persians, Daniel 5:28. Every Bible believer knows that from Genesis to Revelation, there are an abundance of testimonies where the Lord ruled over kings and nations in every generation. Therefore, since our God has given abundant proof of Him ruling in the lives of kings and nations all through history, we should be encouraged to pray for those in authority in government in our day. We say that He is the same God today as recorded in the Scriptures. Since He has commanded us to pray for those in authority, why are we so apathetic in praying for them? Though they have no right in the house of God to execute their authority there, we recognize that God has established them over us in society and that we should pray for them. Joseph was a man of great wisdom and a man who served God whether in prison or as the Prime Minister of Egypt. Obviously, Egypt worshiped many gods and did not know the one true God, though God made Joseph to be "a father to Pharaoh," Genesis 45:8. This means that Joseph was a man that instructed or gave wisdom and advice to Pharaoh with regard to ruling Egypt, Genesis 41:37-45. (It might be noted that though Joseph's wife was the daughter of a priest, or possibly a prince, in Egypt, he still worshiped and honored

God, Genesis 41:50-52.) Though Joseph was in such high position, as a Hebrew, he did not eat with the Egyptians, Genesis 43:32. All of this is to say that Joseph, who was a just and righteous man that served God and was in such a high position in civil government, did not try to force Egypt or those who came to him for grain during the drought to worship God in truth. As previously stated, he lived a virtuous and holy life, but he did not seek to force his beliefs on others and still served in a pagan government and sought the good of the king and very likely prayed for him. Another obvious example of a godly man serving under worldly governments is that of Daniel. He served in the Babylonian government and under multiple rulers in the government of the Medes and Persians. Daniel lived such a life in honor to the true God and in obedience and faithfulness to the rulers over him that his enemies could not find any fault in him, Daniel 6:4. They could only "find any occasion against" Daniel was "concerning the law of his God," Daniel 6:5. Obviously, Daniel was to obey God rather than man. By studying the book of Daniel it is seen that Daniel honored the kings, prayed for the kings, served the kings faithfully, and never tried to force his religious beliefs on the kings or their governments. The only time Daniel was in violation of a law of the state or civil government was when the law was created for the purpose of trying to cause him to stop praying or to get him in trouble with the government. Nevertheless, God vindicated Daniel. While God may not deliver everyone as He did Daniel, the principle of rendering to God that which belongs to Him and to the civil government that with belongs there is found in the life of Daniel, as well as in the life of Joseph. Yes, Jesus did tell us that in the latter days there would be "wars and rumours of wars," "nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places," and that believers shall be delivered" up to be afflicted" and killed, and "be hated of all nations for" His "name's sake," and that because "iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold," Matthew 24:6-12. However, this is no reason that we should cease praying for those in authority over us in civil government. Do we not believe that in the midst of a chaotic and crumbling society that the Lord can hedge us about so that we might be blessed to "lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty," II Timothy 2:2? Even if the Lord sees fit that we be persecuted and afflicted by the civil government, we are to still live "soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world," Titus 2:12. May the Lord be pleased to grant a revival of prayer and stir up our hearts to pray for those in civil government. Yes, if the government becomes our enemy, our Lord commanded, "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise

on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect," Matthew 5:44-48. Before closing, allow me to give a personal experience. I was greatly blessed today (This occurred in February of 2020) as I was driving in my car and listening to a local "Christian radio station." It was during their "prayer time" and in the prayer being broadcasted, the man prayed for our government and those in authority over us, and though he could not mention all of those in each branch of government, he did mentioned each branch. He did, however, mention by name President Trump, Vice-president Pence, and Nancy Pelosi, and this pray was about a week after the impeachment proceedings in the Senate and the State of the Union address by President Trump. It made me stop and think how one-sided my prayer might have been and that my own prayers need to be revised as I, too, strive to pray for those in authority over me. Our time is up for today. The Lord willing we will look at more passages regarding this subject matter in future studies.

The Christian and Civil Government (11th)

(Our study today is a break from reviewing scriptural references of the confessions. It is an overview of the "religious right" and civil government.) I ended the last broadcast by saying that, the Lord willing, we would continue our next study by looking at other scriptural references as listed in the confessions. Instead of doing this, I would like to present some things to further show the relevancy of this subject matter. Part of my own journey began as far back as the late 1970's and early 1980's when I became interested in what is considered the "religious right." In fact, in 1980, I was present at the "National Affairs Briefing" in Dallas, Texas, when Ronald Reagan addressed the Religious Roundtable which was established by Ed McAteer. I also attended other sessions of the Religious Roundtable at various places in the country, including one meeting in Washington, D.C. This was one part of the religious right which included other organizations as the Moral Majority which was likely the most popular and over reaching group at that time. Regarding the fundamental premise of such organizations, recently in a newsletter published by Chuck Baldwin (October 10, 2019 edition), he stated the following: I well remember another press conference that I attended with the leaders of the RR [religious right—JKB] back in the day. The reporter's question was, "What exactly is it you want?" I thought the question was terrific. It gave us a chance to express some of the basic principles of truth that we believed and what we were all about. What an awesome

opportunity. One of the key leaders of the RR back then answered by saying (and this is a quote), "All we want is a seat at the table." I almost gasped aloud. What? All of this effort, all of this adversity, all of this energy, all of this prayer and fasting was simply to give the leaders of the RR an opportunity to sit at the seat of power? At the time, I thought the answer was one man's opinion. Turns out it wasn't. He was truly speaking for many of them. To be sure, not all of them had this Machiavellian motivation, thank God. But for far, far too many of them, that is exactly what they wanted. Well, the RR got their seat at the table. And now that Trump is president, it is a front-row seat. And I'm here to tell you, the RR will do almost anything to keep their seat at the table. When they protect Donald Trump, they are protecting themselves. Whether you agree with Chuck Baldwin or not in his final assessment of the situation is not my concern. What I want to draw our attention to is the answer to the question of what the religious right wanted: "All we want is a seat at the table." In other words, the religious right wants to impose "Christian principles" into civil government. Allow me to be clear at this point. In my opinion, it is without question that anyone who knows and studies the Holy Scriptures, and is truly a Christian, knows that it is wrong to murder babies in the womb at anytime, that marriage is instituted by God and that it includes one man and one woman, that sodomy is condemned by God, that adultery and all other forms of sexual sins are wrong, as well as other sins that destroys society. Furthermore, I believe any nation that supports and upholds such practices (as well as other sins not previously listed) will come under the judgment of God and eventually fall. I also believe that the population (Christians and non Christians) should be involved in the political process and do all they can to see that our legislators and representatives pass laws against such moral sins and that our judges uphold them. Equally, Christian ministers are to preach against such sins, but when the congregation of God becomes a political sounding board it has gone beyond the authority given to it by God. There is no record in the New Testament where any congregation or minister sought to change the policies of civil government under Israel, or Rome, or any other nation. History teaches us that when the house of God seeks to "have a seat" in the political arena it only caused the civil government to fight against it. In other words, when the congregation of the Lord goes outside of its ordained commission it generally causes more division than good. Yes, sometimes there is a fine line of distinction, but it is essential that that distinction be known and carefully guarded. An incident recently occurred that further illustrated the importance of the issues of the Christian and civil government. This took place on February 12, 2020, in the state of Virginia. A minister from Warrenton, VA, was invited to give the opening prayer before the Virginia House of Delegates. His "prayer" was more of a sermon than a prayer. What he presented was

written and as he read this so-called prayer he looked up at the audience from time to time while those around him (and I assume all the delegates) were standing with bowed heads. This may be his normal way of presenting prayers in his congregation but I rather doubt it. Nevertheless, I often hear ministers giving prayers where it seems they are preaching to the congregation more than actually petitioning the Lord. This "minister" delivered his message regarding social injustices from his perspective. He further spoke of the murder of the unborn and addressed the wickedness of perverted lifestyles and other sins and instructed the delegates of their duty to provide legislations against such things. He was finally interrupted by the Speaker of the House and she led in the Pledge of Allegiance. This man was invited to give an opening prayer and not to address the delegates as to their role and duty as he thought. One of the delegates was also a minister and he thought the former minister was out of line, which I agree. (Please be patient with me again as I digress somewhat. While I likely would agree with many of the views of the minister invited to deliver the opening prayer, I believe it was wrong for him to seek to force his beliefs on the House of Delegates. Furthermore, I believe the minister who is a delegate should not be serving in such capacity. God calls His ministers to preach the gospel and not to seek political ambitions. Therefore, my opposition or agreement with either minister is not based on political party lines. Just as Caesar (civil government) does not have any place in the congregation of the Lord, it is not the place of the congregation to provide laws and regulations in the house of Caesar; i.e., civil government). A couple of days following this incident, it was broadcasted on a "Christian news source." At the end of the story, the audience was encouraged to contact the opposing minister and give their disapproval to his objections. The audience was further encouraged to also contact the Speaker of the House and voice their objections to her actions. Yes, Paul did preach and exhort civil leaders such as Felix, Festus, Agrippa, and others. But he did it as he was requested to do so as he gave a defense against those who opposed him. Paul never sought out any leader in civil government nor did he seek an appointment with the government at any time for the purpose of instructing them concerning the laws of the land or the laws of God. Even the discourse by Paul on Mar's Hill was at the request of the court in Athens. He did not go there on his own for the purpose of changing or stopping their governmental procedures. Is it any wonder that the civil government is moving in more and more on the congregations of the Lord when they are seeking to persuade the government to follow Christian beliefs? Yes, the world, and even civil governments, will hate the truth of the gospel and persecute Christians, but when Christians seek to force their Christian beliefs on a government that provides religious liberty for all religions according to the laws of that government, it is like

jumping into the den of lions and pulling their mane. Obviously, the idea that the civil government is to be connected to the congregation is that which flows from the Protestants and not the historic position of the Baptists. However, our time is up for today. The Lord willing we will continue our study of this topic in our next podcast. May "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all."

The Christian and Civil Government (12th)

(We return today to our study of reviewing some of the scriptural references as listed in the confessions. This lesson discusses Isaiah 49:23, Deuteronomy 13:5-6 and Titus 3:1.) In the previous podcast, we devoted some time to the objections and directions of the "religious right" instead of continuing our studies of the scriptural references of the confessions. It is our desire to take up again the references of the confessions to see if they in anyway affirm that Caesar (civil government) and the house of God are to be joined together in any way. So far, we have found the opposite regarding the passages previously studied. In fact, we have reviewed the strongest of the verses as found in the Holy Scriptures. Many of the remaining passages are from the Old Testament and are in reference to the theocratic kingdom of Israel where the worship of God and civil government were interwoven and connected together under the moral, civil, and ceremonial laws given to them by God through Moses. While civil governments are ordained by the Lord and clearly Christ instituted the congregational worship while here on earth, He plainly said (as mentioned in previous podcasts) that His kingdom is not of this world (John 18:36) and there are things which belong to Caesar (civil government) and other things that belong to God, Matthew 22:21. Furthermore, since the New Testament assembly was established under the new covenant, we ought to derive the rules and functions of it from the New Testament and only used scriptural references from the Old Testament to support principles clearly expressed in the New. Therefore, we will not expand this study to exegete all of the many Old Testament passages supplied by the Protestant confessions to support their idea of the civil government being a "nursing father" to the congregation of God. However, we will look at some to see the intent and objective that Protestants believe civil government should exercise its power not only in society but also in the house of the Lord. The first sentence of Article Three of the Westminster Confession reads as follows: The civil magistrate may not assume to himself the administration of the Word and sacraments, or the power of the keys of the kingdom of heaven: yet he hath authority, and it is his duty, to take order that unity and peace be preserved in the Church, that the truth of God be kept pure and

entire, that all blasphemies and heresies be suppressed, all corruptions and abuses in worship and discipline prevented or reformed, and all the ordinances of God duly settled, administered, and observed. Several passages are referenced for this sentence and many are from the New Testament (as well as the Old Testament) regarding the discipline of the congregation. Many of these do not include civil government and simply affirm that the congregation is to discipline its erring members. One passage, however, to which I draw your attention is Isaiah 49:23, "And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers: they shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I am the LORD: for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me." It appears from the context that this passage is referring to the latter days of the kingdom of God whereby the Gentiles will be included in the covenant promises of Israel, and that it is inclusive of the day when "all flesh shall know" that the Lord is the Redeemer. This reminds us of Philippians 2:10 when all men shall bow and confess that our Savior is Lord of all. However, nothing is said regarding kings or civil government ruling in the congregation of the Lord. Also, we must remember that the Protestant view of "the Church of God" is defined as being "catholic or universal … which is invisible," and "consists of the whole number of the elect," Westminster Confession, Chapter, XXV, Article One. Furthermore, "The Form of Presbyterial Church-Government" of this confession continually affirm that "many congregations were one church, and that they were under one presbyterial government." Therefore, there is a "universal invisible church" and within this umbrella is a "church" or "presbyterial government" consisting of "many congregations." Sadly, this is the general consensus of much of "evangelical Christianity," or the second view, which is dispensational concept, that the "universal church" is composed of all believers from Pentecost until the return of Jesus. Whereas a study of the historical use and the common meaning of the Greek word evkklhsi,a is a congregation or assembly. This was covered in previous podcasts and, therefore, we will not take the time here to verify it again. Since the Protestant view has so influenced modern "evangelical Christianity" so much that the English word "church" is often used to signify the people of God or New Testament believers, commentators will supply the word "church" into their interpretation of passages like this in Isaiah 49:23. This is confusing because often when reading commentators or historians they will use the word "church" to refer to the people of God or to organized religion and/or to a denomination and/or to an individual congregation within the same paragraph or to Christianity in general; therefore, it is difficult to know what the author actually means by the use of the word. Equally, too often the kingdom of God and "the church" are set forth as being identical or the same thing when in reality they are two

separate things. For time sake, I will simply say that I believe the congregation of the Lord is included in the kingdom of heaven, but the kingdom extends far beyond that of the house of God. Nevertheless, this too, is another subject that time will not permit us to enlarge on at this point in our study of civil government and its role in the assembly of the saints. It is to be noted also that the Protestant confessions proclaim that the civil magistrate has the "authority, and it is his duty, to take order that unity and peace be preserved in the Church, that the truth of God be kept pure and entire, that all blasphemies and heresies be suppressed, all corruptions and abuses in worship and discipline prevented or reformed, and all the ordinances of God duly settled, administered, and observed." Nowhere in the New Testament did Caesar (Rome), or the elders or Jewish leaders of Israel, or any other form of civil government take part in any congregation regarding how the Christians were to worship. In fact, when the Jews in Corinth took Paul to the judgment seat of Rome under the deputy Gallio, he drove them away because it was not "reason" (or logical) that he should consider "a question of words and names" of Jewish law or religion, cf. Acts 18:12-17. Besides, what may be heresy to a Baptist may not be to a Protestant or vise versa. The same may be said concerning "abuses in worship," "congregational discipline," "blasphemies," or "the ordinances of God." The civil government is never authorized give judgment on to such practices in the New Testament. Likewise, there was not any denominational hierarchy within the New Testament that dictated to any congregation, or a group of congregations, as to how to perform religious worship or set orthodox standards for any congregation. The congregation of God is the only ecclesiastical authority in the New Testament outside of the Lord Jesus Christ. In connection with this, the Westminster Confession referenced Deuteronomy 13:5-6. To better understand these two verses, it would be better to consider them in the context of verses one through eleven. The passage plainly declared that a prophet or a dreamer of dreams (even if it included a family member) sought to lead the Israelites away from worshiping and serving the Lord as affirmed by the Scriptures he was to be stoned to death. This punishment was to be administered by not only the one(s) who brought the charge but by all the people, Deuteronomy 13:9. It was not a punishment inflicted by the rulers or judges at the gate nor by the Levites or priests of God, it was by the people of the congregation. As for false prophets or teachers or ministers in the assembly of the saints today, we are instructed to "mark them" and "avoid them," (Romans 16:17-18), "withdraw" from them and "have no company with" them, (II Thessalonians 3:6, 14), or other such like actions. We are never told by God in His Word to call for civil government to come in and rule over the congregation of the Lord or administer judgment on it or any of its members or officers. As we pointed out in a previous podcast, Paul rebuked the congregation at

Corinth for going to the civil government to settle differences between the members instead of the congregation judging and settling the matter among their own selves, I Corinthians 6:1-8. Another scriptural reference not previously considered is Titus 3:1 as listed by the 2001 Confession of Faith for the Cumberland Presbyterians. It says, "Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work." This verse in no way suggests that civil government is to be involved within the congregation of God. In fact, this is teaching no more than what we found in previous podcasts concerning Romans 13 and civil government. At this time we will close our lesson for today. May the Lord bless and keep you by His grace and power.

The Christian and Civil Government (13th)

We interrupt our studies today to reflect somewhat concerning the Christian, the congregation of God, and the civil government in connection with the Covid-19 virus.) As you may or may not know we prepare our podcast weeks and sometimes months in advance. The purpose for this is to give myself plenty of time to hopefully devote the proper time to each lesson and to be prepared so that I don't get behind with the broadcast. Therefore, instead of continuing to review the scriptural passages from the confessions, I want to devote today's broadcast to the recent happenings regarding various things around the Covid-19 virus. To help set the stage somewhat, I am beginning to write this on March 27, 2020, though I may not finish this today. Also, to give further insight to thoughts, I have been somewhat "out of commission" the last couple of weeks because on March 13, of this year, I fell in a parking lot and scrapped my face and nose on the asphalt and broke my kneecap on my left leg. Needless to say, I have had a lot of time sitting and thinking about all that has been going on and the relationship of our current subject matter—the Christian and civil government. Due to my time of sitting and inactivity, I watched more news than I normally do and can assure you that when one focuses too much on the so-called wisdom of the world instead of centering his attention on the Holy Scriptures it greatly affects his spirituality and causes him to gravitate away from the peace of God that passes all understanding, cf. Philippians 4:7. Additionally, we know that God has not "given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind," II Timothy 1:7. Knowing these things in our head is one thing, but having the assurance of them in our spirit and soul is entirely a different thing. I believe every true believer understands what I am saying. Also, please keep these things in mind as I endeavor to enlarge on the topic at hand and know that my purpose is first and foremost to teach what God tells us in His Holy Word. I cannot control your heart.

In fact, I cannot control my own heart. I know what it is to have fear and trepidation and at the same time to know that it is wrong, and that I am to pray to the Lord to bless my heart and soul to be in line with the Scriptures. As you know, we need the Lord to do this because without Him we cannot do this, John 15:5. Allow me to share something that I heard recently that I believe clearly illustrates what I am saying. There is a Christian brother in Russia that some years ago applied for a teaching position in the school system there. He had all the necessary requirements and was in line to get the job. However, when the Russian government discovered that he was a Baptist they would not give him the job. This brother said that in his head he thought of Roman 8:28 believing that all things work together for good for him, but that it took two or three weeks for his heart to catch up with his head. Do you not find this to be your case at times? We know the truth of the Scriptures, but until the Lord sanctifies it in our hearts we struggle within ourselves. Allow me to also say that I do not think the Covid-19 virus is some minor or insignificant thing. A plague of any kind is a serious matter. There have been plagues and diseases throughout the world and as long as man lives in this sinful world there will ever be such things. Jesus said, "And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows," Matthew 24:6-8. Notice that our Lord said that the Christian is not to be "troubled" or frightened. He also said that these things are "the beginning of sorrows." And yet, when a famine or storm or war or other such like things overtakes us as individuals it is no small thing. It is real to us. It is our life that is turned upside down. It is an emotional trauma and it is painful. As long as we focus our attention on the immediate surroundings we will panic like Peter did in the sea when he took his eyes off the Lord. See Matthew 14:25-32. (By the way, I do not mean to cast any dispersion on Peter because he had faith to get out of the ship and walk on the water where others did not.) Nevertheless, regarding our subject matter and the Covid-19 virus, harmful viruses and diseases are part of the world in which we live. Now we will try to address somewhat our overall subject matter—the Christian and civil government. We have shown from previous podcasts that Caesar (civil government) has no place within or over the house of God. It is true that civil government rules over Christians as citizens of the country and the Christian is commanded by God to obey the civil government so long as they do not command us to disobey the Word of God. Currently our government, as well as other countries throughout the world, are endeavoring to rule over the house of God and unless compliance is observed to governmental mandates arrests are made and people are put in jail and issued fines.

One mayor in the United States said that unless the congregations abide by his decrees they would be closed and their buildings possibly torn down. This is clearly a violation of the laws of our land—The Constitution of the United. (As a side note, many have been seeking to destroy The Constitution before and since 1861 when Abraham Lincoln suspended the writ of habeas corpus, but that is another study.) However, the Christian is under command to a higher law and authority. Christians down through the century have suffered for their faith under all different kinds of governments. Thankfully, here in the United States of America we have been granted religious freedom for a few hundred years, but there is a massive movement now to end this glorious freedom. (Remember there is a difference between liberty and freedom. In England, during the reign of William and Mary, the Baptists were granted liberty but not freedom. Again, that is another study.) While the Constitution regulates the powers of the Federal Government, it does not fully regulate the state governments in every situation. In fact, some states did not grant freedom of religion until the early eighteen hundreds. And there is at least one incident where a ban was issued by a state governmental agency in the history of our nation that forbad congregations to meet during the Spanish flu. During this time, a Baptist minister in Kentucky was sent to jail for continuing to hold services, https://www.courierjournal.com/story/news/2020/03/20/coronavirus-pastor-rrested-holding-church-during-spanish-flu/2874182001/. On a separate note, there are stories of men like B. H. Palmer who stayed in New Orleans during the Yellow Fever pestilence in 1858 and ministered in the homes of those afflicted with the disease and was preserved from contracting the disease. He did the same in another outbreak twenty years later in 1878. This was true of Martin Luther regarding the Black Plague in Europe and of Charles Spurgeon during a cholera epidemic in his day. While Palmer stayed, many of the other ministers fled the city and abandoned their flocks. (By the way, the yellow fever took the lives of some 4,858 people in the city of New Orleans in 1858, Life and Letters of B. M. Palmer. And Martin Luther said, “I have lived to see the greatest plague on earth—the contemning of God’s word, a fearful thing, surpassing all other plagues in the world; for thereupon most surely follow all manner of punishments, eternal and corporal.” The Table Talk of Martin Luther by Thomas S. Kepler, No. 28.) The essential question for the Christian during such times is what does the Bible teach us? As we have seen in previous podcasts, the government does not have the authority to rule over the congregation of God. It is in another kingdom—the kingdom of God, which is not of this world, John 18:36. Our Lord instructed believers who were considering going back to the Old Testament worship because they were being persecuted for their faith not to forsake their assembling together, Hebrews 10:23-27. While it is true that we are not told how

often the congregation is to assemble, it is generally understood that the early saints met on the first day of the week, Acts 20:7; I Corinthians 16:2. Today we are being challenged by the civil government regarding this issue and it appears that many congregations are simply following governmental recommendations without question. In fact, it seems that they mostly question and condemn congregations that choose to continue to worship together. Who is right? Obviously, the answer is God. What should each congregation do and how should they respond to the governmental recommendations and in some cases governmental demands? I can't answer that for you. That is a decision that each individual congregation must prayfully and humbly make. We are living, I believe, in serious times and our freedoms are being eroded on a massive scale. Frankly, my prayer is that our nations would draw nigh to God, repent, beg His mercies, and that He would restore us to a more godly environment so that we may continue to freely serve Him without outside intrusion. Christians have suffered down through the centuries for exercising their obedience to the Lord. Do we have the wisdom, strength, and spirituality to be faithful to Him today? Time will tell. Yes, I believe there will be congregations faithfully serving the Lord at His return, I Corinthians 11:26. Will it be in our nation? I do not know. I believe that no believer should arrogantly say that He going to do so-n-so regardless of what the civil government says, but at the same time we must obey God rather than men when called to do so, Acts 5:29. Much, much more could be said (and probably should be said by those wiser than I am), but our time is up for today. In closing, allow me to encourage you to pray that all of us will draw closer to the Lord, to have the wisdom to know what He would have us to do, and that He give us the power and strength to do His will to His honor and glory. May the blessings of God abide on you richly.

The Christian and Civil Government (14th)

(The lesson today involves the remaining verses listed by the Protestant confessions to support the congregation striving to change governmental rules and regulations and to promote a social climate under the tenets of the Bible.) Today we return to our reviews of the confessions with a more particular view to the Protestant confession of the Cumberland Presbyterians as published August, 2001. Allow me to quote the last three articles of this confession. The covenant community, governed by the Lord Christ, opposes, resists, and seeks to change all circumstances of oppression—political, economic, cultural, racial—by which persons are denied the essential dignity God intends for them in the work of creation. (Dt. 15:7-11; Ps. 41:1-3, 83:3-4; Pr. 21:13, 29:4, 14.) The covenant community affirms the lordship of Christ who sought out the poor, the oppressed, the sick, and the helpless. In her

corporate life and through her individual members, the church is an advocate for all victims of violence and all those whom the law or society treats as less than persons for whom Christ died. Such advocacy involves not only opposition to all unjust laws and forms of injustice but even more support for those attitudes and actions which embody the way of Christ, which is to overcome evil with good. (Mt. 9:35-38, 14:14, 15:32-39; Ro. 12:19-21.) God gives the message and ministry of reconciliation to the church. The church, corporately and through her individual members, seeks to promote reconciliation, love, and justice among all persons, classes, races, and nations. (Mt. 28:18-20; 2 Co. 5:18-20.) While the appellation of "covenant community" in the first article quoted above may refer to believers in general, the designations of "corporate life" and "corporately" are supplied in the following two articles to clearly deduce that the individual congregations are under consideration. As noted in previous podcasts the idea of the meaning of the word "church" in Protestant teaching is that of all believers in general. In fact, I recently heard two different Protestant ministers refer to "the church in Galatia" in their teachings regarding this book. Paul did not write to "the church" in Galatia. Plainly the Scriptures declare "unto the churches" (or congregations) "of Galatia," Galatians 1:2. To disregard this to promote some theological opinion or denominational doctrine is to twist or wrest the Scriptures, II Peter 3:16. While the Greek word evkklesi,a is used a generic way, the reality of it is expressed as a congregation or assembly. It is never invisible, denominational, provincial, or national. It is to be composed of regenerated and baptized believers and they are to live as such in the world. However, what an individual may do in his life does not infer that a congregation is to do. Obviously, as Christians we are to "do good unto all men" as we have opportunity and "especially unto them who are of the household of faith," Galatians 6:10. And a Christian woman and mother is to aid and support her husband in teaching their children the Holy Scriptures but she is not to occupy a teaching position in the house of God, I Timothy 2:11-12; I Corinthians 14:34-35. This is one simple and clear example of where a believer is to do individually but not within the confines and authority of the assembly of the saints. Equally, while a Christian may be involved in public or in government regarding various social activities regarding civil affairs, no where do we find commands in the Scriptures for the congregation of the Lord—particularly the New Testament assembly—to be involved in governmental and public social activities regarding these civil affairs. You will notice that the scriptural references supplied for the first article that we read from the confession are all from the Old Testament and generally were given to Israel under their theonomic government. The first reference is Deuteronomy 15:7-11. If we were to try to apply the principle taught in this passage to the congregation of the Lord we would have to

limit the poor to those within the individual assembly. This passage did not expand beyond the umbrella of the nation of Israel. Yes, Israel was to show kindness to strangers, (cf. Exodus 22:21; 23:9), but this did not mean that Israel was to alleviate all the poor of the nations round about nor were they to go into those countries and impose their laws on them governmentally. Likewise, Israel was forbidden to charge usury to a fellow Israelite, but he could do so with strangers outside the camp, Deuteronomy 23:19-20. Also, while some animals Israel could not eat, they could sell them unto the stranger for him to eat, Deuteronomy 14:21. Therefore, the principle regarding Deuteronomy 15:7-11 refers to a "brother in Israel" and not to the population in general. In like manner, obviously a congregation ought to show love to their brother or fellow member, but it is not obligated to feed the poor of the world. In fact, the congregation is obligated to not feed some, even professing believers. The Thessalonians were instructed by the Lord that "if any would not work, neither should he eat," II Thessalonians 3:10. Such principles may equally apply to the other Old Testament references supplied for the first article given above. Now let us consider the New Testament passages supplied for the last two articles. The first is Matthew 9:35-38. In reality, the only verse here that is associated with the topic at hand is verse thirtyfive: "And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people." Without question, this verse is only summarizing the ministry of Christ and is not a commandment to the house of God. On the other hand, it is clear that anytime someone can alleviate sickness and disease he should do his best to do so if at all possible. Yet, this verse is not teaching this as a "ministry" of the congregation of God. The same may be applied for Matthew 14:14, the second passage listed. The next passage listed is Matthew 15:32-39. This passage is telling about when Christ Jesus fed the "four thousand men, beside women and children." It should be obvious to any Bible reader that this passage (or when Christ fed the five thousand) is not an injunction to the house of God to feed the poor. This reminds me of a stunt that a minister did several years ago to fill his congregation with children. He had ordered five thousand fish sandwiches from McDonald's restaurant to give out to children that would come to his services via his "bus ministry." In doing this, he bragged that he had fed the five thousands as Jesus did. Such exploits is a disgrace to the true ministry of Christianity whether by an individual or a professed congregation of God. It is evident that Christians should go to the aid and minister to their friends and neighbors that the Lord providentially brings in their lives. Is this not the plain teaching of the Good Samaritan? See Luke 10:29-37. Likewise, it is a blessing when a congregation that can mitigate the suffering of individuals. However, it is an entirely a different thing to teach that it is

the duty of the assembly of Christ to oppose “all unjust laws and forms of injustice” in the arenas of “political, economic, cultural,” or “racial” settings. Also, such passages do not teach that the house of God is to “seeks to promote reconciliation, love, and justice among all persons, classes, races, and nations.” Yes, the congregation is to judge its members, but it is not to pass judgment on those without, I Corinthians 5:9- 12; I Peter 4:17. The same principles apply to Romans 12:19-21. The last two passages supplied are Matthew 28:18-20 and II Corinthians 5:18-20. They are as follows: “And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.” And, “And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” Without question, the house of God is to proclaim the gospel to all the world, but it is not a “social gospel” for the change of society. It is the gospel of salvation through the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Many people who are obedient to the gospel live in poverty and dire circumstances. The gospel does not promise a better social status or a higher economic standard of living. Christ came to save His people from their sins, not to change their social environment. Obviously, when one is delivered from his sins often his quality of life is improved, but sometimes his social status is worse especially if he is being persecuted for his faith. Remember the words of Jesus, “Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man’s foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me,” Matthew 10:34-38. More needs to be said regarding these issues, but our time is exhausted for today. The Lord willing, we will follow up with this in our next podcast.

The Christian and Civil Government (15th)

Our lesson today is another overview as to the relevancy of our subject. Too many Christians, including ministers, have disregarded this subject too long. May the Lord awaken us before it is too late and all of our liberties and freedoms are removed from us.) We have reviewed the Protestant and Baptist confessions overall and studied the references supplied by them and found that while the believer is to obey the laws of the land as long as they are not required to disobey the Scriptures, the Lord did not command or suggest to the congregation of God to rule over or engage in setting up civil government over society. The Catholic institutions (both Roman and Greek) maintain a strong tie with civil government. The Roman Catholics maintain that the pope is not only the head of church but that he is the king of the world. As many may, or may not know, the Vatican City is considerate to be a city-state surrounded by Rome, Italy, and many world countries recognize this citystate as an independent country. It was not until January 10, 1984, when President Ronald Reagan and congress recognized it as a country. Presidents before him sought to do this but the country's opposition prevented it. (Time does not permit us to follow this historical path.) Nevertheless, with the strong ties of Catholicism and civil government, the Protestant did not fully break with this ideology with the Reformation. This is clearly visible by studying the history at that time. Various wars and battles were fought among the Protestants, along with different heads of states and kings and emperors aligned with the causes on both sides of the Reformation. The different forms of governments throughout Europe, too, contributed to the various "church-state" relationships. These governments included such as monarchy, oligarchy, aristocracy, and various forms of democracy. The idea of a constitutional republic came to vogue with the forming of the Unites States of America. However, the Reformation and the religion of the reformers was defined under the ideals of a "church-state relationship" as previously taught and practiced by the Catholics, though in later times some Protestants seek to distance themselves from this idea. Allow me to impose on your patience by quoting from the "Belgic Confession" (as revised in 1618 and 1619) as printed in The Three Forms of Unity as published by the Mission Committee of the Protestant Reformed Churches of America. Though no date was supplied with this printing, originally, this confession was published in 1561. In Article XXXVI, entitled "Of Magistrates," it states, "And their office" (i.e., the office of magistrates) "is, not only to have regard unto, and watch for the welfare of the civil state; but also that they protect the sacred ministry; and thus may remove and prevent all idolatry and false worship; that the kingdom of anti-christ may be thus destroyed and the kingdom of Christ promoted." At the place of "false worship" regarding the civil

magistrates removing and preventing "all idolatry and false worship," is a footnote supplied with a follow-up note which is a follows: "This phrase, touching the office of the magistracy in its relation to the Church, proceeds on the principle of the Established Church, which was first applied by Constantine and afterwards also in many Protestant countries. History, however, does not support the principle of State domination over the Church, but rather the separation of Church and State. Moreover, it is contrary to the New Dispensation that authority be vested in the State to arbitrarily reform the Church, and to deny the Church the right of independently conducting its own affairs as a distinct territory alongside the State. The New Testament does not subject the Christian Church to the authority of the State that it should be governed and extended by political measures, but to our Lord and King only as an independent territory alongside and altogether independent of the State, that it may be governed and edified by its office-bearers and with spiritual weapons only. Practically all Reformed churches have repudiated the idea of the Established Church, and are advocating the autonomy of the churches and personal liberty of conscience in matters pertaining to the service of God. "'The Christian Reformed Church in America, being in full accord with this view, feels constrained to declare that it does not conceive of the office of the magistracy in this sense, that it be in duty bound to also exercise political authority in the sphere of religion, by establishing and maintaining a State Church, advancing and supporting the same as the only true Church, and to oppose, to persecute and to destroy by means of the sword all the other churches as being false religions; and to also declare that it does positively hold that, within its own secular sphere, the magistracy has a divine duty towards the first table of the Law as well as towards the second; and furthermore that both State and Church as institutions of God and Christ have mutual rights and duties appointed them from on high, and therefore have a very sacred reciprocal obligation to meet through the Holy Spirit, who proceeds from the Father and Son. They may not, however, encroach upon each other's territory. The Church has rights of sovereignty in its own sphere as well as the State.'" Acta. Synod, 1910. I might add that later in this article, along with the article on magistrates in the Christian Reformed edition of this confession in 2011 says "Wherefore we detest the Anabaptists and other seditious people, and in general all those who reject the higher powers and magistrates, and would subvert justice, introduce community of goods, and confound that decency and good order, which God hath established among men." While some Anabaptists may have been seditious, this is not the truth of all, and the reformer and their histories to date generally infer that all Anabaptists are of this temperament. This is not the truth and is a general dispersion of our Baptist forefathers. While the Protestants seek to distance themselves from outright persecuting those who differ

with them, they continue to affirm that it is the duty of the civil magistrate that "They must therefore countenance the preaching of the Word of the gospel everywhere, that God may be honored and worshipped by every one, as He commanded in His Word." Many may say that this is a moot point and should not be considered in our modern times. But nothing could be further from the truth. Allow me to quote from a modern "Christian new source" as published April 16, 2020. Under the sub-title "49% of Americans say Bible should influence laws" it says the following: "And finally, 49 percent of Americans believe the Bible should have at least 'some' influence on U.S. laws, while 23 percent say the Bible should have 'a great deal' of influence, according to Pew Research. "The study also found 28 percent of Americans believe that the Bible should take precedence over the will of the people in terms of influencing U.S. laws. "Wisdom says in Proverbs 8:15-16, 'By me kings reign, and rulers decree justice. By me princes rule, and nobles, all the judges of the earth.'" https://theworldview.com/#!news_broadcasts/doj-sides-wchristians-fined-for-drive-in-servicetrump-pulls-world-health-funding-congo-muslims-kill-35-christians
Notice again that according to this research that "49 percent of Americans believe the Bible should have some influence on U.S. laws" and that "28 percent of Americans believe that the Bible should take precedence over the will of the people in terms of influencing U.S. laws." The question is raised as to who is to make this judgment as to what the Bible teaches and what biblical laws are to be enforced or "take precedence over the will of the people"? This fully aligns with the teaching of the Protestants, but sadly many Baptists, too, support this idea. One previous podcast equally showed the relevancy of this topic. We also previously published that the intrusion of the congregation of God seeking to influence and/or control civil government has caused the government to move in and seek to rule over and regulate the congregation of the Lord regarding its beliefs and practices, even as to when and how it worships. However, our time is up for today. Please know that this is a vital subject and that we need the wisdom of God to know how to live our lives in this pluralistic society to His honor and glory.

The Christian and Civil Government (16th)

Today we will briefly review our previous studies and begin to supply some history of this dichotomy regarding the Christian assembly and civil government as addressed by the Protestants and Baptists.) Earlier we stated that "there are basically two questions or issues that need to be addressed: (1) what role should the civil government play in the New Testament congregation, or in any form of religion; (2) what role should the New Testament congregation (or any form of religion) be

involved in civil government or in any worldly organization?" Further we said that "these questions relate to all religions and not only to the New Testament assembly." After reviewing the confessions of the Baptists and Protestants, we summarized by saying the following: The differences between articles three of the two Protestant confessions were given as such: (1) the Westminster focuses article three around the Church (which according to their "Form of Church-Government" is an umbrella over congregations) whereas the Savoy centers it around the "interest of Christ in the world"; (2) both affirm that civil government is to encourage, promote, protect, and preserve the gospel and professors of the gospel; (3) both affirm that blasphemies, heresies, corruptions, and wicked practices be prevented and that the truth of God be kept pure; (4) the Savoy allows some lead way so as "not disturbing others in their ways or worship that differ from them," whereas the Westminster does not allow such liberty of conscience; and, (5) the Westminster grants that the civil authority has "power to call synods, to be present in them, and to provide that whatsoever is transacted in them be according to the mind of God," where the Savoy does not allow. This greatly differs from the Baptist confession where article three states that "Civil magistrates being set up by God for the ends aforesaid; subjection, in all lawful things commanded by them, ought to be yielded by us in the Lord, not only for wrath, but for conscience's sake; and we ought to make supplications and prayers for kings and all that are in authority, that under them we may live a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty." Furthermore we saw that some of the modern Protestants confessions enlarged their interests in that they affirm that it is the role of organized "Christian" religion to be involved in social justice and seek to persuade civil government regarding these affairs. Equally, we found that as late as 2011 Protestants continue to affirm their aversions to those who differ with them in stating as follows: "Wherefore we detest the Anabaptists and other seditious people, and in general all those who reject the higher powers and magistrates, and would subvert justice, introduce community of goods, and confound that decency and good order, which God hath established among men." In reviewing the scriptural references as supplied by the confessions, we found that God ordained civil government and that Christians are to be submissive to such government. However, we also saw that when the civil government seeks to interfere with the house of God and its worship it has overstepped its bounds and that the saints of God and the congregation of the Lord are to obey God rather than man. Israel under the Old Testament theocracy never sought to force the stranger or other nations to worship under their economy. If a stranger desired to be identified with Israel and her worship he was welcomed, but he was never forced under it. Obviously, if Israel captured and subdued a tribe, nation, or kingdom, they were subject to Israel's civil laws but they were not forced

under the Levitical worshiping system. In fact, a "stranger" could not enter into their worship as such. And, likewise, under the New Testament worship and the gospel of the kingdom of heaven, unbelievers and civil powers were not forced into the worship of the congregation of God. It cannot be denied that we live in a pluralistic society. Regardless of the country in which one lives, this is a fact. Unless all the citizens of a country believe identically, different people are going to have views that differ from others. While there are countries that basically have one form of religion, there are some within that nation that believe somewhat different from the majority in some fashion. This is a fact of human nature. Even within a family, it is a rare thing (if this is ever the case) that the husband and wife always agree on everything. In a pluralistic society like the United States of America, there are people who live here with various forms of religious worship. Therefore, it is impossible that all will believe alike. In fact, all who profess to be Christian do not believe alike. John Owen said in his answers to a Roman Catholic in his day concerning a unity in profession among all Christian that such could only be achieved by the sword. He said, "In the meantime, to expect unity in profession, by the reduction of all men to a precise agreement in all the doctrines that have been and are ventilated among Christians, and in all acts and ways of worship, is to refer the supreme and last determination of things evangelical to the sword of secular power and violence, and to inscribe 'Vox ultima Christi' upon great guns and other engines or war, seeing otherwise it will not be effected;—and what may be done this way I know not." John Owen, Works of John Owen, Volume 14, p. 318. And yet, the followers of John Owen and the Savoy Confession sought to do this very thing in the early days of this country under the rule of the Congregationalists. Such practices were likewise done by the Episcopalians and Presbyterians and other Protestants as well. However, such practices of using civil government to enforce so-called Christian beliefs on others began long before this in America. In fact, it can be traced back to Augustine, one of the heroes of the Protestants. Needless to say, Augustine was a Catholic and not a Protestant. Augustine desired to use the civil government to extinguish the Donatists. We need to give some history regarding the Donatists because Catholics and Protestants alike in their histories always speak of them as being "the filth of the world" and "the offscouring of all things," cf. I Corinthians 4:13. Even John Owen said of them that they were "the wretchedest schism that ever rent the church of God; which makes the wounds of Christendom incurable, and all hope of coalition in love desperate," Works, Vol. 14, p. 355. Also listen to the words of Thomas Goodwin from his Sermon XXXV, on Ephesians 1:22-23: I will add but two cautions, to inform you concerning two divisions; the one from the universal church, and the other from particular churches. It is proper to the thing in hand, 'church,' 'the church, which is

his body;' and there is no schism to be in the body, no schism from the universal church, no schism from particular churches that are truly churches of Christ. I will tell you of two great divisions from either. You have heard of two sorts spoken of, the one of old, the other of latter years; the one the Donatists of old, the other the Brownists of late. You call the Brownists the new Donatists, and the Donatists the old Brownists. I will explain that which is the worst in either opinion, and you shall see it is proper to the thing in hand. First, for the Donatists that were in Austin's time. I have examined diligently the writings of Austin; among them I find the highest venom of their opinions to lie in this, and it is high enough, —if we may know men by the writings of their adversaries against them, for there is none of their own writings extant,—the truth is, they denied the church universal, they denied that the church was anywhere but in that part of Africa where they were, and this inflamed that holy man Austin against them. They might have put out of their creed, 'I believe the Church Catholic,' and put in 'I believe a little part of the world to be the Church.' Here you see a schism hath been from the church universal. Now, go take the Brownists; they never deny the church universal, as the Donatists do; they have always affirmed that there is a church universal in all places, yea, and in England the most glorious church of saints of any in the world. But yet herein hath lain their error; they have sinned against particular churches, as they of old did against the universal church. And against these I, for my part, and many of my brethren, profess that they are in an error; and it is evident by Rev.15., that, from the first time of the separation from Popery, there hath been a temple built to God, churches to God, in all the Reformed Churches. This is a small sample of many quotes that could be furnished to show the disdain the Protestants have for the Donatists and others who desire to use civil magistrates or civil government to keep the truth of God (as they understand it) "pure and entire." You will note in both quotes, though not as open in Owen's as in Goodwin's, that one of their major objections to the Donatists was their resistance to the belief in "the church universal." However, that is another study which we have made reference to in previous podcasts. The confusion regarding what is "the church" can be readily seen in another quote by John Owen in his answering the papists John Vincent Cane: Moreover, we desire to know what church you mean in your assertion, or, rather, what is it you mean by the church? Do you intend the mystical church, or the whole number of God's elect in all ages, or in any age, militant on the earth, which principally is the church of God? Eph. 5.25; or do you intend the whole diffused body of disciples of Christ in the world, separated to God by baptism and the profession of saving truth, which is the church catholic visible? or do you mean any particular church, as the Roman or Constantinopolitian, the French, Dutch, or English church? Works, Vol. 14, p. 301. As has been noted in previous podcasts, the

translators under the rules as established by King James, were not allowed to translate the Greek word ἐκκλεσία as congregation as Tyndale did in every place in his New Testament. If the word congregation would have been used throughout the translations of the Bible over the years, I believe there would be less confusion regarding what our Lord meant concerning the house of God. Obviously, there were no denominations or such like religious institutions in the days of the New Testament. But let us return to our topic and the use of civil government by professors of Christianity to rule over or interfere with the assembly of the saints. We were discussing the Donatists in the days of Augustine. Baptists have generally recognized the Donatists as their forefathers. The noted Baptist Charles Spurgeon, for example, said the following: And now, it seems to me, at this day, when any say to us, "You, as a denomination, what great names can you mention? what fathers can you speak of?" we may reply, "More than any other under heaven, for we are the old apostolic Church that have never bowed to the yoke of princes yet; we, known among men, in all ages, by various names, such as Donatists, Novatians, Paulicians, Petrobrussians, Cathari, Arnoldists, Hussites, Waldenses, Lollards, and Anabaptists, have always contended for the purity of the Church, and her distinctness and separation from human government." Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit, 1861, Sermon 424. The famous Baptist historian David Benedict did not include the Donatists in his earlier histories of the Baptists due to the massive negative comments by the Protestant and Catholic historians. (Benedict wrote his earlier two volume history of the Baptist in 1813 and the one volume edition later in 1848.) However, after much study he wrote his book entitled the History of the Donatists in 1875 proving that they were "grossly misrepresented" (as well as the Manichees) "as given by Augustine." Benedict further stated in his book Fifty Years Among the Baptist, pp. 267-268, the following: The history of the Donatists cost me a great amount of labor, and the facts which I have collected from the writings of Optatus, Augustine, and the numerous editors of their works, respecting the character, the publications, the sufferings, and the number of this people, and also their influence in the support of evangelical principles, have far exceeded my most sanguine expectations. I had supposed that no vestiges remained of the literary productions of that large class of able men who are known to have existed among the Donatists; but on this point I was agreeably disappointed, since I found in the works of Augustine an abundance of quotations from Donatist authors, in the veritable Latin in which they wrote, in defense of their own principles and pursuits, and in condemnation of the corruptions and persecutions of their Catholic opponents. This is quite different from Goodwin's quote above where he said, "I have examined diligently the writings of Austin; among them I find the highest venom of their opinions to lie in this, and it is high enough, —if we may

know men by the writings of their adversaries against them, for there is none of their own writings extant ….” I regret to say that our time is exhausted for today. The Lord willing, we will continue in our next lesson by further examining the controversy between the Donatists and Augustine and his desire to remove them by civil powers.

The Christian and Civil Government (17th)

The study today continues in supplying some history of the dichotomy regarding the Christian assembly and civil government as addressed by the Protestants and Baptists.) In our last study, we began a presentation from history of the dichotomy regarding the Christian assembly and civil government as addressed by the Protestants and the Baptists. It was shown that this diversity goes back at least to the days of Augustine and the Donatists. In reality, persecution among professing Christians began with the emperor Constantine when he professed the Catholic faith. However, the Catholics and Protestants throughout the history of Christianity repeatedly look to Augustine as one of their champions. While there are some things that Augustine believed and wrote that may be worth reading and studying, it is important to know that he was an advocate of using civil government to eradicate those who differed from him and to enforce his religious views on others. One such group of believers that Augustine sought to remove was the Donatists. In our previous podcast, we quoted from John Owen and Thomas Goodwin of their ill regards of the Donatists. Thomas Goodwin said of them, “I find the highest venom of their opinions to lie in this, and it is high enough … they denied the church universal, they denied that the church was anywhere but in that part of Africa where they were.” Goodwin also stated, “I have examined diligently the writings of Austin” and further said, “if we may know men by the writings of their adversaries against them, for there is none of their own writings extant.” In other words, Goodwin’s opinion of the Donatists was derived solely from what Austin (Augustine) said against them. However, David Benedict, a renowned Baptist historian, after much study wrote the History of the Donatists in 1875 proving that they were “grossly misrepresented … as given by Augustine” and spoke of “their influence in the support of evangelical principles.” To further illustrate Augustine’s position supporting the use of civil government to suppress those who differed with him and his followers and to show the “evangelical principles” of the Donatists from Benedict’s History of the Donatists. Obviously, we are unable to supply a lot of details from Benedict’s history and there is no way we can do justice to the valuable information in it as we endeavor to provide concise, clear, and informative history in a short podcast. Equally, we will not supply proof supplied by Benedict to show the

"evangelical principles" of the Donatists. Needless to say, I would highly recommend studying Benedict's History of the Donatists for a more complete picture. Therefore, we will seek to limit our quotes to the subject matter at hand, which is the use of civil government in religious affairs. Hopefully, we will give a lucid picture without being too tedious. We mentioned above that persecution among professed Christians actually began with Constantine. After supply details of persecution of the Donatists under Constantine, Benedict summarized with the following: This was the first great temporal state ruler who embraced the Christian cause, and his bad example in dealing with the Donatists has been followed, and very often much surpassed, by countless numbers of professedly Christian rulers in all succeeding ages. While such a statement is highly discreditable to christianity itself, that is still more so which places the clergy, in most cases, at the bottom of persecution. P. 13. There were other Catholics involved in the controversies between the Donatists and the Catholics but we will essentially limit our historical information with that revolving around Augustine since he is most notable in history. During this time, the Theodosian Code published 438 AD, decreed a find of ten pounds of gold against the ministers or preachers of all "heretics." In the beginning of the controversy with the Catholics, the Donatists were not considered to be heretical, but Benedict said "Augustine appears to have been the first who attempted to subject them to the penalties of the Theodosian code." P. 39. On page 112, Benedict wrote, "But to the old warrior, Boniface, Augustine sent his largest treatise about punishing the Donatists, not so much for heresy, as he admitted to the count that they had nothing in common with the Arians, but for their impious dissension from the Catholic church." As previously stated, time does not permit to give massive quotes to show the "evangelical principles" of the Donatists. Benedict supplies that in his book with quotes from debates between the Donatists and Augustine and other Catholics. Our topic revolves around the use of civil government to persecute religions of differing beliefs as introduced by the Catholics with Augustine and later adopted by the reformers in the reformation. That the Catholics persecuted any and all who differed with them by torture of the most horrible inventions and even unto death during the inquisition is so documented by various histories that I do not think any documentation needs to be given for this. Many of the reformers too suffered greatly at the hands of the Catholics. We plan to say more about it later but at this time we will give some information to show that the reformers also used civil government to persecute the Anabaptists who were among the forefathers of the Baptists. It is true that the category of Anabaptists often includes any group that differed from the Catholics or Reformers; therefore, the orthodox Baptists did not claim any and all Anabaptists. In fact, the 1644 London Baptist Confession of Faith stated on the title page of the

confession, “The CONFESSION OF FAITH Of those CHURCHES which are commonly (though falsly [sic.]) called ANABAPTISTS.” Nevertheless, the forefathers of the Baptists were grouped together with all Anabaptists and spoken of by their enemies in a demeaning way. At this time we will show that the main heads of the reformation believed and practiced using civil government to persecute those who differed from them, including the Baptists. It is too time consuming to document historically of the use of civil powers by religious institutions for every generation or age. There are abundant histories on both sides to show such persecutions by the Catholics during the times of the inquisition and the wars that were fought between the Catholics and Protestants during the reformation for the advancement of their particular religious beliefs. Equally, intermingled with times of the inquisition was the period of the Crusades which were for the purpose of advancing religion with the use of the sword. While it is not our purpose to denigrate or deny God using such men during the times of the reformation, we shall show the consequences of believing that civil government is to be used to be a “nursing father” to religion as witnessed in the lives of some of the leading men. First, this was witnessed with Martin Luther. Sylvester Hassell stated in his History of the Church of God, p. 381 the following: The gladness manifested by the genuine Baptists of that day, upon the ascension of Constantine to the throne, was therefore soon turned into sorrow, when they found he had become their enemy, and persecuted them as the heathen rulers had persecuted Christians before. A similar scene appeared in after ages, when the voice of Martin Luther and his colleagues shook the thrones of popes and emperors, and proclaimed liberty of conscience to all mankind. The poor persecuted Baptists rallied to his support, and rejoiced to think that the day of their deliverance had come. But they soon went away sorrowful when they discovered that the anathemas of Luther were as violently hurled at them as those of Leo had been against him, and eventually both Catholics and Lutherans joined hands in persecuting Baptists. In writing about a group which he deemed as heretical called the Winckelpredigten, Luther wrote that they “are in no case to be tolerated …. These are the thieves and murderers of whom Christ spoke in John 7 …. They must neither be tolerated nor listened to, even though they seek to teach the pure Gospel, yes, even if they are angelic and simon-pure Gabriels from heaven …. If he refuses this then let the magistrate consign the scamp into the hands of his proper master — whose name is Meister Hans. ‘Meister Hans’ is a euphemism for the hangman!” The Reformers and Their Stepchildren, Leonard Verduin, pp. 184-185. Regarding another party which were considered to be heretical according to Luther, he said, “I, Martin Luther, have shed the blood of the rebellious peasants; for I commanded them to be killed. Their blood is indeed upon my head; but I put it upon the Lord God, by whose command I spoke.” From A History of the

Baptists by John T. Christian, Volume 1, p.156. Christian referenced John Alzog's Universal Church History, III, 221, 222. Dublin, 1888 edition where Alzog referenced Luther's Table Talk, 276 from the Eisleben edition. Obviously, other quotes could be supplied to substantiate Luther's belief that the magistrates or civil government has the authority to punish those who differed with him regarding the preaching of the gospel. It is interesting that Luther even questioned the salvation of Zwingli. In fact, he said, "I wish from my heart Zuinglius" [an older spelling of Zwingli] "could be saved, but I fear the contrary; for Christ has said, that those who deny him shall be damned." The Table Talk of Martin Luther edited by Thomas S. Kepler, p. 331. I thought this rather strange since Luther was "persuaded that Ahab was saved …." Ibid, P. 264. However, our time is up for today. The Lord willing, we will continue in our next broadcast showing that other reformers shared Luther's principles.

The Christian and Civil Government (18th)

The study today continues to supply history from the lives of Zwingli and Calvin regarding the Christian assembly and civil government as addressed by the Protestants and Baptists.) From previous podcasts we noted the connection of civil government and religion with the Catholics in the time of Augustine and the growth of such practices as displayed in the inquisition, the Crusades, the various wars among the Protestants and Catholics and after the time of the Reformation, and by supplying quotes regarding Martin Luther and his plain agreement that civil government should exercise its power in punishing heretics as defined by him. Today we will provide more information showing the historic beliefs of other leaders of the Reformation and their influence with the stated doctrine as previously provided from the Protestants confessions not only from the past but including today. Historically Baptists did not believe or practice the use of civil government in advancing their religious beliefs, but, sad to say, many professing Baptists currently are adopting the Protestant ideology in part regarding the use of the Bible to define civil government. Little do they realize that they are denying their Baptist heritage and are more and more accepting the Catholic-Protestant principle regarding the civil magistrate governing in the affairs of religion. However, before I digress too much, allow me to provide the history of other leaders of the Reformation and their views of the subject at hand. During the day of Martin Luther, another reformer of influence was Huldrych (or Ulrich) Zwingli. He was born in 1484 which was the same year that Luther was born. Zwingli resided in Zurich and through his influence the town Council issued a decree against Anabaptists of "death by drowning as the penalty for

all those who persisted in the heresy. During the months which followed the Anabaptist leaders were all imprisoned, executed or banished." Zwingli and Bullinger, G. W. Bromiley, editor, p. 120. The "heresy" referred to was rebaptizing those who joined themselves to the Anabaptists but were previously baptized or sprinkled as infants or those baptized by the Protestants or Catholics. The first martyr of drowning in Zurich is described by Leonard Verduin in his book The Anatomy of a Hybrid, pp. 168-169, as follows: He was apprehended for complicity in the new "heresy," was tried, found guilty, and on January 5, 1527, was liquidated. The mode of Manz's execution was novel. For centuries the empire-church had rid itself of "heretics" by burning them, a mode of execution derived from John 15:6 (via the convenient exegetical form for which the old hybrid, beginning with Augustine, was noted): "Men gather them and cast them into the fire and they are burned." But Felix Manz was drowned. He was placed in a rowboat with his wrists firmly tied together and passed over his cocked knees, and a heavy piece of wood thrust between his bent knees and his elbows. Trussed up in this manner—making swimming impossible—he was rowed to the other side of the Limmat River, thrown overboard, and thus made to perish in Limmat's water." Quoting again Verduin in another book, The Reformers and Their Stepchildren, p. 274, regarding Zwingli: It was one of the bitter ironies of history that Huldreich Zwingli, the man who had served as midwife at the birth of Protestantism, had had a hand in welding the sword once more to the Cross of Christ, himself died on the battlefield, caught in the traffic between two "Christian magistrates," each doing his duty in regard to religion. Many other quotes could be supplied of other men of the Protestant Reformation to clearly show their belief that the sword of civil government is to be used to advance the "purity" of their religious views and to suppress unto death those who differed from them and labeled as "heretics." And sadly, today, many advance ideas and opinions that not only border on the philosophy of Constantinianism but too often accept it fully. While this is expected of Catholics and Protestants, it ought not to be hinted at by any Baptist. However, before leaving the historical milieu of the Reformation, I believe it is essential that we document the position of John Calvin on this topic. Because of the great influence of Calvin during the Reformation and afterwards, it is important to devote more attention to the life of him and his connection regarding the use of civil government to safeguard "religious truth" and to restrain "heresy." To do this, I believe I can do no better than to quote at length again from Leonard Verduin's book The Anatomy of a Hybrid, from pp. 198-211. Calvin was unlike the rest of the reformers in that he did far less of an about-face: with him there was not such a clear swing to the right as there was with the other reformers. Some would argue that the otherness of the Genevan reformer was due to his logical mind. But it is rather to be

ascribed to the simple fact that Calvin appeared on the scene too late to share in the ambiguities of the earliest moments of the Reformation. His career began after the die had been cast; the bifurcation [division, split—JKB] had already occurred. This does not mean that Calvin was not influenced by the pre-Reformation rival church in any way; it is altogether likely that he too owed a debt to it. In his biography, Beza says that "he received his first impressions of true religion of Olivetan." Olivetan, who was Calvin's cousin, had been active in the Waldensian church, was even a Waldensian pastor, according to some. The first Bible in French translation printed at Geneva was the work of Olivetan. Also, while Calvin was engrossed in Seneca (from whose grasp he never fully escaped) while a student in Paris, he lived with Etienne de la Forge, another Waldensian. Calvin acknowledged (to Czerwenka, a delegate sent to Strasbourg from the Bohemian rival church) that he too "was at one time a Waldensian." Perhaps the rival church, against which Calvin raged, represented his bad conscience in that it reminded him of his own switch from a Picardian past to the magisterial reformation, a step to which his contact with the Renaissance mentality had taken him. However, the side chosen by Calvin in the controversy concerning Corpus Christi [body of Christ—JKB] versus Corpus Christianum [Christian body—JKB] is not in doubt: he stood squarely with the magisterial reformers. In fact, it can be said that he was the most magisterial of all. Let us look first at Calvin's doctrine of the church: in setting forth his views on the church in the Institutes, the first thing he wished to make plain is this: The Scriptures speak of the Church in two ways; sometimes when they speak of the Church into which none are admitted but those who by the gift of adoption are the sons of God and by the sanctification of the Spirit are true members of Christ … often too by the name Church is designated the whole body of mankind who by baptism are initiated into the faith; by partaking of the Lord's Supper profess unity in true doctrine and charity, agree in holding the Word of the Lord and observe the ministry which Christ has appointed for the preaching of it. In this Church there is a large admixture of hypocrites who have nothing of Christ but the name and outward appearance, ambitious, avaricious, envious, evil-speaking men, some of impure lives moreover. A much simpler way of saying this would be that the church both is and is not Corpus Christi, is and is not Corpus Christianum, and that society both is and is not composite, is and is not unanimous. Calvin does not recognize a church that is not the front side of the state (or vice versa). It is clear that Calvin wanted to retain the everybody-embracing church and at the same time stay out of trouble with the New Testament. He found himself in the same dilemma into which Augustine had worked himself a millennium earlier. And Calvin made grateful use of every device Augustine had invented to get out of his self-imposed difficulty. Calvin also took

refuge in the device of a visible-invisible configuration of the church; in fact, Calvin offered to fix the ratio between the two "churches" by referring to "a small and contemptible number hidden in a huge multitude, a few grains of wheat hidden in a large pile of chaff." Following Augustine, Calvin also made abundant use of the concept of election in eternity to bolster the idea of a church that was indiscernible, "as it really is before God." Like Augustine, Calvin fought with all his might against the idea that the church is discernible—in the life-style of its members. We plan to continue quoting from Verduin in our next podcast to provide further insight to Calvin and his foundational premises that caused him to support and practice the merging of civil government with religious practices. So far, it is seen from the time of Augustine that not only is the issue of churchstate belief and practice is essential to be define from the Scriptures, but that the "doctrine of the church" is essential to clearly understand the place of the civil magistrate. Other doctrines are also vital to the overall topic, but time will not permit us to examine all of them. Nevertheless, our time is up for today. May the Lord bless you as you continue to seek for a better understanding of the Holy Scriptures.

The Christian and Civil Government (19th)

The study today continues by supplying more information concerning John Calvin and his contribution to the reformed teachings and practices regarding the civil government's role in punishing "heretics.") In our last podcast, we supplied information about Zwingli and his belief that civil government is to guard the truth of the gospel and punish "heretics" which he viewed those who differed from him regarding the interpretation of the Scriptures regarding some subjects. For example, for those who did not agree with him regarding baptism, he and the council at Zurich drown Baptists in the Limmat River. Also, we began studying somewhat the life and views of John Calvin by quoting at length from Leonard Verduin's book The Anatomy of a Hybrid, from pages 198-211. We were showing that Calvin, like the Catholics before the Reformation, and the Reformers during the Reformation, followed the teaching of Augustine against the Donatists in his introduction of a universal invisible "church" and a "visible church" residing within the invisible one. If you remember, in a previous podcast we quoted Thomas Goodwin where he said of the Donatists, "I find the highest venom of their opinions to lie in this, and it is high enough … they denied the church universal." Regarding this, we will continue quoting Verduin. Calvin did not object to having the church defined as concerning Corpus Christi, [body of Christ—JKB] provided that in the next breath it was defined as Corpus Christianum [Christian body—JKB]—a clear case of trying to blow hot

and cold at once. As the German theologian Wernle has pointed out, there were in Calvin's mind "three concepts of the church, each of which spoke its piece to him: 1) the invisible church of the elect, 2) the visible church held together by Word and sacrament, 3) the church of the saints with its criterion of the inoffensive life and the employment of discipline to keep it free of offence." And it is understandable that a contemporary scholar, Arthur Cushman McGiffert, come to the conclusion that "Calvin's doctrine of the Church was a composite of many and diverse and inconsistent elements, and because of this, confusion concerning the meaning, the place, and the purpose of the Church has since his day reigned almost everywhere in the Reformed wing of Protestantism." (One finds it difficult to disagree with this, except to say that it is not necessary to single out "the Reformed wing of Protestantism," since the same confusion reigns in all other "wings" of the Reformation.) It has been said that it is the conception of a free church consisting of freely committed and practicing believers, as opposed to the inclusive state church of the Catholics and most Protestants, that formed the basic doctrine of the Anabaptists. If this is true, then we know what Calvin's attitude toward the new rival church was bound to be—utter disagreement. Verduin's assessment of the situation should open the door for us as to why civil government considers it legitimate to impose itself on the activities and doctrines of religious institutions, particularly those under the umbrella Christianity. With the Catholic-Protestant doctrine of the connection of "church and state" being generally accepted by all denominations, including the mainstream Baptists, is it any wonder that congregations in general have bowed to the pressure of the government in closing their doors under the current "crisis" of today? Regardless of one's opinion of Richard Weaver's philosophy, the title of his book certainly demonstrates that Ideas Have Consequences. However, in order to paint a clearer picture of the times of Calvin, we will continue quoting Verduin. In 1527, the Anabaptists held a secret conference at Schleitheim (near Schafhausen), where they drew up a brief credal statement, which Calvin somewhat later undertook to refute item by item. The Schleitheim statement contained among other things a definition of the church, the issue that was central in the bifurcation [a division into two parts—JKB] which had taken place. … Schleitheim defined the church as "a fellowship of saints, namely, of all believing and regenerate Christians and children of God born again from above by the Word and the Spirit." Calvin "refuted" this statement at some length, offering as a substitute for its definition of the church "that mass among whom the Word of God is purely preached and the sacraments administered according to the institution of Christ." … The Schleitheim confession also contained a definition of the state, one that likewise elicited Calvin's ire because it went in opposite direction of his own. For Calvin the divinely intended

function of the state was "not merely … to enable men to breathe, eat, drink, and be warmed … but it is that no idolatry, no blasphemy against the name of God, no calumnies against his truth, nor other offense to religion, break out and be disseminated among the people. …" Calvin's view of the state was that of Seneca, so that he declared: Wherefore no man can doubt that civil authority is, in the sight of God, not only sacred and lawful, but most sacred, and by far the most honorable of all stations in mortal life." It is no surprise that he took great pains to "refute" Schleitheim at this point especially. It had said: "The sword is an ordinance outside the perfection of Christ; princes and rulers are ordained for the punishment of evil-doers and for putting such to death. Within the perfection of Christ excommunication is the ultimate in punishment, physical death not included in it." … As mentioned above, Calvin wrote a "refutation" of Schleitheim's definition of the regnum (or, as it was called in those days, the "magistracy"). In the course of his attempted refutation, he quoted I Corinthians 12:21, where we read: "The eye cannot say to the hand, nor the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you.'" It would be difficult to tip one's hand more conclusively than Calvin does here: for his quoting of this text in this argument shows clearly that he considered church and state to be two parts of the same body, …. It is tempting to quote much more from Verduin. I believe his books are well worth reading for those who desire to get a fuller and more detail understanding of the overall subject at hand. After giving more details of the conflicts between Calvin and the Anabaptists, Verduin gives this summary. In light of what we have observed in Calvin thus far, it is not really surprising that he endorsed the notion that it is the duty of the regnum to put heretics to death. He wrote: "Whosoever shall now contend that it is unjust to put heretics and blasphemers to death will, knowingly or unknowingly, incur their very guilt. This is not laid down on human authority; it is God that speaks and prescribes it as a perpetual rule for the Church." The burning of Servetus was the logical outcome of this thinking. Now that the stage is set somewhat to understand the times and beliefs of the reformers under the influence of Calvin in Geneva, we will direct our attention more specifically to Michael Servetus and his execution. It is generally accepted that Servetus was guilty of heresy, specifically regarding the doctrine of the Trinity. It is also to be noted that Calvin tried to prevent Servetus from being burned to death and executed in a different way; nevertheless, Calvin did want Servetus killed because he believed him to be a "heretic." In fact, Verduin quoted Calvin as saying regarding Servetus, "If ever he comes to the city and my authority then counts for aught, I will never let him get out of the city alive." The Anatomy of a Hybrid, p. 207. In The Reformers and Their Stepchildren, pp. 51-52, Verduin wrote of Servetus, "Here was a man who posed no threat to civil serenity in Geneva—unless of course it be granted that anyone

who deviates from the orthodoxy exposed by the State is ipso facto a threat to that civil serenity. Servetus stated no parades, made no speeches, carried no placards, had no political ambitions. He did have some erratic ideas touching the doctrine of the Trinity, and he entertained some deviating notions concerning baptism, especially infant baptism." Servetus was not living in Geneva; he was only passing through the city when he was arrested and burned to death for his religious views. The burning of Servetus was considered as being the correct and proper thing to do throughout the ranks of the reformers. Melanchton, wrote to Calvin and congratulated him on it. He said, "To you the Church owes now and always will owe a debt of gratitude. … I affirm that your magistrates did the right thing when they put the blasphemer to death." The Anatomy of a Hybrid, pp. 207-208. Since John Calvin is considered by many to be a principle figure in the Reformation and the overall system of theology of the sovereignty of God is often identified after him under the title of Calvinism, I thought it profitable to give considerable time and information about him. However, our time is up for today. The Lord willing, we will continue our study regarding the role of civil government and religion in our next lesson.

The Christian and Civil Government (20th)

The study today turns from the time of the Reformation to the early days of the colonies of the United States of America and the struggles for religious freedom.) In previous lessons we gave a brief overview of the role of civil government being used to punish "heretics" as initiated by Augustine and developed and practiced by the Catholics and continued by the reformers during and after the Reformation. Before leaving this historical setting, I would like to present an interesting bit of history to show that the Baptists in the reformation were opposed to the civil government being joined to the house of God. Notice the following quote from the Protestant historian, Philip Schaff, in his History of the Christian Church, Volume 8, Chapter 3, and Article 24: Having considered Zwingli's controversy with Romanism, we must now review his conflict with Radicalism, which ran parallel with the former, and exhibits the conservative and churchly side of his reformation. Radicalism was identical with the Anabaptist movement, but the baptismal question was secondary. It involved an entire reconstruction of the Church and of the social order. It meant revolution. The Romanists pointed triumphantly to revolution as the legitimate and inevitable result of the Reformation; but history has proved the difference. Liberty is possible without license, and differs as widely from it as from despotism. Nothing could be clearer, with our Baptist forefathers, "the baptismal question was secondary," and "an entire reconstruction of the Church and of the social order" was deemed paramount toward

the goal of "liberty … without license." In other words, the assembly of the saints is free from the rules, regulations, guidelines, and restraints of civil government. Nevertheless, one wonders how much is accredited to the belief and influences that civil government should be involved in religious activities in that many ministers are required to seek a license in many states before their performing marriages, or other religious functions. History clearly shows that in the early days of this country that ministers were required to get a license from the government before they could not only perform marriages, but to preach the gospel as well. We plan to say more about this going forward. We have chosen to omit much of the struggles for religious freedom in the countries of the United Kingdom and focus our attention closer to home. With this being said, we will turn our attention to the struggles regarding the influence of civil magistrates upon the congregation of the Lord as seen in the colonies in the early days of America and the Constitution of the United States of America. In order to properly explain this, it is necessary that we provide some historic background of America from the earliest days. While the Spanish Catholics were some of the earliest to arrive on the continent of North America, we will center our studies around the early settlers from England and the New England colonies. These would generally be identified as the thirteen original colonies. While many of the settlers came to the new country for adventure and wealth, there were others who came here to avoid the pressures of religion from England and the European countries. In Virginia there was a strong influence of the Anglican Church of England from which the Episcopalian Church was founded. In Massachusetts and the Plymouth Colony, there was a strong influence of the Puritans from which the Congregationalist Church was derived in some of the northern colonies. Even Maryland was founded to provide safety for the Catholics from the Protestants. It was through the influence of William Penn that Pennsylvania was established to provide a safe haven for the Quakers and anyone else who desired to live there, though struggles abounded there. Presbyterians and Baptists too came to the new land, but there was not any colony that centered around their religious beliefs initially. While Pennsylvania provided for religious freedom and a democratic type of government, the government was essentially run and controlled by the Quakers. After a new constitution was signed in 1701, Sydney G. Fisher wrote the following in The Quaker Colonies, pp. 73- 74. This book is from the "Yale Chronicles of America Series" edited by Allen Johnson. The Church of England people in Pennsylvania entertained great hopes of this proposal to turn the proprietary colonies into royal provinces. Under such a change, while the Quakers might still have an influence in the Legislature, the Crown would probably give the executive offices to Churchmen. They therefore labored hard to discredit the Quakers. They kept harping

on the absurdity of a set of fanatics attempting to govern a colony without a militia and without administering oaths of office or using oaths in judicial proceedings. To further verify Quakers ruling in civil government, notice the words of Isaac Backus (1724-1806), from the "Author's Preface to Volume III" as found after the preface to Volume II in volume 2 of his History of New England Baptists, with notes by David Weston, as reprinted by Arno Press in 1969. The Quakers hold that their children are born in their church, which, by a secret policy, has been upheld as one great body in Europe and America; and they held so much with Britain in the late war, that two of them were hanged, and others were banished, by the government of Pennsylvania, as enemies of their country. But as the Baptist hold all religion to be personal, between God and individuals, and that all church power is in each particular church, it is impossible for them ever to form any great body, that can be dangerous to civil government. The Baptists and Quakers have therefore been unjustly ranked together, when their principles are opposite to each other. And when the church of Christ shall come to be governed wholly by his laws, independent of all the inventions of men, all sectarian distinctions will cease, and wars will come to an end. So while seeking freedom from civil government and seeking to provide freedom of religion, there was still a union of religion and civil government in this Quaker colony. Therefore, the only religion that sought religious freedom that did not unite with civil government was the Baptists. Going forward we will witness that the Baptists not only suffered throughout in the new land but they were instrumental in establishing religious freedom as recognized in the Constitution of the United States of America. To give an overview of the colonies in their early days, we will give a quote of David Weston as found in The Story of the Baptists by Richard B Cook on page 204. When colonists settled America, they brought with them across the Atlantic, the system of legislation for consciences. Massachusetts and Connecticut fined, imprisoned, whipped, banished or even put to death those who opposed the established orthodoxy. Catholic Maryland, fined, whipped or banished all who uttered reproachful words against the Virgin Mary and put to death a denier of the Trinity. Virginia had her nine pound tobacco tax for the support of Episcopacy." From this we see that religious persecution was well alive among the colonists in the early days and civil government as outlined by the Catholics and further advanced by the reformers was used to exercise "church discipline" to assure purity of "doctrine." As Weston further stated, "When Roger Williams, banished from Massachusetts because he was a Baptist, founded a settlement in Rhode Island, then for the first time in history of the world, there was a civil government which claimed no jurisdiction in religion. The great principle of religious freedom was first practically applied by Roger Williams." While it is debated by some as to whether

Roger Williams was really a Baptist, it is generally believed that he was. Obviously, it is not the purpose of this study to determine that. Nevertheless, the principle of religious freedom from civil government as established in the colony of Rhode Island was that as believed and practiced by the Baptists down through the ages. It did not originate with Roger Williams. Nevertheless, the colony of Rhode Island cannot be overestimated in the founding of religious freedom in America as well as the idea of such freedom throughout the world. In future studies we plan to show some of the historic details of the struggles and persecutions of Baptists in the new land and their influence in securing religious freedom as outlined in the Constitution of the United States. However, we have exhausted our time for today's study. Farewell.

The Christian and Civil Government (21th)

The study today begins with the struggles for religious freedom in the United States of America as it relates to the colony of Massachusetts.) We left our last podcast saying that we plan to show some of the historic details of the struggles and persecutions of Baptists in the new land and their influence in securing religious freedom as outlined in the Constitution of the United States. These examples will not be exhaustive. This should be obvious. Also I would like to say again that the exhaustive labors of Roger Williams (with the invaluable help of John Clarke) and the founding of the colony of Rhode Island established true religious freedom cannot be overestimated. However, due to the general knowledge and popularity of this truth, our attention will be devoted to some of the other colonies and their struggles for religious freedom. Likewise they will not necessarily be presented in a chronological order. Though Virginia was the first colony, we will look firstly at Massachusetts. It is without question that the people on the Mayflower believed that the civil government had the power to regulate and enforce religious beliefs by law. In part, the Mayflower Compact reads as follows: "Having undertaken for the Glory of God and advancement of the Christian Faith and Honour of our King and Country, a Voyage to plant the First Colony in the Northern Parts of Virginia, do by these presents solemnly and mutually in the presence of God and one of another, Covenant and Combine ourselves together in a Civil Body Politic, for our better ordering and preservation and furtherance of the ends aforesaid; and by virtue hereof to enact, constitute and frame such just and equal Laws, Ordinances, Acts, Constitutions and Offices from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the Colony, unto which we promise all due submission and obedience. In witness whereof we have hereunder subscribed our names at Cape Cod, the 11th of November, in the year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord King James, of

England, France and Ireland the eighteenth, and of Scotland the fiftyfourth. Anno Domini 1620." Note that it reads "…for the Glory of God and advancement of the Christian Faith … do by these presents solemnly and mutually in the presence of God and one of another, Covenant and Combine ourselves together in a Civil Body Politic, for our better ordering and preservation and furtherance of the ends aforesaid; and by virtue hereof to enact, constitute and frame such just and equal Laws, Ordinances, Acts, Constitutions and Offices from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the Colony, unto which we promise all due submission and obedience." Twenty years later, in 1641, Nathaniel Ward, a minister, compiled the Massachusetts Body of Liberties and Article 94, Section 3 stated, "If any man shall Blaspeme the name of god, the father, Sonne or Holie ghost, with direct, expresse, presumptuous or high handed blasphemie, or shall curse god in the like manner, he shall be put to death." However, in 1780, the first Constitution for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts was drawn up by John Adams. Article 2 stated, "It is the right as well as the duty of all men in society, publicly, and at stated seasons to worship the Supreme Being, the great Creator and Preserver of the universe. And no subject shall be hurt, molested, or restrained, in his person, liberty, or estate, for worshipping God in the manner and season most agreeable to the dictates of his own conscience; or for his religious profession or sentiments; provided he doth not disturb the public peace, or obstruct others in their religious worship." As we know, in 1791, the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America was passed declaring, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances." And yet, in 1917, Article 46, Section 1, of the Massachusetts' Constitution was ratified and adopted which stated, "No law shall be passed prohibiting the free exercise of religion." While a law for the exercise of freedom of religion was not established in Massachusetts until 1917, this was not done for almost 300 years after the Mayflower Compact and some 137 years after the first constitution of Massachusetts and 126 years after the Constitution of the United States. Nevertheless, religion fines are still written into the Constitution for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The General Laws for Massachusetts, Part IV, Title I, Chapter 272, Section 36, reads as follows: "Whoever wilfully blasphemes the holy name of God by denying, cursing or contumeliously reproaching God, his creation, government or final judging of the world, or by cursing or contumeliously reproaching Jesus Christ or the Holy Ghost, or by cursing or contumeliously reproaching or exposing to contempt and ridicule, the holy word of God contained in the holy scriptures shall be punished by imprisonment in jail for not more than one

year or by a fine of not more than three hundred dollars, and may also be bound to good behavior." (See the supplied link for more details: https://blog.mass.gov/masslawlib/legal-history/massachusetts-declarationof-rights-article2/#:~:text=Massachusetts%20Constitution%2C%20Articles%20of%20Amendment,the%20free%20exerc ise%20of%20religion.%E2%80%9D.) Obviously, the God under consideration is Jehovah or the God of the Bible because Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost or Spirit are also mentioned. It is likely that other states have such laws on their books that are left over from the early days of their establishment. Further research, not only with Massachusetts but other colonies as well, will show that the liberty of religious worship was at first limited to the "Christian" religion. And while John Adams was liberal in this religious liberty somewhat in 1780, he did not share this view in his earlier days. A wealth of information can be supplied to show the persecution of the Baptists, and others, in the early days of Massachusetts and the struggle for religious freedom. However, we will limit our study of the colony to three men—Obadiah Holmes and Isaac Backus and John Leland. However, the influence of Leland will also be seen as we study other states. Bypassing a massive amount of interesting information regarding the life of Obadiah Holmes (1607- 1682) and the historical setting of the colony of Massachusetts and the surrounding colonies, we will try to give a snapshot of Holmes and his life. For a fuller history surrounding the life of Holmes I would recommend the book entitled Baptist Piety: The Last Will and Testimony of Obadiah Holmes by Edwin S. Gaustad. It may be asked what is the importance of looking into the life of an obscure Baptist preacher that lived in the 1600's and the connection with our subject at hand and modern day Baptist regarding reformation doctrine? Much in every way and, the Lord willing, we will show this in future studies because we are approaching near the end of our time for today. "On July 16, 1651, John Clarke, John Crandall, and Obadiah Holmes journeyed from Newport [Rhode Island] into Massachusetts, coming to the town of Lynn on the ninetheeth of that month. … The purpose of the visit … was to bring spiritual comfort and communion to one William Witter, a blind and aged fellow Baptist who had invited the three to come to his home. … On Sunday, July 20, as Clarke began to expound upon the temptations to error all around and upon 'that word of promise made to those that keep the word of His patience,' two constables entered the house. 'With their clamorous tongues' they interrupted Clarke's discourse, 'telling us that they were come with authority from the Magistrate to apprehend us.' Clarke asked to see the authority for so rude an intrusion, 'whereupon they plucked forth their warrant" and read it." Baptist Piety, pp. 22-23. (I am quoting from Gaustad's work, but fuller details are found in John Clarke's Ill Newes From New-England: or A Narative (sic.) of New-England Persecution, written in 1652.

Clarke wrote to England seeking help from parliament concerning persecution in the new world. The opening sentence in "The Epistle Dedicatory" reads as follows: "To the Right Honorable the House of Parliament, and Council of State for the Commonwealth of England, The author humbly craves of that mighty Counseller, that Price of peace, a large donation of the spirit of Consell, and of the spirit of courage, with a suitable and happy success for the Peace, Liberty¸ and enlargement of these three Nations." {From my photocopy from microfilm of Ill Newes, which I assume may still be obtained from Xerox-University Microfilm, Ann Arbor, Michigan. There are copies on the web and reprints from books of this work, as well. A pdf file of this work may be found at this link: http://elbourne.org/baptist/ofbl_docs/john%20clarke's%20ill%20news%20final.pdf }) While Clarke was giving a narrative of the persecution that was going on in New England in his Ill Newes, Gaustad pointed out from a Puritan work by one of their ministers at that time the primary issue was that of the place of civil government regarding its role in religion. Referring to a work by Thomas Cobbet, Gaustad wrote the following: "This, Cobbet correctly perceived, was the crux of the dispute between the Baptists and the Puritans, whether in London or in Boston. Baptist views on the limit of civil government, more than their views on baptism or church order or human learning or any other single doctrine, was their most distinguishing as well as their most disturbing tenet to the Puritan majority." Baptist Piety, p. 37. We plan to give more information about Thomas Cobbet (or Cobbett) in a future broadcast; however, our time up for today. May God bless you, and farewell.

The Christian and Civil Government (22th)

(The study today continues looking into some of the history of the struggles for religious freedom in the United States of America as it relates to the colony of Massachusetts and the life of Obadiah Holmes.) In our last podcast we noted that the people who came to America on the Mayflower drew up a compact before landing on shore. Most of those who came here were Puritans that had fled England years before and moved to Holland to worship God according to the liberty of their conscience. These same people came to our shores seeking religious freedom and with the view of establishing religious freedom in the new land. However, there were other people on the Mayflower that were of another nature and when it was realized that the charter obtained by the Pilgrims from England did not apply to the area of Cape Cod where they providentially found themselves concluded that "'These people have no charter for a settlement at Cape Cod, and without a charter they have no authority over us. We will, therefore, when we come ashore use our own liberty.'"

The Mayflower Pilgrims, Edmund Janes Carpenter, p. 80. Carpenter further wrote that "Brewster and Carver, Bradford and Winslow, and Standish, mighty with the sword, were equal to this emergency. Upon the lid of Standish's chest … they drew up and signed that immortal Compact of government, by which this company 'solemnly and mutually in the presence of God and of one another,' did 'covenant and combine' themselves 'together into a civill body politick.'" Ibid. Here we see that in their desire to escape the intolerance of liberty of conscience in England, in seeking to remove the influence of civil government, and at the same time desiring to honor God in establishing a society agreeable to His will, they in effect created what they hoped to avoid. Their "civil body politic" was created "for the Glory of God and advancement of the Christian Faith." Before we judge them too severely, allow me to ask, "What would you do under the same circumstances?" In other words, if you found yourself gathered together with a group of likeminded believers and desired to move to some remote location to live together, what compact or order of government would you create for the peace and security of the whole? If you merely wanted to function as a congregation of the Lord then the form of government is established in the Holy Scriptures for that, but congregational government only applies to the membership, I Corinthians 5:11-13. However, when a group of individual people or citizens that is composed of believers and non-believers, or a group of professed believers of different faiths, seeks to form a civil government it is more complicated. What law can be established to secure the liberty and rights for all? In my opinion, I cannot of think of a better one than that of Article 1 of The Bill of Rights of the Constitution of the United States: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people to peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances." And as we shall see, if the Lord wills, in future broadcasts, that this article is largely the results of our Baptist forefathers. However, it must never be forgotten that we live in a fallen and sinful world and ultimately no civil government will stand when the people are unwilling to abide by the law of the land. Furthermore, for the Christian believer, he knows that ultimately all kingdoms and governments will fall and the only kingdom that will abide forever is the kingdom of God and Caesar has no authority over it or the congregation of the Lord which resides within God's kingdom. And while we live in this fallen world, we must ever be mindful that the house of God is not of civil government, and yet, the individual member of the congregation is a citizen of the community (town, city, county, state, and nation) and must assess before the Lord his place in civil government for the benefit of each citizen in a just and equitable way. He may or may not take an active part, but

whatever position he takes it must be that which he determines by a prayerful studying of the Holy Scriptures and a diligent seeking the face of God. Indeed, much, much more could be said regarding this matter, but we should return to the subject that we concluded in our previous podcast. We ended that podcast with John Clarke, John Crandall, and Obadiah Holmes being arrested on the Lord's Day, in the home of William Witter, a blind man living in the town of Lynn, Massachusetts. They were first taken to Anchor Tavern, the local ale-house, to be kept to appear before the local magistrate the next day. Since it was the Lord's Day, it was suggested that they be taken to the Puritan (Congregational) meeting house since worship services were going on there. The ministers were Samuel Whiting and Thomas Cobbett. While being marched to the Puritan worship, Clarke told the constable that if they were forced to attend their "meeting, we shall declare our dissent from you both by word and gesture." Baptist Piety, p. 24. Upon entering the meeting house, they removed their hats and sat down where they were directed, and then put their hats back on. At this Robert Bridges, the local magistrate, instructed the constable to "pluck off" their hats. After the conclusion of the worship service (composed of prayer, singing, and preaching) Clarke stood up to explain why they returned their hats to their heads. He said they did not object to what was preached, but they (that is, Clarke, Crandall, and Holmes) were strangers and did not know what the congregation believed and did not know their practice they could not endorse the congregation. At this point the magistrate commanded Clarke to be silent. Then they were taken back to the ale-house and were "watched over that night, as Theeves and Robbers." Ill Newes, pp. 3-4. For more history regarding the trial, we will give the following from Gaustad's Baptist Piety, pp. 24-27. In the morning, after a brief appearance before Robert Bridges in Lynn, the itinerant evangelists were sent to Boston for trial. The charge to the keeper of the Boston prison was that he take custody of "the bodies of John Clarke, Obadiah Holmes, and John Crandall and them to keep until the next County Court to be held at Boston, that they may then and there answer to such complaints as may be alleged against them." This mittimus, or court order for commitment to prison, indicated essentially four complaints against the "strangers." They had offended by a) conducting a private worship service at the same time as the town's public worship; b) "offensively disturbing" the public meeting in Lynn; c) more seriously, "seducing and drawing aside [of] others after their erroneous judgment and practices"; and d) "neglecting or refusing to give in sufficient security for their appearance" at the next meeting of the county court. After the Rhode Island Baptists had spent a week or so in Boston's prison, the day of trial came. The trial itself was so swiftly consummated that the accused hardly knew it was done. We were examined in the morning, wrote Clarke, and sentenced in the afternoon — sentenced

"without producing either accuser, witness, jury, law of God or man. …" In the sentencing, particular emphasis were placed upon the "seducing of others" and notably upon the "rebaptizing" of others. But, insisted the three accused, they were not "re-baptizers," since the baptism which they administered was the only real baptism, infant baptism being no valid ordinance at all. This brand of apologetics only threw the Court into a paroxysm of fury. … The same essential charges were levelled [sic.] against all three men, all of whom fell under the clear proscription of the 1645 law against Anabaptists. The penalty which that law, with equal clarity, provided was banishment. But what sort of punishment is it to "banish" persons who already live in another jurisdiction? Obviously, some other manner of rebuke had to be meted out, whether the law made provision for it or not. Clarke, clearly the spokesman and leader of the group, was fined £20; Crandall, as a tag-along and largely silent companion, was fined only £5. But Obadiah Holmes, already under the cloud of excommunication from the church in Rehoboth, received the largest fine: £30. All the fines provided for a hard alternative: to be paid in full or else the culprit was to be "well whipped." Until the fines were paid or satisfaction otherwise received, all three were to remain in jail.… After another week or ten days in prison, Clarke was released (August 11, 1651) when friends paid his £20 fine. … So only Holmes remained in prison, adamantly refusing to pay his fine or to let others pay it for him. The court's explicit alternative awaited him — to be "well whipped." I regret interrupting the historical setting in the life of Obadiah Holmes and the religious persecution by the civil authorities in the early days of this country. However, our time is up for today and we will continue this narrative in our next podcast. Farewell.

The Christian and Civil Government (23rd)

The study today continues the history of sufferings of Obadiah Holmes in the struggles religious freedom in the United States of America as it relates to the colony of Massachusetts.) In the previous podcast, we interrupted our quoting from Edwin S. Gaustad's book entitled The Last Will and Testimony of Obadiah Holmes regarding the arrest and trial of Holmes along with John Clarke and John Crandall. (Also, further details can be found in John Clarke's Ill Newes From New-England: or A Narative (sic.) of New-England Persecution.) We ended with Holmes still in jail and waiting to be "well whipped" for being involved in religious worship in a private home in Lynn, Massachusetts. At this time we will continue from where we stopped in our last podcast. Holmes recounted his ordeal in a letter to fellow British Baptists John Spilsbury and William Kiffin "and the rest that steadfastly in the order of the gospel which was once delivered unto the saints by Jesus Christ." While still before

the Boston Court in July, Holmes had apparently aroused a special antipathy in John Wilson, pastor of Boston's first church. When he heard his sentence pronounced, Holmes responded that he blessed God that he was "counted worthy to suffer for the name of Jesus, whereupon John Wilson … struck me before the judgment seat and cursed me saying, "The curse of God or Jesus go with thee." The amount of Holmes' fine together with the intensity of animosity he aroused (though Thomas Cobbet vigorously denied that Wilson had stuck him) placed this prisoner in a singular category. He felt even more singular when, after the middle of August, he languished in prison all alone, "deprived of my two loving friends." It was then, wrote Holmes, that "the Adversary stepped in, took hold on my spirit and troubled me for the space of an hour.…" But the spirit of the Comforter drove the Tempter away: it pleased God "to stand at my right hand." During that time when Holmes was alone, from mid-August until September 5, Tempter and Comforter wrestled for his soul. Other friends came to pay the fine, "yet I durst not accept deliverance in such a way." On the morning appointed for his whipping, more friends appeared to offer him some wine "and other comforts, but my resolution was not to drink wine nor strong drink until my punishment were over," lest the world say that he was sustained by anything other than the spirit of God. Then Holmes asked his friends to leave him for a time so that "I might communicate with my God, commit myself to him, and beg strength from him." But even in this final hour the Tempter had not yet surrendered. First, said Satan, think of your reputation, your birth, your breeding, your wife, children, and friends. Swiftly, the sweet answer came: "Tis for the Lord, I must not deny Him before the sons of men." Aha, replied Satan, that is just the point: "Is it for Him and Him alone? is it not rather for thy own or some other's sake? … is it not pride and self at the bottom?" This, Holmes conceded, was a strong temptation indeed; therefore, "I made diligent search after the matter….After a while there was even as it had been a voice from heaven in my very soul, bearing witness with my conscience, that it was not for any man's cast or sake in this world, but for my Lord's case and sake and for Him alone…." Still Satan pressed on: Consider the weakness of the flesh, the strokes of the whip, the pain, the blood….Holmes prayed for courage, for strength "not to shrink or yield to the strokes, or shed tears…." And at length the answer came: Just as you have already surrendered your soul to Me, now surrender your body. "And so I addressed myself in a comely a manner as I could, having such a Lord and Master to serve in this business." The jailer arrived to find a prisoner utterly calm and composed, and "even cheerfulness did come upon me." Holmes was taken outside to the market place, there to await the arrival of the governor. A few moments of awkward silence followed when the Governor did not appear. Finally, Magistrate Increase Nowell told the "executioner" to proceed with his task. Holmes

asked permission to speak. After some dialogue with Holmes and the magistrate, and Holmes not being allowed to speak, the executioner was told to "Do your office!" While Holmes' clothes were being "stripped from him," he said, "I am now come to be baptized in afflictions by your hands, that so I may have further fellowship with my Lord. [I] am not ashamed of His sufferings, for by His stripes am I healed." Continuing quoting from Baptist Piety, (from pages 27-29.) we give the following: As the strokes began to fall, Holmes prayed once more and in truth, he later wrote, I never "had such a spiritual manifestation of God's presence." And though the executioner spat upon his hands, and laid the three-corded whip "with all his strength" thirty times across the prisoner's bare back, yet "in a manner [I] felt it not." When the whipping was finished and Holmes was untied from the post, he turned to the magistrates and said, "You have struck me as with roses." From out of the crowd of spectators, two came forward to offer their sympathy to Obadiah Holmes — John Spur and John Hazel. Both men were promptly arrested and jailed. While it is tempting to continue quoting Gaustad about what all happened to Spur and Hazel, I will forbear. I trust I have not already wearied the listener by quoting this much, but I believe it profitable not only to know what happened to Holmes, but also to hear of the spiritual struggles he endured lest one would think that God will keep Satan totally away during such trials and tribulations. It is true that the Lord will uphold and sustain His people during such times, it is equally true that the sufferer is in the waters and in the fire (cf. Isaiah 43:2), and that he will likely have such spiritual struggles with the affliction. Hopefully, this will be beneficial for God's children as we are nigh approaching, I believe, persecutions much like that of Obadiah Holmes and others down through the centuries and in the early days of the founding of this country. The Protestant doctrine as applied by the Reformers and their followers will always end this way when followed to the logical conclusion. As Gaustad wrote, "A government led by Oliver Cromwell looked askance at the persecution of a sect whose members held positions of prominence both in Cromwell's army and in Cromwell's official family." Baptist Piety, p. 33. It should be noted that the beating that Holmes received was so severe that for weeks he could only sleep while on his knees and elbows. Another important reason for introducing Obadiah Holmes at this time is the connection with one of the pastors (or teachers) of the congregation where Holmes, Clarke, and Crandall were taken after their arrest. His name was Thomas Cobbett (spelled sometimes with two "t's" and sometimes with one) and he was mentioned in previous podcasts. As pointed out earlier, Gaustad noted that "Cobbet correctly perceived" that "the crux of the dispute between the Baptists and the Puritans, whether in London or in Boston" was the "Baptist views on the limits of civil government, more than any other single doctrine …." Before Cobbett received

a copy of Clarke's Ill Newes, the was putting the finishing touches to his book The Civil Magistrate's Power (first published 1652/3). In his dedicatorial epistle to Oliver Cromwell, Cobbett wrote, "This also (Right Honorable) the rather moved me, as a member of this polity, even in a way of gratitude, to dedicate to your Excellency this apology for civil Christ and governments, why they ought, in their civil, and political way, to restrain and punish abuses and enormities, even in matters of the Lord and of the Church." This book of Cobbett's was reprinted in 2008 by a well known Baptist minister with a foreword written by another well know Baptist minister. In the forward he said that Cobbet "lays down the scriptural ordination as well as the scriptural limitation of government." As a side note, if you are wondering why I am not labeling these men it is because I have a high regard for them (though one is now deceased) and it is not my intention to cause ill intent with these podcasts. My issue is with the principle and not the people. After reading the reprint, I did discuss the book with the printer and he assured me that he did not agree with Cobbett's views regarding civil government having the right to interfere with the house of God in religious matters. Also, I want to reaffirm that often there is a fine line of distinction regarding this subject, but it is one that definitely needs to be drawn and maintained for the overall peace and prosperity of society. I regret that our time is exhausted for today, but you can see that the Protestant view of civil government is influencing and changing the direction among Baptists today. The Lord willing we will discuss this more in our next podcast. May the Lord give us wisdom and understanding as we weigh this important matter in light of the encroaching restrictions that civil government is seeking to impose on religion today. It is essential that if we do suffer that we suffer righteously as a Christian (cf. I Peter 4:12- 16). We need to know the difference in standing for a political reason or for the cause of Christ. Farewell.

The Christian and Civil Government (24th)

The study today continues the history of sufferings of Obadiah Holmes in the struggles religious freedom in the United States of America as it relates to the colony of Massachusetts. It also includes a brief introduction to Isaac Backus.) We ended our last podcast by saying that one of the reasons for introducing Obadiah Holmes was the connection of Holmes with one of the pastors (or teachers) of the congregation where Holmes, Clarke, and Crandall were taken after their arrest. His name was Thomas Cobbett (spelled sometimes with two "t's" and sometimes with one). It was further noted by Gaustad that "Cobbet correctly perceived" that "the crux of the dispute between the Baptists and the Puritans, whether in London or in Boston" was the "Baptist views on the limits of civil government, more than any other single

doctrine ….” This was further documented by quoting from the dedicatorial epistle to Oliver Cromwell in Cobbett’s book The Civil Magistrate’s Power, in 1652. He wrote, “This also (Right Honorable) the rather moved me, as a member of this polity, even in a way of gratitude, to dedicate to your Excellency this apology for civil Christ and governments, why they ought, in their civil, and political way, to restrain and punish abuses and enormities, even in matters of the Lord and of the Church.” To further show the weight of this subject, it was pointed out that Cobbett’s book was reprinted in 2008 by a well known Baptist minister with a foreword written by another well know Baptist minister. Thomas Cobbett wrote an earlier book in 1648 entitled A Just Vindication of the Covenant and Church-Estate of Children of Church-Members; As also of their Right unto Baptisme where it was “[d]irected against John Spilsbury” (a Baptist in England) “among others” in England. Baptist Piety: The Last Will and Testimony of Obadiah Holmes by Edwin S. Gaustad, p. 36. When John Clarke published his Ill Newes From New-England: or A Narative (sic.) of New-England Persecution in 1652, describing the persecution along with a full account of Holmes, Clarke, and Crandall, Cobbett countered it with A Brief Answer to a certain Slanderous Pamphlet called Ill News from New-England; or, A Narrative of NewEngland Persecution in 1653. He later included it with his earlier book The Civil Magistrate’s Power. In Ill Newes, nearly twenty pages were devoted to a defense of liberty of conscience. There Holmes, Clarke, and Crandall wrote that no servant of Christ has “any liberty, much less authority, from his Lord to smite his fellow servant, nor yet with outward force or arm of flesh to constrain or restrain his conscience; no, nor yet his outward man for conscience sake or worship of his God, where injury is not offered to the person, name or estate of others.…” Baptist Piety, p. 39. To show Cobbett’s reply and other issues regarding the subject at hand, we can do no better than by further quoting from Gaustad’s Baptist Piety, pp. 39-41. Cobbet, equally concerned to reply at length on this point, employed logic, scripture, and history to refute the dissenters’ position. And along the way he scored some effective points: for example, Cobet pointed to the contradiction in Ill Newes, which on the one hand praised Cromwell and his use of the “sword of steel” against all enemies, while on the other hand it condemned the Bay Colony’s exercise of civil power in religious concerns. On Christ’s parable of the wheat and tares (“Let them grow to the harvest”), the arguments flew from both sided. Cobbet contended that Christ in his exposition of the parable spoke not one whisper to suggest that he requires “Church or Commonwealth officers to let all the children of the wicked, seducers, traitors, seditious, and schismatical persons, blasphemers, professed atheists, etc. [to go] unpunished. Recognizing that his primary audience was more England than New England, Cobbet innocently inquired what Britain’s situation would be if this

pernicious Baptist view prevailed. How could Cromwell and party "condemn and damn Episcopal Government in the Church and all their trash," or root out the Book of Common Prayer? The doctrines in Ill Newes, if taken seriously, he continued, would even stain "that which has been and is the glory of that religious State throughout the Reformed part of the world." No, if England (and Cromwell) will look closely, they will see "how nearly our Government here has trodden in their steps, making coercive laws against what they have forbidden by law under civil penalties—albeit the penalties possibly not in every point the same." … What we expect from England, he added, is not criticism but encouragement, "to go on and prosper in [our] holy zeal, to vindicate the name, truth, worship and ways of Jesus Christ from all such as would subtilely spoil us of them in whole or part." And if Obadiah Holmes, John Spur, John Hazel, and such as that "are to be let alone unrestrained and [un]punished, both civil government and state and churches here would soon be blown and we should become a very chaos."… Thus, Obadiah Holmes, a fool for Christ, had his brief moment on the stage of history. But how quickly the lights were dimmed: no biography was ever written, no portrait every printed or statue erected, no church or school ever bore his name. Isaac Backus in his History tried to rescue the reputation of Holmes for posterity, as he successfully did that of Roger William; but somehow it did not work. "True and impartial history," Backus wrote in 1791, "is one of the most difficult services in the world." The attention given to Obadiah Holmes and the connection with Thomas Cobbett as provided not only in this podcast but in the previous two messages demonstrates the importance of the place of civil government and its relationship to the congregation of God. We have seen that belief that civil government is be a "nursing father" to the house of God was introduced by the Catholics by Augustine and those associated with him and later adopted by the Protestants during the Reformation. The Protestants in their desire to escape religious persecution in Europe and Great Britain continued to practice this doctrine as they came to the shores of the New World. Down through the centuries of the history of the Christian religion, the only people who did believe and practice religious freedom for all were the Anabaptists of which the Baptists were often identified. And now we find that many people claiming to be Baptist in belief are identifying with the Protestants regarding the place of civil government and seeking to classify themselves with the Reformers who persecuted their forefathers. Eventually, we plan to show that the reason this nation adopted religious freedom in the law of our land— the Constitution of the United States with the Bill of Rights—was because of the sufferings of the Baptists by the Protestants in the infancy of our nation and the Baptists working with our founding fathers to establish this freedom. This freedom was the pattern for the entire world and this nation along with the world

owes to the Baptists a debt of thanks. May the Baptists of today awake to the truth of their heritage and enlighten ourselves to our faith and seek to walk in the footsteps of our forefathers. There is a vast amount of history that needs to be read and studied not only by the adults, but I pray the youth of today will be motivated and inspired to know and continue their heritage. Nevertheless, at the beginning we said that we are limiting our studies to only three of our Baptist forefathers: Obadiah Holmes, Isaac Backus, and John Leland. Now that we have covered Holmes, we will move on to Isaac Backus. Isaac Backus (1724-1806) was born in Norwich, Connecticut, but lived much of his life as a Baptist in Massachusetts. Here again we can only touch on some of the highlights of his life and his trials and persecutions in his working for religious freedom in America. His A History of New England With Particular Reference to the Baptist is an invaluable asset to any library. It was originally in two volumes, but from the "Author's Preface to Volume III" as found in the second volume indicates that he planned on a third volume. Another book of recent years (published in 1968) that is quite informative is Isaac Backus on Church, State, and Calvinism: Pamphlets, 1754-1789 edited by William G. McLoughlin. These works alone are over 1,600 pages which we cannot devote to our studies. One work of Backus that is available is the little book entitled Your Baptist Heritage. It was published originally in 1844 under the title of Church History of New England from 1620-1804. It can be found at the supplied link https://www.baptistbooks.com/products/your-baptist-heritage for the price of $8.00. However, since our time is exhausted for today, the Lord willing, we will continue with his life and influence in securing religious freedom in our country in the next broadcast. Please be mindful of me in your prayers as we continue with this most valuable and essential subject. Farewell.

The Christian and Civil Government (25th)

The study today continues with the history of the struggles for religious freedom in the United States of America. It provides some background of this struggle around the life of Isaac Backus who was introduced in the previous podcast.) In our last lesson we ended by introducing Isaac Backus and gave a list of some of his writings. Much valuable information is in his works to give a broader picture and many details of the struggles for religious freedom in America. Like Obadiah Holmes before him, he was first a Protestant but later became a Baptist and suffered for his faith. Backus (1724-1806) was born forty-two years after the death of Holmes and while some progress was made in the New England colonies during this time, persecution by those who believed that civil government should be involved in punishing people for

religious "crimes" was still practiced. In fact, in 1665, a Baptist congregation was established in Boston by seven men and two women. The website (see supplied link: https://www.firstbaptistboston.org/history.html) of the First Baptist Church of Boston states, "The story of the First Baptist Church of Boston traces back to the year 1651 when Obadiah Holmes (a glassmaker from Rhode Island) was whipped for being a Baptist." History further tells us that the congregation was "…formed in defiance of two laws, passed by the General Court: (1) That all persons wishing to form churches must first obtain consent of the 'magistrates and elders of the greater part of the churches within this jurisdiction.' (2) That 'if any person or persons within this jurisdiction shall ... condemn or oppose the baptizing of infants ... such person or persons shall be subject to banishment.'" (See supplied link: http://baptisthistoryhomepage.com/boston.fbc.history.html.) The congregation's website says that this congregation is the "fifth oldest Baptist Church in the United States." For several years the congregation met in homes and in 1678 it endeavored to build a meeting house. In 1680, though the meeting house was disguised as a brewery, the General Court (legislature) of Massachusetts ordered it to be nailed shut. As stated above, such persecution was practiced in the time of Isaac Backus and during the time of the Revolution. We should keep in mind that from the period of the Declaration of Independence written in 1776, the Constitution of the United States written in 1787 and ratified in 1788, and the Bill of Rights ratified in 1791 was a period of fifteen years. Part of this time (1775-1783; 8 years) the country was engaged with the Revolution War with England. Obviously, a lot of interesting history could be presented but time will not allow us to do so. Nevertheless, we will endeavor to give enough information to show the influence of the Baptists in securing the rights and freedom of religion in this nation and its introduction to the world at large. As stated in the previous podcast, Isaac Backus suffered for his faith for being a Baptist and for his labors in seeking to secure religious freedom with the founding of our nation. Again I want to stress that it was religious freedom and not religious liberty that was desired and finally achieved, though we are fast losing it today. In previous studies this distinction was noted and for some it may seem to be merely a war of words, but I assure you that is not the case. In England, when William and Mary came to the throne in 1689, some liberties were given with certain rules. Later, in the New World, there were some liberties also provided with various restrictions though the limits and boundaries were not always the same within the various colonies. In fact, in 1791, John Leland said, "The state of Rhode Island has stood above one hundred and sixty years without any religious establishment. The state of New York never had any. New Jersey claims the same. Pennsylvania has also stood from its first settlement until now upon a liberal foundation …." Quoted from "The

Rights of Conscience Inalienable," as found in The Writings of John Leland, edited by L. F. Greene, Arno Press, p. 182. (The Lord willing, we will hear more from and about John Leland.) In the New England colonies, we will study this struggle for religious liberty in relation to Isaac Backus and the Warren Association. This was the first Baptist association in New England and it was established in 1767 in the colony of Rhode Island. Regarding Isaac Backus and the Warren Association, William McLoughlin said the following: The Warren Association was even more important, for it provided the unity and organization which enabled the Baptists to wage an aggressive campaign for religious equality throughout New England during the remainder of the century. Unity was provided by the adoption of a strict Calvinistic confession of faith to which all member churches were required to subscribe, and by annual meetings at which delegates from the member churches met to discuss their common problems. Backus and his church at first hesitated to join this association, fearing that it would threaten the autonomy of the individual churches. Both the Congregational Separates and the Separate-Baptists, like the early Puritans, were firm believers in the independence of each church from any outside ecclesiastical authority; they wanted no bishops, presbyteries, or synods to overrule the decisions of the local church bodies. As Backus put it "a particular church of Christ is the highest judicature that he has established upon earth to carry his laws into execution in his name." Backus had seen what happened in Connecticut when the Congregational churches adopted the Saybrook Platform in 1708 and permitted ministerial associations and consociations to appoint and dismiss ministers and to decide cases of discipline and order with the backing of the civil authority. Not until 1770 was Backus persuaded that the Warren Association meant what it said when it denied jurisdiction over the member churches except for counsel and advice. Probably the deciding factor in Backus' decision to join and support the association was the opportunity it offered for united action against the "persecution" of Baptists by the tax collectors. The first step in this direction was taken in 1769 when the association formed its Grievance Committee "to prepare petitions to the General Courts of Massachusetts and Connecticut for redress" of grievance and, if necessary, to petition the King in Council. … Backus was appointed a member of this committee in 1769 even though his church was not yet officially a member of the association. Throughout the rest of his life Backus played an important role in this committee's efforts to alter the ecclesiastical system of Massachusetts. He helped it to draft many petitions, remonstrances, and memorials to the General Assembly. He took affidavits from persecuted Baptists and testified on their behalf in the courts. On one occasion he took part in an appeal to King George III over the heads of the legislature and succeeded in having one of its laws disallowed. So active were he and other members

of the committee that when the Revolution approached many Congregationalists doubted their loyalty to the patriot cause. Backus himself had to admit that the King and his royal governors had been more friendly and helpful to the Baptists than the Sons of Liberty had been. However, in 1774, rather than appeal to the King, Backus and the Warren Association decided to appeal to the First Continental Congress. Backus and James Manning went to Philadelphia in September where they sought the aid of the Philadelphia Baptists, and accepted also the support offered by the Quakers. Together they drew up a memorial which they presented to the delegates from Massachusetts—John Adams, Samuel Adams, Robert Treat Paine, and Caleb Cushing. The meeting in Carpenters Hall on October 12 was stormy; neither side succeeded in convincing the other. John Adams told Backus and Manning that "We might as soon expect a change in the solar system as to expect that they would give up their establishment." Robert Treat Paine returned to Massachusetts to spread the rumor that Backus and the Quakers had deliberately tried to sabotage the Continental Congress by causing a division among them on the trumped up issue of religious liberty. But the following spring, when the Battle of Lexington and Concord was fought, Backus was as ready to break with England as were his Congregational neighbors. In a sermon he delivered to his congregation on the Sunday after the battle he attacked the doctrines of "passive obedience" and "non-resistance to kings" and pointed out that it was not necessary to obey bad rulers. He went on to say that "it was a foundation point in the constitution of the English government that the people's property shall not be taken from them without their consent.… Upon the whole I declared I fully believed our cause was just." From Isaac Backus on Church, State, and Calvinism, "Introduction," pp. 11-13. This somewhat lengthy quote from McLoughlin should give us a small introduction to Isaac Backus. The Lord willing, we will study him and his labors in future podcasts. Yet, before closing, allow me to note that he was battling such men as John Adams and others of the Sons of Liberty before the war broke out or before the Declaration of Independence. Our time is exhausted for today. Farewell.

The Christian and Civil Government (26th)

The study today continues with the history of the struggles for religious freedom in the United States of America. It provides some background of the Baptists and their connection and influence regarding the general Congress and the war with England along with aid of Isaac Backus.) We ended the previous study with Isaac Backus going to Philadelphia in 1774 on behalf of the Warren Association to petition for religious freedom to be established in the new government. The certificate given

to Backus by the association reads as follows: To the Honorable Delegates of the several colonies in North America, met in a general Congress in Philadelphia: HONORABLE GENTLEMEN: As the Antipædobaptist churches in New England are most heartily concerned for the perseveration and defence of the rights and privileges of this country, and are deeply affected by the encroachments upon the same which have lately been by the British parliament, and are willing to unite with our dear countrymen, vigorously to pursue every prudent measure for relief, so we would beg leave to say that, as a distinct denomination of Protestants, we conceive that we have an equal claim to charter-rights with the rest of our fellow-subjects; and yet have long been denied the free and full enjoyment of those rights, as to the support of religious worship. Therefore we, the elders and brethren of twenty Baptist churches met in Association at Medfield, twenty miles from Boston, September 14, 1774, have unanimously chosen and sent unto you the reverend and beloved Mr. Isaac Backus as our agent, to lay our cast, in these respects, before you, or otherwise to use all the prudent means he can for our relief. History of New England Baptists by Isaac Backus, Volume II, p. 200. You will notice that while they first designated themselves as "Antipædobaptist churches" they later identified them as "Baptist churches." (For those who may not be aware of the meaning of antipædobaptist, it is anti or in opposition to pædobaptism or child baptism. This term is often used synonymously with Anabaptist.) We also previously mentioned that the Philadelphia Baptist Association was there, too. In the century sermon delivered at the association in 1807, by Samuel Jones, he said the following: When the first Congress met in this city, I was one of the committee under the appointment of your body, that, in company with the late Rev. Isaac Backus, of Massachusetts, met the delegates in Congress from that State, in yonder State House, to see if we could not obtain some security for that liberty, for which we were then fighting and bleeding by their side. It seemed unreasonable to us, that we should be called upon to stand up with them in defence of liberty, if, after all, it was to be liberty for one party to oppress another. But our endeavors availed us nothing. One of them told us, that if we meant to effect a change in their measures, respecting religion, we might as well attempt to change the course of the sun in the heavens. Minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association from 1707 to 1807, edited by A. D. Gillette, pp. 459-460. The Philadelphia Association is the oldest Baptist Association in America. As noted from the previous podcast, it was John Adams, who later became the second President of the United States, which expressed the impossibility of securing religious freedom in the new government for North America. Nevertheless, the Baptists supported the war against England. Even the Baptists in England supported the American's hoping that it would provide greater liberties for them in their country. In 1784, John Rippon (a prominent

Baptist minister in England and pastor of the Carter Lane/New Park Street congregation for sixty-three years after John Gill and twenty years before Charles Spurgeon became pastor of the same congregation) wrote to James Manning showing that the Baptists in England favored the colonies in their cause against the Crown of England. He wrote the following: I believe all our Baptist ministers in town except two, and most of our brethren in the country, were on the side of the Americans in the late dispute. … We wept when the thirsty plains drank the blood of your departed heroes, and the shout of a king was amongst us when your well fought battles were crowned with victory. And to this hour we believe that the independence of America will for a while secure the liberty of this country; but if that continent had been reduced, Britain would not long have been free." History of New England Baptists by Isaac Backus, Volume II, p. 198. To give a preview of some of the things the English Baptists were enduring at this time I will quote from the book by William Cathcart entitled Baptist Patriots and the American Revolution, pp. 28-30. Never were Baptists more cruelly used than by James II., King of England. He was the most defective sovereign in moral worth that ever polluted a throne. Becoming a Romanists, he issues a decree dispensing with all penal laws against Dissenters and Catholics. James had no authority to alter any law of England. To secure himself from the vengeance of the next Parliament he abrogated the charters of several cities and that of London among the rest, that he might appoint borough magistrates who would return pliant members to the House of Commons. William Kiffin was the most influential Baptist minister in England, and he was a wealthy London merchant. James sought to bribe him by making him an alderman of London, an office then held in high esteem and still regarded with great favor; he supposed also that by this act of royal favor the Baptists would be disposed to support his usurpation, even though they well knew that he had only ceased to be persecutor for the special benefit of the Papal Church. Kiffin was brought to the palace, and James made his proposition with as much grace of manner as his natural rudeness permitted, and Kiffin immediately and absolutely rejected it. He knew that James had the might but not the authority to make him an alderman, and he refused an honor that came from usurpation. John Bunyan had spent twelve years of his life in prison for preaching Christ; the laws were still in force that had handed him to the jailer, and James needed Bunyan's popularity to aid him in his assault upon the liberties of his people and upon the established Church, and he intimated to him that he had an office for him that would show the world the king's estimate of the illustrious dreamer. But Bunyan turned his back upon the hand that offered him liberty and an office, because it was the hand of the regal burglar who stole the gifts which he offered. In the previous podcast we noted that Backus preached a sermon to his congregation supporting the

break with England and the war against her. In fact, most of the Baptists supported the war and many of the ministers, like Backus, served as chaplains in the American army. To show the strength of the ministers in support of the American cause, Morgan Edwards, a prominent Baptist minister, sided with the Tories. Henry C. Vedder, in his A Short History of the Baptists, p. 316, said of him, "He was almost, if not quite, the only Tory among the Baptists clergy during the Revolution, and so found himself isolated among his brethren." Our time is up for today and, the Lord willing, we will continue the history of religious freedom in America revolving around Isaac Backus. Farewell.

The Christian and Civil Government (27th)

The study today continues with the history of the struggles for religious freedom in the United States of America. Today's lesson shows how our nation strayed from the initial intent of the First Amendment and is in bondage to pagan philosophy.) In our last podcast we saw that the Baptists, both in England and New England, were interested in the war with England with the hopes that it would go toward liberty of conscious in worship not only in the New World but also in the Old. Furthermore, we found that the Baptist, Isaac Backus, was central in this struggle. Some today may think that this study is a waste of time in searching the past and validating the influence of the Baptists in securing this freedom and that it is not relative to today. I can assure you that the connection of civil government and its role with religious worship and the freedom to worship according to one's conscious is vital today. In fact, in some ways, it may be even more essential today than in the early days of our country. While there were restrictions regarding worship in the colonies of North America and particularly in the New England states, those limits were the results of the Protestants and the theology of the Reformers that they adopted from the Catholics. Though wrongly interpreted, those rules and laws were ostensibly from the premise of the Word of God. It is little known that the problem is that the idea of civil government regulating the worship of God outside of the Old Testament theonomy is pagan philosophy. In an earlier podcast we quoted from Leonard Verduin's The Anatomy of a Hybrid and the influence of the Roman philosopher Seneca upon Calvin in forming his views of civil government used to exercise discipline upon "heretics." Before Seneca, we find that Plato, too, believed that civil government should dictate the worship of the citizens. Listen as we read from Book X of Plato's laws: No man shall have religious services in his house, but he shall go with his friends to pray and sacrifice in the temples. The reason of this is, that religious institutions can only be framed by a great intelligence. But women and weak

men are always consecrating the event of the moment; they are under the influence of dreams and apparitions, and they build altars and temples in every village and in any place where they have had a vision. The law is designed to prevent this, and also to deter men from attempting to propitiate the Gods by secret sacrifices, which only multiply their sins. Therefore let the law run:—No one shall have private religious rites; and if a man or woman who has not been previously noted for any impiety offend in this way, let them be admonished to remove their rites to a public temple; but if the offender be one of the obstinate sort, he shall be brought to trial before the guardians, and if he be found guilty, let him die. https://www.gutenberg.org/files/1750/1750- h/1750-h.htm By this we see that the intelligentsia of the state is only smart enough to know what is to be worship and how it is to be instituted. Unless worship is in conformity to the state—civil government—then the "offender" is to be "brought to trial … and if he be found guilty, let him die." But what has all of this to do with our society today, it may be asked? It is answered: much in every way. Little does the public know that our modern educational system in America as outlined by John Dewey is based on the Prussian educational philosophy and it was founded on the philosophy of Plato. Plato also believed that the children belonged to the state and they were to be educated for it. The Word of God teaches that the children belong to the parents and the parents are to teach the children according to the Scriptures, cf. Ephesians 6:1-4. Obviously we cannot go into great details to show the development of our educational system, but we will give a few quotes for verification. To do this, we will quote from Rousas J. Rushdoony's book The Messianic Character of American Education. On page 15, he wrote "For the Greeks, authority came from the polis, not from God." The meaning of polis is a city state in ancient Greece, especially as considered in its ideal form for philosophical purposes. The quotes from Rushdoony are as follows: Both Plato and Aristotle had a deep insight into the meaning of man's social and institutional life. To live together with one's fellows in a community involves fitness so to live. This fitness, in turn, implies discipline, instruction, training; that is, education. The highest type of individual life is found in community life. Ethics passes into or includes politics, and the education of the individual is education for the state. Man is not only a social animal, he is a statist animal. Being continuous with all reality, he has no discontinuity with the mass, and no law to live by in terms beyond that commonality and continuity. Hence, "the education of the individual is education for the state." Man in evolution, unlike man created in the image of God, has no element of transcendence and no law beyond the commonality. He is continuous with his fellow men, and that continuity is best fulfilled in democracy, which is man's "completion." … John Dewey, indeed, spoke of "the necessity for

the participation of every mature being in formation of the values that regulate the living of men together: which is necessary from the standpoint of both the general social welfare and the full development of human beings as individuals," and called this "the keynote of democracy as a way of life." Thus, men must play gods to become truly human. But for Dewey democracy is "the truly human way of living," and "the foundation of democracy is faith in the capacities of human nature." "Man is a social animal," and education is into sociality, and "the heart of the sociality of man is in education." To move forward in this faith will produce "a fuller and deeper religion," possibly manifest already in the decay of the older forms, and "the spiritual import of science and of democracy" will lead to "that type of religion which will be the fine flower of the modern spirit's achievement." From the continuity through democracy and its established church, the state school, we arrive at Dewey's governing presupposition, The Great Community, the secular version of the New Jerusalem. Clark [i.e, Gordon H. Clark from his book entitled Dewey] has observed, of Dewey's concepts of ethics and the state, "The state can do no wrong, for right is determined by what the state does." … Hegel had held that the state is the actuality of the ethical Idea, in and by itself the ethical whole, the actualization of freedom, mind on earth, "the march of God in the world," the "actual God" and the manifestation of history. For Hegel, these things came to focus in the Prussian state. Dewey, holding the same faith, more modestly than Hegel and Marx, saw this "actual God" as yet in the future but drawing near in his Great Community. At present, because it is unborn or at best shadowy, "the Public will remain in eclipse." Man will not be truly man until this "actual God," the "Great Community," is born. Man is not created in the image of God but of society, and therefore as yet is not fully man. It is no wonder that even a non-Christian such as Bertrand Russell has seen in Dewey's philosophy a "cosmic impiety" which increases "the danger of vast social disaster." For Dewey, "the seer" of the Great Community was Walt Whitman, and "democracy is a name for a life of free and enriching communion." … Dewey's influence on contemporary life and thought has been extensive in religion, philosophy, and other areas, but chiefly in education and jurisprudence. The Supreme Court in particular has long reflected his influence with a devastating cynicism of all categories of faith and life other than the omnipotent state, which has been exalted and furthered with unrelenting force. It is questionable whether liberty can long survive under a continued onslaught of Deweyism. … Pages 120, 158-159, 160, 161. Again, it may be asked, "What does all of this have to do with today?" Again I say, "Much in every way." Recently, Thomas Griffith, a recent retired Court of Appeals judge testified before the U.S. Senate in support of Amy Coney Barrett as follows: In taking the oath, the judge makes a solemn promise with God as witness that when acting as a

judge, she will be a different person than when she's not acting as a judge. Robert Bolt's portrayal of Thomas More in A Man for All Seasons captures this point simply and powerfully: "What is an oath," More asks, "but words we speak to God?" In other words, for a person of Faith, the judicial oath is a promise to the Nation and to God that she will not do the one thing her secular critics most fear: reach for outcomes based on her religious world view. When wearing the robe, there is no conflict between following God and Caesar. It's Caesar all the way down. See Chuck Baldwin's October 22, 2020 newsletter entitled "For Whom Will I Vote?" In the words of Baldwin, "So, in the world of Barrett and Griffith, anyone who takes a governmental oath (judge, sheriff, police officer, mayor, county commissioner, governor, legislator, etc.) is obligated to deny God's Revealed Law … and one's own moral conscience to be a slave of Caesar." This should be sufficient to show that this issue of the Christian and civil government is as vital and essential as in the founding of the laws of our country. That the educational system was forced on the people to indoctrinate our children from the earliest age of this pagan-catholic-reformed ideology and it has turned our nation into what it is today. Ideally, this lesson should have been published months ago, but we trust it will be beneficial to show why we are in our current state. The Lord willing we will return to the establishing of the First Amendment as seen in the life of Isaac Backus in our next podcast. Farewell for now and may God be pleased to grant us mercy to worship Him in all freedom.

The Christian and Civil Government (28th)

The study today continues with the history of the struggles for religious freedom in the United States of America and concludes our review of the life and influence of Isaac Backus in securing this freedom for our nation.) In our last podcast, we interrupted our study of the First Amendment as centered around the life of Isaac Backus by providing a brief overview to show why such a study is vital today. In reality this struggle has continued from the beginning when Satan sought to bring man into captivity and away from the kingdom and rule of God. The believer's "pledge of allegiance" has always been first and foremost to God, the Creator, and to His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Few people are aware that the Pledge of Allegiance of the United States was written by a "Christian socialists" named Francis Bellamy. Obviously, the phrase "under God" was not included in his version. In fact, "under God" was not added until the 1950's. Also, originally the "salute" to the flag involved stretching out the arm toward the flag similar to that of the later Nazi salute to the German flag. A massive study could be done regarding Francis and his brother Edward and their influence in spreading socialism in the 1800's. Truly the ideal of

socialism with the government controlling all of the affairs of life is no new philosophy in this country and it begins with the idea of allegiance to government first. The government does not understand that it has no better citizens than the Christian so long as the state does not demand the believer to disobey the Lord. However, let us return to our study regarding the influence of the Baptist, Isaac Backus, in working to secure religious freedom in America. In previous podcasts, we saw that Backus as a representative of the Baptist Warren Association (the first New England Baptist Association) in conjunction with the Philadelphia Baptist Association (the first Baptist association in America) met with the general Congress in Philadelphia, in 1774, to labor toward the freedom of religion in the forming of the new government. At that time the "sons of liberty" as headed by John and Samuel Adams opposed the idea of such a freedom, and the Baptists were told by John Adams, "We might as soon expect a change in the solar system as to expect that they would give up their establishment." However, when the war with England was declared, Isaac Backus and the Baptists in general supported the American cause. Not only did the Baptists of the colonies support the war against England, but the Baptists in England also supported the American cause. Now we shall look somewhat at the role of Backus regarding the framing of the Constitution of the United States written in 1787 and ratified in 1788. Though Backus supported the war against England, he continued to labor for freedom of religion in Massachusetts. This was not easy for him. In a letter to a brother minister in London, he wrote, "I should have fainted long ago, had I not believed that wherein men dealt proudly God was above them. And he fixed a persuasion on my soul that if we faithfully improved the advantage he gave us, rulers would be forced to give up their tyrannical power over the church of God and the consciences of men. A large part of my good friends here, rather wished than believed we should obtain so great a blessing; and, therefore, have often been clogs instead of helps, in this great work." The Life and Times of Isaac Backus by Alvah Hovey, p. 247. Hovey further stated, "From a passage in this letter it appears that the bold and unyielding course advocated by Mr. Backus, was not approved by all his brethren. Some of them at length became disheartened, and were ready for the sake of peace to make the best of existing laws without subjecting themselves to yet further and seemingly profitless toil or expense." Page 248. Nevertheless, Backus was willing to suffer to the uttermost for religious freedom. Listen again to the words of Alvah Hovey: "For many years in public and in private he had solemnly protested against this submission, and had urged his brethren to suffer their property to be all confiscated rather than to recognize the validity of human laws in the domain of religion. Whether his views were correct or erroneous, they were the result of protracted examination, were endorsed by his conscience, and

were maintained with christian [sic.] fidelity to the last. His was not the spirit of falter and turn back at the prospect of danger. There was moral heroism in his soul, and he was ready for the severest conflict. To find his brethren prepared to relinquish in discouragement their high position and plant themselves on lower ground, was therefore a sore trial to his patience and charity; but so far as we can ascertain, he was enabled to bear this trial, if not without complaint, yet without bitterness of feeling. Had his brethren throughout the State refused at this time to give in certificates and cheerfully taken the consequences, it is at least probable that Mr. Backus would have been permitted to welcome in his own day that complete separation of church and state for which he longed. As it was, he died in faith, not having seen the blessing which he desired for the churches of Christ." Pp. 249-250. Yes, the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America was passed declaring, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances," in 1791. However, it was not until 1917, that Article 46, Section 1, of the Massachusetts' Constitution was ratified and adopted which stated, "No law shall be passed prohibiting the free exercise of religion." Therefore, Backus did not live to see this full freedom in his state during his lifetime. Isaac Backus continued to labor for religious freedom in Massachusetts as well as in all the colonies. In 1786, a law was passed in Massachusetts that "confounded ministerial and civil taxes." Hovey gives some letters of Backus during this time to show somewhat his views and beliefs. Obviously, we cannot include all the letters recorded, but I believe one will be adequate to manifest this. It is from Hovey's book on pages 251-252 and is as follows: To George Washington, Esq., President of the United States. SIR: Among the many addresses to your Excellency since your advancement to the highest seat of government in America, I suppose you have received none from any community of Baptists in the State of Massachusetts. Not because they have not as hearty a regard for your Excellency as any denomination therein, but for want of a convenient opportunity when you were in these parts. But an obscure individual begs your acceptance of a private token of love, which may be of more real service than many flattering public addresses. Indeed, if elegance of style and composition were necessary to render any book acceptable to your Excellency, the author would not have presumed to send such a present as his History of New England. But believing that the knowledge of principles and facts, and of their influence on mankind through various changes, is of great importance in your view, he hopes that this work will not be unacceptable. Much of it was taken from original records and papers which were never before published; and none of

them have ever since been disputed in any newspaper among us. The Quakers were so much affected with my first volume, published in 1777, that one of them wrote a considerable volume against it; but when he came to lay it before their committee, they thought it better to apply to me for corrections; and a committee of theirs met with me in Providence, in December, 1780, and after two days' labor we agreed upon the corrections which are in the end of the second volume, which agreement was signed by me, and by * * * their committee. If any others would have favored me with their corrections, as they might have done and concealed their names if they pleased, it might have been of public benefit. But no such favor hath been granted me. The continuance of tax and compulsion for religious ministers in New England, while it is abolished in Virginia, is a clear demonstration of the narrow selfishness of mankind. The continuance of it here for Congregationalists, and the abolishing of it there for Episcopalians, are both commended by Dr. Gordon in his History of the American Revolution, in which is much impartiality about civil and military affairs. But religious ministers, when supported by force, are the most dangerous men upon earth; while no men are more necessary and useful to human society than faithful teachers. Of this further evidence is given in two late pieces which I here send you. That your Excellency may still be guided and preserved in your exalted and difficult station until righteous government shall be well established in this land; that your latter days may be peaceful and happy, and your end be eternal life, is the earnest prayer of Your humble servant Isaac Backus November 15, 1790 While much more could be given regarding the life and influence of Isaac Backus in laboring for religious freedom in America, allow me to supply a brief summary from page 50 of William G. McLoughlin’s Isaac Backus on Church State, and Calvinism: The net conclusion regarding Backus’ position on church and state after a careful reading of his tracts on the subject must be that while his pietistic arguments provided a powerful cutting edge against New England’s ecclesiastical system and particularly against the practice of compulsory religious taxes, his subordination of the doctrines of natural rights, his advocacy of a Christian state, and his essentially theocentric concern for revealed truth produced a far less logical and consistent exposition of separation than that of Madison, Mason, Jefferson, or even John Leland. In fact, in certain respects Backus had more in common with the transformationists or theocrats than the separationists. Backus and the New England Baptists were Jeffersonians in politics primarily in reaction to the Standing Order’s Federalism, but basically they shared the socially conservative heritage of their region, or at least their eastern spokesmen did. Our time is exhausted for today. The Lord willing we will begin studying the influence of the Baptist, John Leland, and his role in securing religious freedom in America in our next podcast. Farewell.

The Christian and Civil Government (29th)

The study today continues with the history of the struggles for religious freedom in the United States of America and introduces John Leland and his valuable influence in securing the freedom of worship in our nation.) We ended our last podcast by saying that we would consider John Leland and his role regarding the First Amendment. Obviously, a large study could be done about the life of John Leland and his role in securing religious freedom in America. However, we will endeavor to limit our time somewhat, but for those who desire to know more about him I would suggest The Writings of John Leland as edited by L. F. Greene. John Leland (1754-1841) was born and died in Massachusetts, though he spent considerable time in Virginia. We will consider his labors and influence regarding the struggles for religious freedom essentially during the time he lived in Virginia. While the struggles for religious freedom in all the colonies are vital to securing such in America, it may well be said that the struggles in Virginia were likely more influential and powerful in procuring these rights. For those who would desire to know more about the struggles and persecution of the Baptists in Virginia by those religions of the reformed ideology regarding the use of civil government to regulate religious activities would do well by reading History of the Baptist in Virginia by Robert Baylor Semple and Imprisoned Preachers and Religious Liberty in Virginia by Lewis Peyton Little. To get an accurate picture of the influence of the Baptist is securing religious freedom in America, I would suggest another book entitled Documentary History of the Struggles for Religious Liberty in Virginia by Charles F. James. I mentioned this book in an earlier podcast, and I plan to supply various quotes from this source going forward. Protestants and some modern Presbyterians try to claim that religious freedom was derived from the teachings of the Reformers, but this work by James clearly documents that this is not the case. While it is not our intention to belittle anyone or case odium on anyone, we do desire to make aware of our Baptist heritage and, hopefully, enlighten many in our day of the vital role played by the Baptists so that this generation of Baptists will be educated to the truth of the freedom. Also, I trust this will ignite a flame to emphasize the importance of maintaining this freedom because it appears that the dark cloud is rising on the horizon to rob us of this freedom. Truly civil government has no right or authority over the congregation of God. As Charles James said, “By religious freedom, or soul liberty, is meant the natural and inalienable right of every soul to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience, and to be unmolested in the exercise of that right, so long, at least, as he does not infringe upon the rights of others; that religion is, and must be a voluntary service; that only such service is acceptable to

God; and, hence, that no earthly power, whether civil or ecclesiastical, has any right to compel conformity to any creed or to any species of worship, or to tax a man for its support. … This principle gives to 'Caesar' 'the things that are Caesar's' but it denies to Caesar 'the things that are God's.' … No government in the Old World had recognized this doctrine, and, unless Rhode Island be an exception, it did not find full and unequivocal recognition in any of the colonies of the New World. Virginia was the first to recognize it in her organic law, and this she did in Article XVI. of her Bill of Rights, which was adopted on the 12th day of June, 1776. From that time down to January 19, 1786, when Jefferson's 'Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom' became the law of the State, the battle for soul liberty was on." Pages 9-10. Sadly, we are witnessing in our day when civil government is working feverishly to deny the "soul liberty" secured in the Constitution. Time will tell whether there are men in our day with the spirit, determination, and dedication of Obadiah Holmes, Isaac Backus, John Leland, and many others that will work to assure this freedom of religion. Will we obey God or men? Or, have we succumbed to the philosophy and lifestyle of the world in such proportions that the Lord has given us over and we have neither the will, the spirit, nor the wisdom to fight this battle? As previously stated, "Time will tell." However, let us turn our attention and see if we can learn from the life and labors of John Leland so that we might know more how to do what we can to maintain and secure this freedom. Obviously, every man cannot be "a John Leland." God uses various men in different ways. While the Lord called one man, the prophet Elijah, to stand in the gap and challenge the prophets of Baal, He still had a remnant composed of seven thousand that did not bow to the image of Baal. Therefore, the Lord may, or may not, call you to be in the forefront of the battle as John Leland (or Elijah) was in his day; yet, if you are a believer in Christ you have a place in the battle. For example, a widow may think that her life is small and insignificant and that she cannot do anything of any importance or benefit, but that is far from the case. Listen to I Timothy 5:5 regarding the labors of a widow: "Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusted in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day." I implore you to believe me when I say that this is no small thing. Every believer knows how hard it is to pray and that Satan will assault him in his prayers and often cause him to think that God will not hear him and the he should simply give up and not pray. This is not true. Proverbs 15:8 says, "…the prayer of the upright is his delight." God delights to hear His people pray, even the desolate widow that trusts in God. "He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer," Psalm 102:17. Dear widow, your prayers are essential in securing freedom of worship as the labors of a John Leland in our day. Allow me to digress here and encourage you pastors to remind the widows of their value and

importance to the congregation of the Lord and their work in advancing the kingdom of God. Too often these women are shut in and believe they are not important and are laid aside on the shelf. Not so! These women are vital to health and strength of any congregation and they need to be encouraged in this "labor of love." Please be patient with me as I digress further to give another example of a young man that I know who contributes weekly (I believe) to his local newspaper. While he is currently a deacon in the congregation where he worships, if I remember correctly he began submitting letters the local newspaper in his teen years or shortly afterwards. He continually reminds the readers what the Scriptures say regarding abortion, sodomy, and other sins that destroy society. Some of his coworkers and supervisors have made it known to him their opposition and hatred to him and his articles, but he continues to do what he can to encourage godly living in the community. I do not know what the Lord will have you to do and time will not allow me to give suggestions for believers in every area of life in society, but I assure you that the Lord can use the testimony of the blessed housewife as she tirelessly labors to fulfill her desire and calling in life as well as other believers whether young or old. John Leland was not only a minister of the gospel, but he prayed, wrote letters, lectured, served as a representative of the Baptist, and did many other things in his labors for religious freedom in America. He was first and foremost a minister of the gospel. However, he understood the relationship of civil government and the congregation of God and the boundaries of each. This needs to be clearly understood today. Sad to say that the philosophy of the Reformers and the influence of reformation thinking of the Protestants has not only been adopted by society at large, but many (if not most) people who profess to be Baptist have espoused them too. Before we can wage an accurate warfare, we must know the logistics of the battles. This was noted in our previous podcast in a quote by William McLoughlin's: "The net conclusion regarding Backus' position on church and state after a careful reading of his tracts on the subject must be that while his pietistic arguments provided a powerful cutting edge against New England's ecclesiastical system and particularly against the practice of compulsory religious taxes, his subordination of the doctrines of natural rights, his advocacy of a Christian state, and his essentially theocentric concern for revealed truth produced a far less logical and consistent exposition of separation than that of Madison, Mason, Jefferson, or even John Leland. In fact, in certain respects Backus had more in common with the transformationists or theocrats than the separationists." Isaac Backus on Church State, and Calvinism, page 50. We will close this session with some quotes of Leland to give a glimpse of his insight. He said, "Government has no more to do with the religious opinions of men, than it has with the principles of mathematics." The Writings of John Leland as edited by L.

F. Greene, p. 184. This may seem a strange statement but, the influence of governmental education on the destruction of our nation was clearly shown a previous podcast. The idea that government is not to be involved in the education of our children is foreign in the minds of modern man, but civil government knows from the earliest days that it is essential for sovereign rule. Caesar wants absolute power. Nevertheless, Leland went on to say, "Let every man speak freely without fear, maintain the principles that he believes, worship according to his own faith, either one God, three Gods, no God, or twenty Gods; and let government protect him in so doing, i.e., see that he meets with no personal abuse, or loss of property, for his religious opinions. Instead of discouraging him with proscriptions, fines, confiscations of death, let him be encouraged, as a free man, to bring forth his arguments and maintain his points with all boldness; then, if his doctrine is false, it will be confuted, and if it is true, (though ever so novel,) let others credit it." Ibid, p. 184. This is a far cry from many today who desire to stop worshipers who differ from them. I have seen where professed Baptists have posted on social media their desires that our government would send out of our country those who profess a religion different from that of their professed "Christian" desires. However, our time is exhausted for today. The Lord willing we will continue studying this important subject in our next broadcast. Farewell.

The Christian and Civil Government (30th)

The study today continues with the history of the struggles for religious freedom in the United States of America and sets the stage showing somewhat the lack of religious freedom in Virginia and the influence of John Leland in securing the freedom of worship in our nation. While government does not have the right to govern the conscience of man, man must ever know that he is responsible to be obedient to the law of God.) We saw in previous studies some of the struggles for religious freedom in Massachusetts revolving around the life of Isaac Backus. Today we are beginning to show somewhat the struggles of the freedom of religion in Virginia focusing on the life of John Leland. We ended our previous podcast by supplying a couple of quotes from Leland supporting the freedom of religion. In order to get some insight into the colony of Virginia and the laws instituted for the promotion of a certain religion and the suppression of any other that differed from it, we will give some examples. First, to set the stage somewhat, we will supply from History of the Baptists in Virginia by Robert Baylor Semple, pages 46-47, the following: Our ancestors, being chiefly emigrants from England, brought with them all that religious intolerance which had so long prevailed in the mother country. Thus

we see that the first care of our early legislatures was to provide for the Church of England, as established by the act of Parliament. By the first act of 1623, it is provided that in every plantation or settlement there shall be a house or room set apart for the worship of God. But it soon appears that this worship was only to be according to the canons of the Church of England, to which a strict uniformity was enjoined. A person absenting himself from divine service on a Sunday without a reasonable excuse, forfeited a pound of tobacco; and he that absented himself a month, forfeited fifty pounds. Any minister who was absent from his church above two months in a year, forfeited half his salary; and he who absented himself four months, forfeited the whole. Whoever disparaged a minister whereby the minds of his parishioners might be alienated, was compelled to pay 500 pounds of tobacco and ask the minister's pardon publicly in the congregation. No man was permitted to dispose of any of his tobacco till the minister was satisfied, under penalty of forfeiting double his part of the minister's salary. The first allowance made to the ministers was ten pounds of tobacco and a bushel of corn for each tithable; and every laboring person, of what quality or condition soever, was bound to contribute. In the year 1631 the Assembly granted to ministers, besides the former allowance of ten pounds of tobacco and a bushel of corn, the twentieth calf, the twentieth kid and the twentieth pig. This was the first introduction of tithes, properly so called, in Virginia. But it did not continue long, for in 1733 the law was repealed. To preserve the purity of doctrine and unity of the church, it was enacted in 1643 that all ministers should be conformable to the orders and constitution of the Church of England, and that no other persons be permitted to preach publicly or privately. It was further provided that the governor and council should take care that all non-conformists departed the colony with all conveniency. Regarding ministers other than those of the Church of England being banished from the colony of Virginia, Charles F. James gives the following from his Documentary History of the Struggles for Religious Liberty in Virginia, p. 18: Winsor's "Narrative and Critical History of America" (Vol. III., page 148) has the following notice of that act of 1643. After stating that Sir William Berkeley became Governor in 1642, he says: "During the year, three Congregational ministers came from Boston to Virginia to disseminate their doctrines. Their stay, however, was but short; for, by an enactment of the Assembly, all ministers other than those of the Church of England were compelled to leave the colony. You will remember from our previous podcasts that the Congregational ministers from the colony of Massachusetts likewise persecuted those who differed from them by the use of civil government. Now, in Virginia, we find that one Protestant religion is persecuted by another Protestant religion. While the Congregationalists (Puritans) came out of the Church of England which was the ruling religion in Virginia, much

of their doctrine was the same, but they were not to be tolerated in Virginia. Another quote from the History of the Church of God by Elders Cushing Biggs and Sylvester Hassell, page 523, will further enlighten the conditions in the early days of Virginia. In 1643 the "Church of England" was established by law in Virginia. In 1653 Sir William Berkeley, royal governor of Virginia, strove, by whippings and brandings, to make the inhabitants of that colony conform to the Established "Church," and thus drove out the Baptists and Quakers, who found a refuge in the Albemarle country of North Carolina, a colony which "was settled," says Bancroft, "by the freest of the free, by men to whom the restraints of other colonies were too severe." In 1790, John Leland stated in "The Virginia Chronicle" as given on pages 122-123, in The Writings of John Leland, edited by L. F. Greene, the following: The subject of religious liberty, has been so canvassed for fourteen years, and has so far prevailed, that in Virginia, a politician can no more be popular, without the possession of it, than a preacher who denies the doctrine of the new birth; yet many, who make this profession, behave in their families, as if they did not believe what they profess. For a man to contend for religious liberty on the court-house green, and deny his wife, children and servants, the liberty of conscience at home, is a paradox not easily reconciled. If a head of a family could answer for all his house in the day of judgment, there would be a degree of justice in the controlling them in the mode of worship, and joining society; but answer for them he cannot; each one must give an account of himself to God, and none but cruel tyrants will prevent their wives, children or servants, either directly or indirectly, from worshipping God according to the dictates of their consciences, and joining the society they choose; for as religion does not destroy either civil or domestic government, so neither of them extend their rightful influence into the empire of conscience. The rights of conscience are so sacred, that no mortal can justly circumscribe them, and yet the conscience is so defiled by sin, as well as the other powers of the soul, that it may lead men into error. The word conscience, signifies common science; a court of judicature, erected by God in every human breast: and, as courts of justice often give wrong judgment, for want of good information, so it happens with conscience. The author of our religion said, "the time will come, when he that killeth you will think that he doeth God service." And Paul verily thought that he ought to do many things against the Lord Jesus. So that conscience is not the rule of life, but the word of God. Though conscience should be free from human control, yet it should be in strict subordination to the law of God. You will notice in this quote that while Leland believed in the freedom of conscience for each person and not be under control by human law, it was never free from the duty of being in subjection to the law of God. Today, it is feared that too many people are unable to make this separation. Yes, legally one's conscience is not to be

governed by civil authority; nevertheless, each of us is responsible to God to worship and honor Him as they are to (as Leland said) "be in strict subordination to the law of God." All men must know and be constantly reminded of the words of the Lord Jesus Christ, "But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment," Matthew 12:36. Our time is exhausted for today. The Lord willing, we will continue this in our next podcast.

The Christian and Civil Government (31th)

The study today continues with the history of the struggles for religious freedom in the United States of America as took place in Virginia. It gives more insights of the persecutions in this colony during the life of John Leland.) In the previous podcast, we endeavored to set the stage somewhat in Virginia and show the lack of religious freedom in that colony prior to and during the time of John Leland. We saw that even some Congregationalist (Puritans) ministers from New England, that believed much the same things that the Church of England (Anglican/Episcopalian) did, came to Virginia to preach the gospel and were "compelled to leave the colony." Not only was religion required to be practiced in Virginia, but the required religion was that of the Church of England. This reminds us of what we saw in a previous study regarding the pagan laws of Plato where he stated that civil government should not only establish what religion was to be practiced but also where it could be performed. After all, as Plato taught, the common people were not educated enough to know what or how to worship the gods. This should ever remind us that the idea of civil government being connected with religion, especially being a "nursing father to Christianity," is not only a Catholic/Reformed ideology, but a pagan one as well. In other words, it is the product of the natural man and not of God. The kingdom of God and of Christ is not of this world and Caesar (civil government) has no authority over it, John 18:36; Matthew 22:21. It is true that Israel under the Old Testament economy was a theocracy and it was under the laws established by God. However, that system of government and religious worship was not forced on other nations or citizens outside their realm. On the other hand, the New Testament economy is under a "better covenant … established upon better promises," Hebrews 8:6. This new covenant is "not according to the covenant" God made with Israel under the Old Testament. When Christ established the congregation of God while here on earth, He plainly declared that it was separate and apart from the kingdoms of the world. As we saw in the previous lesson, Virginia taxed the people to support their system of religion. The taxes went toward not only the salary and support of the ministry, but to provide for the places in which worship was to be practiced. This was opposed by

all the different branches of religion outside the Church of England. To give further insight to John Leland, we will give the following from the History of the Baptists in Virginia by Robert Baylor Semple, pages 207-209: Mr. Leland was a native of Worcester, in Massachusetts, was baptized in 1774, and in the fall of 1776 he married and moved to Virginia and settled in the county of Orange in the neighborhood of those churches. He continued in Virginia about fourteen years, in which time he traveled and preached very extensively and very successfully. He baptized between six and seven hundred persons while in the State, and in January, 1791, he removed to Massachusetts, and settled in Cheshire. Mr. Leland, as a preacher, was probably the most popular of any who ever resided in this State. He is unquestionably a man of fertile genius. His opportunities for school learning were not great, but the energetic vigor of his mind quickly surmounted this deficiency. His memory was so retentive that by a single reading he stored up more of the contents of a book than many would by a dozen careful perusals. It is probable that his knowledge derived from books at this day, taken in the aggregate, is surpassed by few. His preaching, though immethodical and eccentric, is generally warm, wise and evangelical. There are not many preachers who have so great command of the attention and of the feelings of their auditory. In effecting this his manner has been thought by some to approach too near the theatrical. Cowper, the poet [William Cowper; the one who wrote "God Moves in a Mysterious Way" and many other poems.], says: "He that negotiates between God and man As God's ambassador, the grand concerns Of judgment and of mercy, should beware Of lightness in his speech." Here Mr. Leland and the poet are at variance; he does sometimes, and, indeed, not unfrequently, "court the skitteth fancy with facetious tales." If Cowper says, so did not Paul. Leland can say so did George Whitefield, Rowland Hill, &c., and they have been the most successful of modern preachers. Mr. Leland's free and jocund manners have excited the suspicions of some that he wanted serious piety. His intimate friends are confident that these are groundless suspicions. They believe that among his other singularities he is singularly pious. While in Virginia he wrote several treatises, and was certainly very instrumental in effecting the just and salutary regulations concerning religion in this State. He has been similarly employed since his removal to New England. He has always been a zealous advocate for republican government. When Mr. Jefferson was raised to the presidential chair the ladies of Mr. Leland's congregation made a cheese of immense size* and sent it by Mr. Leland as a present to Mr. Jefferson. This affair made no little noise in the United States. *It was said to have in it 1,400 pounds of curd, and to have weighed 900 weight [sic] when taken from the press. The enemies of Jefferson called it the Mammoth Cheese. They also wrote poems and vented much wit upon the occasion. It was, however, received by the President with

pleasure, and viewed by the impartial as a singular pledge of patriotism.— Author's note. Not only was suffering by taxation, but there were other forms of persecution in Virginia prior to religious freedom being established. Lewis Peyton Little documents in his book entitled Imprisoned Preachers and Religious Liberty in Virginia supplies a list of men and their punishment for worshiping according to their conscious. Allow me to supply some of the punishments which are as follows: cruelly beaten, jailed, pelted with apples and stones, ducked and nearly drowned, ordered to leave the county or go to jail, commanded to take a dram of liquor or be whipped, pursued by a man with a gun, meeting broken up by a mob, knocked down while preaching, arrested as a vagabond and schismatic, pulled down and hauled about by hair, almost pulled to pieces, shot with a shot-gun, and many other such-like treatments. Little also gives an account of James Ireland by supplying a quote from William Fristoe's book entitled A Concise History of the Ketocton Baptist Association. Little's quote is found on pages 176-177 of his book. It is as follows: Another instance of cruelty we have to remind the reader of a Minister … [that] was apprehended, torn from the stand [i.e., the pulpit] by violence in the time of prayer, and imprisoned; and such was the rage and malice of his persecutors, that a close prison was thought too good. In addition to confinement those of the vulgar sort took occasion to collect disagreeable and ill-savored trash, nauseous combustables, and burn them in the prison window which filled the close dungeon with smoke that made it difficult for him to breathe or support life; and in the event so impaired his health, though he lived many years after, he had to drag through life loaded with infirmity, distressing pains, disordered bowels, and a constitution throughout so affected and broken down, that made life often a burden. James Ireland, in his autobiographical life, says that the nauseous material that was burned was Indian pepper, and he further stated that before this incident that some tried to blow up the jail. In fact, he said of this event, "they had fixed it for explosion, expecting I was sitting perpendicular over it, but in this they were a little mistaken. Fire was put to it, and it went off with a considerable noise, forcing up a small plank, from which I received no damage. I was singing a hymn at the time the explosion went off, and continued singing until I finished it." (Taken from The Life of the Rev. James Ireland, pp. 141-142.) Hopefully, this small vignette of the history of Virginia up to and during the time of John Leland will give you some idea of the persecution that took place in our country prior to the establishing religious freedom. The Lord willing, we plan to supply more of the history to show the struggles that were endured to provide for this freedom, but our time is up for today. Farewell, until the next study.

The Christian and Civil Government (32nd)

The study today continues with the history of the struggles for religious freedom in the United States of America as took place in Virginia. It gives more insights regarding the times of John Leland and the persecutions in this colony prior to religious freedom.) In our last podcast we saw some of the sufferings in Virginia of those who were not of the established religion. However, there were some who aided and assisted the Baptists during this time. One such man was Patrick Henry. Allow me to quote from the History of the Baptists in Virginia by Robert Semple, page 41, as he wrote around the time of 1774, regarding John Waller, John Shackleford, and Robert Ware being put in jail. From the beginning, the Baptists were unremitting in their exertions to obtain liberty of conscience; they contended that they could not be imprisoned by any existing law; that they were entitled to the same privileges that were enjoyed by the dissenters in England. Their judges, however, decided otherwise, and as there was no regular appeal, the propriety of that decision has not been legally ascertained. [In a footnote at this point it was stated: In the trial of this question before the courts of the colony, with Peyton Randolph representing the one side, and the Rev. Samuel Davies the other, they latter obtained from the law offices of the Crown of England an opinion that the act of the Colonial Assembly of October, 1705 (Hening's Statues III., p. 380), gave effect in the colony to the Toleration Act of I. William and Mary.] The prevailing opinion in the present day is that their imprisonment was unlawful. When they could not succeed in this, they resorted to the general court, for the purpose of obtaining licensed places for preaching, etc., agreeably to the Toleration law in England. It was in making these attempts that they were so fortunate as to interest in their behalf the celebrated Patrick Henry. Being always the friend of liberty, he only needed to be informed of their oppression, when without hesitation, he stepped forward to their relief. From that day until the day of their complete emancipation from the shackles of tyranny, the Baptists found in Patrick Henry an unwavering friend. While other examples could be given of Patrick Henry defending Baptists and supporting freedom of liberty, I trust I will not weary the audience by giving another example. This is taken from the biography of Patrick Henry by his grandson William Wirt Henry. This was published in three volumes and has the title of Patrick Henry: Life, Correspondence and Speeches. The following is taken from pages 118-119 of Volume I. A characteristic incident of the times, and of Mr. Henry, was preserved and related by Rev. John Weatherford, one of the Baptist ministers. He was imprisoned for five months in the jail of Chesterfield, of which county Colonel Archibald Cary was the presiding magistrate, on the charge of creating a disturbance by preaching. By the aid of Mr. Henry he obtained an order of

liberation. But the jailer refused to release him until the jail fees were paid, which from the length of his imprisonment were a considerable sum, much larger than the poor minister could pay. He was therefore forced to remain in prison. Not long afterward he was informed that some one [sic], whose name was concealed, had paid the charges, and he was set at liberty. With a thankful heart he walked out of the prison. More than twenty years afterward, upon removal of Mr. Henry to Charlotte County, he became a neighbor of Mr. Weatherford, who was then the pastor of a church near by [sic], and in recounting their early experiences in the struggles for civil and religious liberty Mr. Weatherford learned for the first time that Mr. Henry had paid for him the fees demanded by the Chesterfield jailer. It need hardly be added, as stated by his biographer, that he never spoke of Mr. Henry but with a glow of affection. While Mr. Henry was for religious freedom, he favored the idea of establishing all denominations alike and that they be supported by the State. Charles F. James, quoted from R. B. C. Howell's Early Baptists of Virginia in his book entitled Documentary History of the Struggle for Religious Liberty in Virginia, on page 98, as follows: Meantime, a new theory of a State religious establishment was devised, and began, in private circles, to be warmly discussed. This theory had its origin with the Presbyterians, and was in their subsequent memorials tenaciously and elaborately advocated. It proposed, not the abrogation of the State religious establishment, the measure demanded by the Baptists, but that the State, instead of selecting one denomination, as the Episcopal, and establishing that as the religion of the State, and giving to that alone it support, should establish all the denominations—Presbyterians, Methodists, and Baptists, as well as Episcopalians—and make them all equally and alike the religion of the State and to be supported by the State. … Of this plan of reconciling and harmonizing all parties Patrick Henry was the ablest and most eloquent advocate. From this we find that the Baptists alone of all religions not only labored for religious freedom but also that no religion (no not the Baptists) should receive support from civil government. In other words, Caesar (civil government) not only has no place in the house of God but it is not to support any religious system. To further support that it was the Baptists, and the Baptists alone, that battled and worked for full and total freedom of religion from civil government in Virginia, Charles James quoted from six sources that were not of "Baptist authority" and that they "were the principal promoters" in this work. (See pages 96-97.) For a fuller picture and more details of the struggles in Virginia I would recommend James' excellent book. He proves beyond any reasonable doubt that we owe the freedom of religion that we have experienced in the country to the Baptists and eventually we will see the tremendous role that John Leland had in this freedom being put into our Constitution. However, it must not be omitted that Thomas

Jefferson and James Madison contributed much to secure religious freedom in Virginia, as well as it being a part of the Constitution. Nevertheless, while Presbyterians and other reformers often advance the idea that religious freedom is a product of reformed theology, history proves otherwise. I must confess that I am in a dilemma as to whether I should or should not supply lengthy quotes to document some of the details revolving around the securing religious freedom in Virginia and the vital role of Virginia ratifying the Constitution and the First Amendment being in the Bill of Rights due to the influence of the Baptist. I do not want to impose on the patience of you who listen to this podcast by doing so, but, on the other hand, there is much history that is lost to the people of today that needs to be emphasized and taught so that Baptists may know of their heritage. For those of you who take the time and energy to read and desire to know more details of this rich heritage, allow me again to refer you to previous podcasts and the resources I have mentioned. Charles James has astutely said, "The world—even the Christian world—was slow to understand and to lay hold of the true principle of soul liberty—a principle which had always been fundamental with the Baptists, and which, in the providence of God, they were destined to teach to their fellows." (Documentary History of the Struggle for Religious Liberty in Virginia, on page 141.) It is extremely sad that many professing Baptists (as well as the public in general) of today know nothing of this truth. What is more depressing is that it appears that this nation has not only lost this valuable history, but that the right of religious liberty is being denied by the general population as well as by the government that rules over us. Obviously, when a people forget the Creator of the universe and He leaves them to their own "wisdom" they will destroy themselves and fall under the hand of tyranny. Our time is up for today. The Lord willing we will provide more history of the struggle for religious freedom and the role of John Leland in the First Amendment of the Constitution in future podcasts. As Don M. Fearheily said in his historical novel of Leland, "He was a Baptist. He was a preacher. He lived during the stirring times of the Revolution. He fought for religious freedom and saw the triumph of his ideals. Baptists owe a lot to John Leland. So does America." (The John Leland Story, page 8.) Farewell.

The Christian and Civil Government (33rd)

The study today continues with the history of the struggles for religious freedom in the United States of America as took place in Virginia. It gives more insights regarding the times of John Leland and the pivotal role of Patrick Henry in ratification of the Constitution.) In the previous podcast we gave some attention to Patrick Henry. He was a friend of the Baptists and labored somewhat for the freedom

of religion in Virginia. However, he still supported religion being propped up and sustained by the government. True and full liberty as advanced by the Baptists owes more of its gratitude to the labors of Thomas Jefferson and James Madison, with Madison being the essential warrior for the insertion of the First Amendment to the Bill of Rights. Much more could be supplied to show the influence of the Baptists in securing religious freedom in Virginia, but we will turn our attention to the struggles and efforts that reflect securing this freedom as established in the Constitution. Therefore, we will focus our attention around John Leland and his influence on James Madison. This will also show somewhat the opposition they faced by Patrick Henry. To give some of the background leading up to securing religious freedom, which included many other issues, we will quote extensively from Documentary History of the Struggle for Religious Liberty in Virginia by Charles F. James. This narrative would not be complete without some account of the agency of the Baptists of Virginia in engrafting the principle of religious liberty upon the Constitution of the United States by means of the famous first amendment; and, in order to appreciate properly the part performed by them, it is necessary that we consider, not only what they did towards securing that first amendment, but also their attitude towards the Constitution and it ratification…. After the independence of the colonies had been established, it soon became apparent that the old "Articles of Confederation" were too weak, that they did not give to Congress sufficient power to secure coöperation at home of respect abroad. Hence a movement was set on foot by James Madison to revise those "Articles" and give additional power to Congress— a movement which culminated in the calling of the Philadelphia Convention of 1787. Virginia selected as her representatives a number of her best men, including Washington, Madison, and Henry. Mr. Henry, however, declined to serve, and his refusal excited criticism and caused apprehension…. But the attempt to patch up the old Articles was vain, and so a new paper was prepared— the Constitution of the United States, of which James Madison was the father. … It was submitted to the several States for ratification, with a proviso that when ratified by nine States the new government should be organized. Eight States—viz., Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Georgia, Maryland, and South Carolina—had passed articles of ratification when the Virginia Convention met on the 2d day of June, 1788. Patrick Henry and George Mason were there to oppose ratification without previous amendments, while Madison let the forces which favored immediate ratification and subsequent amendments. It was a "battle of giants," which culminated, June 25, in a victory for ratification by a majority of ten. When the Constitution first appeared, in the fall of 1787, the impression made upon the Baptists was unfavorable. It did not seem to make sufficient provision for religious liberty. And when the General

Committee met at Williams' meeting-house, Goochland county, March 7, 1788, this was one of the questions considered: [James quoting Semples' history] "Whether the new Federal Constitution, which had not lately made its appearance in public, made sufficient provision for the secure enjoyment of religious liberty; on which it was agreed unanimously that, in the opinion of the General Committee, it did not." Semple, page 76. The only provision in the Constitution touching religion was in the sixth article, and in these words: "No religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States." This was virtually a declaration in favor of the most absolute religious liberty, in that it published to all the world that this government, at least, would not allow a man's religion to bar his way to the highest office in the gift of the people. But the Baptists were not satisfied. They had been great sufferers in the past, and, having just emerged from a long and arduous struggle for their rights, they were apprehensive that, if they entered into this new and stronger union with States that still had religious establishments, there might be a reaction disastrous to their liberties. Hence they resolved to oppose ratification, and Elder John Leland, the most popular Baptist minister in Virginia, was nominated as a delegate from Orange County to the Convention. This was done while Madison was yet in the North, where he remained some months after the Constitution was framed and published, engaged, with Jay and Hamilton, in writing articles in explanation of the new scheme of government—articles since known as "The Federalist." Patrick Henry, who was strenuously opposed to the Constitution on other grounds, and especially as having "a squint towards monarchy," was quick to take advantage of this prejudice of the Baptists to enlist them on the side of the opposition. … Although he had been opposed to them in their war against the Establishment and in their fight against the assessment, he now poses as their champion in opposition to the Constitution, and seeks to array them against their old leader, James Madison. Pages 150-154. Regarding this, John Blair Smith, president of Hampden-Sidney College, wrote to James Madison, June 12, 1788, detailing some of the tactics of Mr. Henry in his opposition to Mr. Madison and his followers. As stated above, the Baptists in opposing the ratification of the Constitution as it stood nominated John Leland as a delegate from Orange County. This placed him in opposition to James Madison. However, before looking at this important and critical historical event in the final stage of religious freedom in America, I believe it is important to give some details regarding the importance of the Baptists in Massachusetts. Regarding the importance of Massachusetts and Virginia and the Constitution, William Cathcart said, "The two great States that supported the Revolution were nearly equally divided about the Constitution; and some of the best men in these powerful centres [sic] of political life regarded it with unmixed alarm, and resisted it with all their influence

and eloquence." (Baptist Patriots and the American Revolution, p. 91.) Further quoting from Cathcart: In Massachusetts, the Convention called to ratify the Constitution assembled on the 9th of January, 1788. It was composed of nearly four hundred members. It possessed much of the 92 intellect and the patriotism of the State. The parties for and against the Constitution were about equal. The debates lasted for a month, and the contest was carried on with great earnestness. The entire United States took the deepest interest in the deliberations. It was universally felt, as Dr. Manning [This was James Manning the founding president of Brown University.] expressed it, that "Massachusetts was the hinge on which the whole must turn," and that if she rejected the Constitution it would be discarded in the other States. The Baptists held the balance of power in the Convention, and they were generally opposed to the Constitution in Massachusetts. The Baptist delegates were chiefly ministers who had the highest regard for Dr. Manning. And he, fully convinced that nothing but the new Constitution could save the country from anarchy, spent two weeks in attendance upon the Convention, and he and Dr. Stillman [another prominent Baptist] exerted themselves to the utmost to persuade their brethren to support the Constitution. With the Rev. Isaac Backus, the fearless friend of the Baptist cause, and of liberty of conscience, they set out, and they met with success in several cases. And the Constitution was adopted by a majority of nineteen votes. There were 187 yeas and 168 nays on the last day of the session, and before "the final question was taken, Governor Hancock, the president, invited Dr. Manning to close the solemn convocation with thanksgiving and prayer." ... There is a strong probability that the Baptists of the Convention would have followed Isaac Backus, and changed the insignificant majority into a small minority, if it had not been for Manning and Stillman. Pages 91-93. However, our time is exhausted for today. The Lord willing, we will return to Virginia and the important role of John Leland in our next podcast. Farewell.

The Christian and Civil Government (34th)

The study today continues with the history of the struggles for religious freedom in the United States of America as took place in Virginia. It gives more insights regarding the times of John Leland and his influence in getting James Madison elected as a delegate of Virginia and religious freedom included in the ratification of the Constitution.) As stated in our last podcast, we will turn our attention to some details revolving around the importance of John Leland and his influence in James Madison being selected to represent Virginia in the ratification of the Constitution and the First Amendment being in the Bill of Rights. We noted in the previous study

that the Baptists opposed the ratification of the Constitution as it stood and nominated John Leland as a delegate from Orange County. This move placed him in opposition to James Madison. The day of the election Leland withdrew and put his support behind Madison. As Charles James said, "That act of his [i.e., Leland] put into the Convention the man who, above all others in Virginia, understood the new scheme of government and was best prepared to defend it against its enemies. It has been claimed that, had Madison been defeated, the Virginia Convention would have failed to ratify, and that, had Virginia refused to ratify, the whole scheme would have failed. Hence it was that Hon. J. S. Barbour, in a eulogy upon the character of Mr. Madison, referred to this incident and gave Elder Leland the credit for the ratification of the Constitution by Virginia and the triumph of the new system of government." (Documentary History of the Struggle for Religious Liberty in Virginia, pages 154-155.) With this, I believe it is important to give some details regarding how it came to be that Leland withdrew himself in favor of Madison. James gives us a lengthy quote which gives these details by Leland. The Governor of Massachusetts, Hon. G. N. Briggs, was a friend of John Leland and asked him regarding the comment of Barbour. James gave Briggs' review as found in Annals of American Baptist Pulpit by William B. Sprague. Briggs said that "Leland replied that Barbour gave him too much credit, and then told the story as follows:" "Soon after the Convention which framed the Constitution of the United States had finished their work and submitted it to the people for their action, two strong and active parties were formed in the State of Virginia on the subject of its adoption. The State was nearly equally divided. One party was opposed to it adoption, unless certain amendments, which they maintained that the safety of the people required, should be incorporated into it before it was ratified by them. At the head of this great party stood Patrick Henry, the orator of the Revolution, and one of Virginia's favorite sons. The other party agreed with what their opponents said as to the character and necessity of the amendments proposed, but they contended that the people would have the power and could as well incorporate those amendments into their Constitution after its adoption as before; that it was a great crisis in the affairs of the country, and if the Constitution then presented to the people by the Convention should be rejected by them, such would be the state of the public mind that there was little or no reason to believe that another would be agreed upon by a future; and, in such an event—so much to be dreaded—the hopes of constitutional liberty and a confederated and free republic would be lost. At the head of this party stood James Madison. The strength of the two parties was to be tested by the election of county delegates to the State Convention. That Convention would have to adopt or reject the Constitution. Mr. Madison was named as the candidate in favor of its adoption for the county of Orange, in which he resided. Elder

Leland, also, at that time lived in the county of Orange, and his sympathies, he said, were with Henry and his party. He was named as the candidate opposed to the adoption, and in opposition to Mr. Madison. Orange was a strong Baptist county, and his friends had an undoubting confidence in his election. Though reluctant to be a candidate, he yielded to the solicitations of the opponents of the Constitution and accepted the nomination. For three months after the members of the Convention at Philadelphia had completed their labors and returned to their homes, Mr. Madison, with John Jay and Alexander Hamilton, had remained in that city for the purpose of preparing those political articles that now constitute 'The Federalist.' This gave the party opposed to Madison, with Henry at their head, the start of him in canvassing the State in his absence. At length, when Mr. Madison was about ready to return to Virginia, a public meeting was appointed in the county of Orange, at which the candidates for the Convention—Madison on the one side, and Leland on the other—were to address the people from the stump. Up to that time he had but a partial personal acquaintance with Mr. Madison, but he had a high respect for his talents, his candour, and the uprightness and purity of his private character. On his way home from Philadelphia, Mr. Madison went some distance out of his direct road to call upon him. After the ordinary salutations, Mr. Madison, began to apologize for troubling him with a call at that time, but he assured Mr. Madison that no apology was necessary. 'I know your errand here,' said he; 'it is to talk with me about the Constitution. I am glad to see you, and to have an opportunity of learning your views on the subject.' Mr. Madison spent half a day with him, and fully and unreservedly communicated to him his opinion upon the great matters which were then agitating the people of the State and the Confederacy. They then separated to meet again very soon, as opposing candidates before the electors, on the stump. The day came and they met, and with them nearly all voters in the county of Orange, to hear their candidates respectively discuss the important questions upon which the people of Virginia were so soon to act. 'Mr. Madison,' said the venerable man, 'first took the stump, which was a hogshead of tobacco standing on one end. For two hours he addressed his fellow-citizens in a calm, candid, and statesmanlike manner, arguing his side of the cast and fairly meeting and replying to the arguments which had been put forth by his opponents in the general canvass of the State. Though Mr. Madison was not particularly a pleasing of eloquent speaker, the people listened with respectful attention. He left the hogshead, and my friend called for me. I took it—and went in for Mr. Madison, and he was elected without difficulty. This,' said he, 'is, I suppose, what Mr. Barbour alluded to.' A noble, Christian patriot! That single act, with the motives which prompted it and the consequences which followed it, entitle him to the respect of mankind." Ibid, pages 155-157 Afterwards, James wrote,

"But how are we to explain Madison's call upon his Opponent? It was a very unusual, if not unprecedented, proceeding, and it is to be accounted from only on the ground of the former relations of Madison to the Baptists in their struggle for religious liberty. He had, while yet a young man, shown his warm sympathy for them in their persecutions; he had incorporated their cherished principle of religious liberty into the Bill of Rights; he had been the true yoke-fellow of Mr. Jefferson in his great work in pulling down the establishment; and then, when Jefferson was representing his country at a foreign court, he had taken his place as the political leader of the Baptists and their allies in their fight against the general assessment. And knowing, as he did, the chief ground of opposition to the Constitution, he felt that he could afford to approach their leading representative in Orange with the view of explaining that paper which he himself had framed, and relieving their apprehensions as to it bearing upon the question of religious liberty. Thus were Leland and the Baptists of Orange won over to the side of Madison, and Madison was sent to the Convention to meet and defeat Mr. Henry." Ibid, pages 157-158. In 1857, Barbour gave a eulogy of James Madison and said, "That the credit of adopting the Constitution of the United States properly belonged to a Baptist clergyman, formerly of Virginia, named Leland: 'If,' said he, 'Madison had not been in the Virginia Convention, the Constitution would not have been ratified, and, as the approval of nine States was necessary to give effect to this instrument, and as Virginia was the ninth State, if it had been rejected by her the Constitution would have failed (the remaining States following her example), and it was through Elder Leland's influences that Madison was elected to that convention." (Baptist Patriots and the American Revolution by William Cathcart, p. 96.) Cathcart went on to say, "It is unquestionable that Mr. Madison was elected through the efforts and resignation of John Leland, and it is all but certain that that act gave our country its famous Constitution." Our time is up for today. Farewell.

The Christian and Civil Government (35th)

The study today continues with the history of the struggles for religious freedom in the United States of America as took place in Virginia. It gives more insights regarding the times of John Leland and his influence in getting James Madison elected to the House of Representatives and the Bill of Rights added to the Constitution.) Our last podcast showed the influence of John Leland in sending James Madison to the Continental Congress to ratify the Constitution of the United States in 1788. However, the Constitution as it stood was not clear enough for the Baptists. They thought that the Constitution at that time lacked specific guarantees of individual right. In 1789, the first Congress submitted the first constitutional

amendments and it was James Madison that introduced those amendments. There were some who opposed the amendments because they believed that since the Constitution was so new that they ought not to be quick to change it. Nevertheless, Madison had pledged his support to the Baptists and he considered himself duty bound to submit the amendments. He told the House of Representatives that he believed himself "bound in honor and in duty" to see that the amendments were brought to a vote immediately. At first there were twelve amendments submitted, but the states only ratified ten of them. The first two were not ratified and the third amendment became the first which stated "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances." These ten amendments were adopted to become the Bill of Rights to the Constitution on December 12, 1791. However, the life and influence of John Leland should be brought to our attention in order to understand somewhat the history between June 21, 1788, and December 12, 1791. After the Constitution was ratified, the next step was to organize a new government. George Washington was elected as President and Thomas Jefferson was selected as Secretary of State. What should be the post for the "Father of the Constitution," James Madison. Naturally, some notable place would be occupied by him, but that was not the case. Charles James, in Documentary History of the Struggle for Religious Liberty in Virginia, page 159, summed it up this way. The situation in Virginia was different from that of any of the other ratifying States, in that "the politics of the legislature were at variance with the sense of the people, expressed by their representatives in the convention." The Legislature, being dominated by [Patrick] Henry and opposed to the Constitution, was hostile to Madison, and when he was nominated by his friends for the United States Senate, he was defeated. … This left Mr. Madison to run for a seat in the House of Representatives, which he preferred. Madison was well aware of his opposition and the task before him. James (on page 160) quoted from the Writings of Madison, Vol. I, from a letter of his to Mr. Jefferson while he was at Philadelphia. It was dated December 8, 1788, and is as follows: I shall leave this place in a day or two for Virginia, where my friends, who wish me to coöperate in putting our political machine into activity as a member of the House of Representatives, press me to attend. They made me a candidate for the Senate, for which I had not allotted my pretensions. The attempt was defeated by Mr. Henry, who is omnipotent in the present Legislature, and who added to the expedients common on such occasions a public philippic [i.e., a bitter attack or denunciation, especially a verbal one] against my Federal principles. He has taken equal pains, in forming the counties into districts for the election of representatives, to associate with

Orange [his resident county] such as are most devoted to his politics and most likely to be swayed by the prejudice excited against me. From the best information I have of the prevailing temper of the district, I conclude that my going to Virginia will answer no other purpose than to satisfy the opinions and entreaties of my friends. Nevertheless, with all the opposition and politics against Madison, James said, "And as, in the case of his candidacy for a seat in the Convention, John Leland and his Baptist following turned the scale in Madison's favor in Orange, so now, when running for Congress, it was the large Baptist element in his district which turned prospective defeat into victory and secured his triumph over all opposing forces." (Page 163) Regarding the Constitution as it was originally ratified, the Baptists were the only denomination in Virginia that expressed any dissatisfaction with it. The Baptist General Committee in Virginia had open "correspondence with the Baptists in the other states, especially in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and New York, with John Leland at the head of the committee." (Page 167) Along this line, William Cathcart wrote, "Denominationally, no community asked for this change in the Constitution but the Baptists. The Quakers would probably have petitioned for it if they had thought of it, but they did not. John Adams and the Congregationalists did not desire it, the Episcopalians did not wish for it, it went too far for most Presbyterians in Revolutionary times, or it our own days when we hear much about putting the Divine name in the Constitution. The Baptists asked it through Washington; the request commended itself to his judgment and to the generous soul of Madison, and to the Baptists, beyond a doubt, belongs the glory of engrafting its best article on the noblest Constitution ever framed for the government of mankind." Baptist Patriots and the American Revolution, pp. 109-111. Cathcart mentioned that Baptists sought the aid of President Washington in securing religious freedom. We will supply you with the letter sent to him as prepared by John Leland as well as Washington's reply. However, we will have to postpone this for the next podcast because it is too lengthy to insert with the study today. Allow me at this time to add some comments as to why the Baptists fought so hard for religious liberty. I am quoting from an address given by Charles F. James "before the Baptist Young People's Union of Virginia, Charlottesville, March 15, 1899." This is found in Appendix A in his Documentary History of the Struggle for Religious Liberty in Virginia. 1. In the first place, Baptist principles furnish the only true basis and guarantee of religious liberty. By religious liberty is meant the right of every one to worship God, or not, according to the dictates of his own conscience, and to be held accountable to none but God for his belief and practice. It differs from religious toleration, however broad and liberal, in that toleration implies the right to withhold, or to refuse license, whereas religious liberty means that the civil power has nothing

to do with a man's religion except to protect him in the enjoyment of his rights. Now, let us see how this principle is grounded in certain fundamental tenets of our denomination. (1) We hold that religion is and must be perfectly voluntary, that nothing except a voluntary surrender to Christ, and a voluntary service under him, is acceptable to God, and hence that no earthly power, parental, social, civil, or ecclesiastical, has any right to compel conformity to any creed, or to any form of worship. It is for this reason that Baptists have always opposed the support of religion by taxation…. (2) Another fundamental principle of the Baptists is that of a converted church membership. This grows out of the spirituality of Christ's kingdom…. (3) Another fundamental principle of Baptists is that Christ is the only king in Zion, and that his will, as revealed in the New Testament, is the only rule of faith and practice. They believe in rendering "to Caesar the things that are Ceasar's," but they do not believe in rendering to Caesar "the things that are God's." Hence their refusal to recognize the right of the civil authorities to regulate their faith, or their practice, or to dictate to them as to whether they shall preach the Gospel, and if so, when and where and how. It has not been out of any rebellious or anarchistic spirit that they have ever refused to obey man rather than God. It is not sectarian bigotry, nor blind adherence to outward forms, that has ever prompted them to resist and denounce the mutilation and multiplication of the ordinances of the Gospel. It is out of loyalty to the great head of the Church, their only Lord and Master, to whom, and to whom alone, they are accountable, that they have sought to do just what he commanded, and to oppose all taking from, and all adding to, the divine prescript. Our time is up for today and, the Lord willing, we will supply you with John Leland's letter to President George Washington and his reply in our next podcast. Farewell.

The Christian and Civil Government (36th)

The study today continues with the history of the struggles for religious freedom in the United States of America as took place in Virginia. This podcast contains the letter sent to President George Washington from the Baptist General Committee as prepared by John Leland and the President's reply to it.) In our previous podcast, we mentioned that the Baptists appealed to President George Washington for his aid in securing religious freedom in the United States. We further said that we would supply the letter to him and his reply. I ask your patience in supply such lengthy reading, but I believe such information is profitable to see some of the efforts of the Baptists and the influence in particular of John Leland in these matters. The letter sent to President Washington from the Baptist General Committee was prepared by John Leland. Leland's letter to Washington and his reply are found (as noted by Charles James) in

Bitting's "Notes on the Century History of the Strawberry Association," and also in Leland's Works, 52-54." I am copying both letters from James' Documentary History of the Struggle for Religious Liberty in Virginia, pages 171-174. "Address of the Committee of the United Baptist Churches of Virginia, assembled in the city of Richmond, August 8, 1789, to the President of the United States of America: "Sir—Among the many shouts of congratulation that you receive from cities, societies, States, and the whole world, we wish to take an active part in the universal chorus, in expressing our great satisfaction in your appointment to the first office in the nation. When America, on a former occasion, was reduced to the necessity of appealing to arms to defend her natural and civil rights, a Washington was found fully adequate to the exigencies of the dangerous attempt; who, by the philanthropy of his heart and the prudence of his head, led forth her untutored troops into the field of battle, and, by the skillfulness of his hands, baffled the projects of the insulting foe and pointed out the road to independence, even at a time when the energy of the Cabinet was not sufficient to bring into action the natural aid of the confederation, from it respective sources. "The grand object being obtained, the independence of the States acknowledged, free from ambition, devoid of thirst of blood, our hero returned, with those he commanded, and laid down the sword at the feet of those who gave it him. 'Such an example to the world is new.' Like other nations, we experience that it requires as great valor and wisdom to make an advantage of a conquest as to gain one. "The want of efficacy in the confederation, the redundancy of laws, and their partial administration in the States, called aloud for a new arrangement in our systems. The wisdom of the States for that purpose was collected in a grand convention, over which you, sir, had the honor to preside. A national government, in all its, parts, was recommended as the only preservation of the Union, which plan of government is now in actual operation. "When the constitution first made its appearance in Virginia, we, as a society, had unusual struggling of mind, fearing that the liberty of conscience, dearer to us than property or life, was not sufficiently secured. Perhaps our jealousies were heightened by the usage we received in Virginia under the regal government, when mobs, fines, bonds and prisons were our frequent repast. "Convinced, on the one hand, that without an effective national government the States would fall in disunion and all the consequent evils, and on the other hand, fearing that we should be accessory to some religious oppression, should any one society in the Union preponderate over the rest; amidst all these inquietudes of mind our consolation arose from this consideration—viz., the plan must be good, for it has the signature of a tried, trusty friend, and if religious liberty is rather insecure in the Constitution, 'the Administration will certainly prevent all oppressions, for a WASHINGTON will preside.' According to our wishes, the unanimous voice of the

Union has called you, sir, from your beloved retreat, to launch forth again into the faithless seas of human affairs, to guide the helm of the States. May that divine munificence which covered your head in battle make you a yet greater blessing to your admiring country in time of peace! Should the horrid evils that have been so pestiferous in Asia and Europe—faction, ambition, war, perfidy, fraud, and persecution for conscience sake, ever approach the borders of our happy nation, may the name and administration of our beloved President, like the radiant source of day, scatter all those dark clouds from the American hemisphere. “And, while we speak freely the language of our hearts, we are satisfied that we express the sentiments of our brethren whom we represent. The very name of Washington is music in our ears, and, although the great evil in the States is the want of mutual confidence between rulers and people, yet we all have the utmost confidence in the President of the States, and it is our fervent prayer to Almighty God that the Federal Government, and the governments of the respective States, without rivalship, may so co-operate together as to make the numerous people over whom you preside the happiest nation on earth, and you, sir, the happiest man, in seeing the people whom, by the smiles of Providence, you saved from vassalage by your valor and made wise by your maxims, sitting securely under their vines and fig trees, enjoying the perfection of human felicity. May God long preserve your life and health for a blessing to the world in general, and the United States in particular; and when, like the sun, you have finished your course of great and unparalleled services, and go the way of all the earth, may the Divine Being, who will reward every man according to his works, grant unto you a glorious admission into his everlasting kingdom, through Jesus Christ. This, sir, is the prayer of your happy admirers. “By order of the Committee. “SAMUEL HARRIS, Chairman. “REUBEN FORD, Clerk.” WASHINGTON’S REPLY “To the General Committee, Representing the United Baptist Churches in Virginia: “Gentlemen—I request that you will accept my best acknowledgements for your congratulations on my appointment to the first office in the nation. The kind manner in which you mention my past conduct equally claims the expression of my gratitude. “After we had, by the smiles of Divine Providence on our exertions, obtained the object for which we contended, I retired at the conclusion of the war, with an idea that my country could have no further occasion for my services, and with the intention of never again entering public life. But when the exigencies of my country seemed to require me once more to engage in public affairs, an honest conviction of duty superseded my former resolution, and became my apology for deviating from the happy plan which I had adopted. “If I could have entertained the slightest apprehension that the Constitution framed by the Convention, where I had the honor to preside, might possibly endanger the religious rights of any ecclesiastical society,

certainly I would never have placed my signature to it; and if I could now conceive that the general government might be so administered as to render the liberty of conscience insecure, I beg you will be persuaded that none would be more zealous than myself to establish effective barriers against the horrors of spiritual tyranny and every species of religious persecution; for you doubtless remember I have often expressed my sentiments, that any man, conducting himself as a good citizen, and being accountable to God alone for his religious opinions, ought to be protected in worshipping the Deity according to the dictates of his own conscience. "While I recollect with satisfaction that the religious society of which you are members have been, throughout America, uniformly and almost unanimously the firm friends to civil liberty, and the persevering promoters of our glorious revolution, I cannot hesitate to believe that they will be the faithful supporters of a free, yet efficient, general government. Under this pleasing expectation, I rejoice to assure them that they may rely upon my best wishes and endeavor to promote their prosperity. "In the meantime, be assured, gentlemen, that I entertain a proper sense of your fervent supplications to God for my temporal and eternal happiness. "I am, gentlemen, your most obedient servant, "GEORGE WASHINGTON." Again, I hope this lengthy reading has been profitable as well as interesting to you. Nevertheless, our time is exhausted for today. Farewell.

The Christian and Civil Government (37th)

The study today continues with the history of the struggles for religious freedom in the United States of America and John Leland's work after he returned to Massachusetts from Virginia.) In the preceding podcast the letter John Leland wrote for the Baptist General Committee to President George Washington and President Washington's reply was presented. This, with previous studies, exhibited the tremendous influence of the Baptists with the assistance of John Leland in securing religious freedom in the United States. As Edwin Gaustad said, "John Leland led Virginia's Baptists in a concerted drive for full liberty, not mere toleration. When the Revolution was over, his vigilance increased as he pushed for complete disestablishment of the Anglican Church. In 1788 Leland headed the group opposing ratification of the Constitution because of its lack of specific guarantees for religious freedom, while James Madison led the faction favoring ratification. The two met for debate, Madison proving so persuasive that he won Leland's support. This fortunate agreement made Virginia's critical support of the Constitution a virtual certainty. In 1791 Leland returned to New England, his original home, there to assist in a longer struggle for disestablishment." A Religious History of America by Edwin Scott

Gaustad, page 119. In the letter to President Washington, it was stated that "the liberty of conscience" is "dearer to us than property or life." Can we say this today? Are we willing to sacrifice our property, even our life, for the liberty of conscience? Recently Caesar, civil government, issued mandates, fines, and imprisonments against religious institutions, even the congregation of the God, and there was (and still is in some places) wholesale caving in of all congregations and denominations and religious establishments. This was not only world-wide, but in the United States of America where the Constitution clearly declares that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances." The laws in our country are to be made by Congress. If a President issues an Executive Order it can be overturned by Congress. However, the government under the domination by presidents, health officials, governors, and mayors have (and are continuing) to exercise power and domination to prohibit the house of God to peaceably assemble. Additionally, large corporations and mega media businesses are exercising their power to abridge "the freedom of speech" and even the press in some cases for the purpose of establishing their totalitarian beliefs. In other words, they are seeking to establish their beliefs (i.e., their religious ideologies) as they seek to crush all who oppose them. Our forefathers, especially our Baptist forefathers, sacrificed persecution by fines, imprisonments, torture, loss of property, and loss of life to secure this freedom that is rapidly being taken from us. Again I ask if there is such a spirit in us today, or have we sold out to the world and its systems that are seeking to place its foot of tyranny on our necks? Time will tell, but it appears that many professing Christians are in name only. If nothing else, I believe, there is one barometer or gauge that will indicate where we are on the scale—prayer. If our minds and hearts are consumed with the affairs of this life and we are not devoting ourselves in prayer to the Lord regarding these things, it is a large sign that we are part of the problem. Yes, this is one thing that each Christian can do; he can pray. Are you praying about these things? Do you believe God can overrule the powers that be? Are you willing to give your property or life for liberty of conscious? I believe these and other such like questions need to be faced by us and answered honestly before the Lord. Where do you stand, or are you willing to simply ignore such questions and go on with your jobs, video games, entertainments, and social activities as you become enslaved to the totalitarian system? If you strive to do anything, please remember that we must conduct ourselves as a Christian and seek to present a Christ-like spirit. We must, at all cost, not engage in such a battle in the energy of the flesh. Equally, the focal point in all our endeavors must be for the honor and glory of the Lord. We

should not desire or seek for liberty and freedom to simply live a life of ease and comfort. We should seek for the blessing of assembling for the purpose of worshiping the Lord and hearing the gospel proclaimed. God, by the writings of the Apostle Paul, exhorts us to pray for kings and all that are in authority not only that we might live "a quiet and peacefully life," but that it be done "in all godliness and honesty," I Timothy 2:1-2. However, to return to the life and influence of John Leland, I would like to devote some time to Gaustad's closing sentence, "In 1791 Leland returned to New England, his original home, there to assist in a longer struggle for disestablishment." Though freedom of religion was established in the Constitution of the United States, some states continued to practice suppression of religion. In an earlier podcast, we noted that the state of Massachusetts continued to maintain laws of taxation for the support of certain religious sects for years after the first amendment was added to the Constitution. In fact, it was not until 1917, that Article 46, Section 1, of the Massachusetts' Constitution was ratified and adopted which stated, "No law shall be passed prohibiting the free exercise of religion." John Leland labored to remove such laws. "As soon as he landed again on its shores [i.e., the shores of New England], he commenced anew the warfare against religious intolerance, and the defence [sic] of the cause that had so signally triumphed in Virginia. During his stay in New London, he published his 'Right of Conscience Inalienable,' and afterwards, from time to time, other works of the same character …." The Writings of John Leland, Edited by L. F. Greene, page 55. We covered some of the struggles for religious freedom in Massachusetts while studying the lives of Obadiah Holmes and Isaac Backus. Now we will look somewhat at the influence of Leland as he, too, labored with Backus in seeking for full religious freedom in this state. Please allow me to quote again from The Writings of John Leland: It [i.e. religious liberty] had struggled for existence, and found some advocates from the first settlement of the state, but was kept constantly shackled by certificate laws, and other expedients of ecclesiastical tyranny. At length, in the beginning of 1811, a decision by Judge Parsons, that no society, not incorporated by law, could claim even the pitiful privilege of drawing back money, awakened the fears of the dissenters, and a circular Address, accompanied by a petition to the legislature, pray for a revision of the laws respecting public worship, was circulated through the state. As the solicitations of the people of Cheshire, Mr. Leland accepted a seat in the legislature, for the special purpose of aiding the measures petitioned for. His speech, delivered during the debate on the subject, may be found in another part of this work [i.e., in this book from which I'm quoting.] A law was finally passed that gave some relief, but not complete satisfaction. The "stump" of the tree of ecclesiastical oppression, so carefully preserved "with a band of iron and brass," continued,

therefore, to furnish a subject for his animadversion [i.e, criticism or censure; a comment or remark, especially a critical one], in various essays, addresses, etc., and he improved such opportunities as were offered him, as a matter of duty, and in fulfillment of the public pledge he had given, that "as long as he could speak with his tongue, wield a pen, or heave a cry to heaven, whenever the rights of men, the liberty of conscience, or the good of his country were invaded by fraud or force, his feeble efforts should not lie dormant." … To neutralize the effect of these, and to destroy the confidence reposed in him, reports were industriously circulated in some newspapers, that "he had renounced the Christian faith, and the sacraments of the Lord's Supper, and been excommunicated from the church." Pages 55-56. Before closing this study, I will supply a couple of quotes from Leland. "Disdain mean suspicion, but cherish manly jealousy; be always jealous of your liberty, you rights. Nip the first bud of intrusion on your constitution. Be not devoted to men; let measures be your object, and estimate men according to the measures they pursue. Never promote men who seek after a state-established religion; it is spiritual tyranny—the worst of despotism. … Guard against those men who make a great noise about religion, in choosing representatives. It is electioneering intrigue. If they knew the nature and worth of religion, they would not debauch it to such shameful purposes. If pure religion is the criterion to denominate candidates, those who make a noise about it must be rejected; for their wrangle about it, proves that they are void of it. Let honesty, talents and quick dispatch, characterize the men of your choice. Such men will have a sympathy with their constituents, and will be willing to come to the light, that their deeds may be examined. Remember that the genuine meaning of republicanism is self-government; if you would, then, be true disciples in your profession, govern yourselves." Page 267 of Writings. "Let Christianity stand upon its own basis, it is the greatest blessing that ever was among men; but incorporate it into the civil code and it becomes the mother of cruelties." Page 356 of Writings. While I am tempted to quote much more from John Leland, our time is up for today. Farewell.

The Christian and Civil Government (38th)

The study today gives an overview of the podcast concerning the history of the struggles for religious freedom in the United States of America and demonstrates some of the inconsistencies of the Baptists during the same era.) In previous studies we found that the idea of civil government seeking to enforce religion on society is a pagan philosophy as witnessed in the writings of Plato. This thinking was adopted by the Catholics in the writings of Augustine and others of his day. When the

Emperor Constantine joined the Catholic religion to the Roman government, this juggernaut sought to eradicate all those who refused to bow to Caesar and deny their allegiance to Jesus Christ. The conscious of the Christian is devoted to Christ as his Lord and Master and he is not to allow any other (person or thing) to occupy that throne. When the Protestant reformation took place, they likewise adopted the beliefs of Rome and sought to stamp out all who would not bow to their tyrannical practices. At first, reformers such a Martin Luther proclaimed the truth of liberty of conscious, but eventually denied this tenet and persecuted those who would not bow to the reformed ideology. Ulrich Zwingli, John Calvin, and all who accepted the reformed practice of civil government overruling religion sought to eliminate anyone who would not bow to their beliefs and practices. All who opposed them were generally classified as Anabaptists. Other names were also ascribed to them, but the broad overall term was that of Anabaptist. While the term "anabaptist" was used to designate all who opposed the reformers and Catholics that practiced the union of civil government to religion, there were a people that were classified by their enemies as Anabaptists that did not wish to be identified as such. They preferred to be called simply Baptists. In fact, the 1646 London Baptist Confession of Faith was composed by "seven congregations … of Christ in London, which are commonly (but unjustly) called Anabaptists." There were various reasons as to why they did not want to be identified as such, but that is not our objective at this time. We simply desire to note that Baptists have ever opposed the idea that civil government is to rule over or interfere with the congregation of God. In fact, scripturally speaking, there is no human authority higher than the assembly of Christ. The concept of a denomination or any organization as a ruling body over congregations is totally foreign to the Word of God. The Head or Authority over each God ordained congregation is the Lord Jesus Christ. Yes, a congregation may join another congregation or congregations for a common cause, or a congregation may invite a congregation(s) or a minister(s) to assist them in a matter, but the final say or authority is the membership of the congregation. Likewise, "parachurch" organizations are not found in Bible. Such organizations are man-made and are to be avoided by the house of God. Such organizations are of modern origin. While I digress somewhat, it is important to know that not only civil government has no authority over or within the congregation of the Lord, but no other entity does either. Additionally, it is important to know that no assembly of Christ should submit itself to civil government by signing itself up under a 501(c)(3) nonprofit status with the government for governmental benefits. Nor should congregations or religious institutions appeal to civil government to maintain or advance the commission given by the Lord Jesus Christ. Oddly, while the Baptists labored so intently for religious freedom, those in New England did not see the

inconsistency of their doctrine when they appealed to Congress to govern over the publications of the Bible to assure they were correct. In 1790, Isaac Backus recorded in his diary that the Warren Association received a letter from the Committee of the Congregational Ministers of Massachusetts of Boston "to move us to address the Congress about new editions of the Bible, to see that they were correct." The Diary of Isaac Backus, edited by William G. McLoughlin, Volume III, page 1295. In a footnote, McLoughlin supplied the following footnote: [Taken from the minutes of the association the following:] Dr. Stillman communicated a letter to the Association, which he had received from the Committee of the Congregational Ministers of Massachusetts, informing him, that they had presented a petition to Congress, requesting their "attention to several impressions of the Bible now making, representing the importance of accuracy in these impressions; and earnestly praying that they would take such measures as the Constitution may permit, that no edition of the Bible, or its translation be published in America, without it being carefully inspected, and certified to be free from error; and requesting the concurrence of the Baptists interest, throughout the United States, in this matter, which is of the highest importance to all denominations of Christians, as they all appeal to the Holy Bible as the standard of truth." Upon due consideration of this matter, Voted, That we the Members of this Association feel ourselves under very great obligations to our reverend brethren, for their early attention to the preservation of the purity of the Holy Scriptures. Voted, That Dr. Stillman, Mr. Backus, Mr. Smith, Mr. Baldwin, and Mr. Green, be appointed a committee, on behalf of this Association, to prepare and transmit a petition to Congress on this important subject. [McLoughlin's follow-up comments.] The petition was drawn and sent, the Baptists being as willing as the Standing Order to think of the United States as a "Christian" (i.e., evangelical Protestant) state. Congress, they believed, had the right and duty to protect and promote evangelical Christianity for the good of society, and they assumed that the Holy Bible was accepted as the source of revealed authority by all denominations. A few years later the Baptists of New England even suggested that it would be perfectly proper for Congress to allocate some of the taxpayers' money for the support of foreign missions. Not even Backus saw the threat to religious freedom involved in assigning such powers to the legislature. Congress, of course, took no action upon the petition. But it was not the last time the Baptists cooperated with the Standing ministers in seeking congressional enactment of religious laws—in 1828 both groups fought against Sunday mail delivery. And both sanctioned, after 1830, outlawing the Mormons and prohibiting the sale and manufacture of alcoholic beverages. Pages 1295-1296. John Leland would not have agreed and was more consistent regarding the separation of civil government from religious involvement. McLoughlin said of

him, “Next to Backus the outstanding American Baptist exponent of the separation of church and state in the eighteenth century, Leland was associated with Jefferson and Madison in the fight for disestablishment of the Episcopal church in Virginia. Like them, he spoke and wrote from a rationalists Enlightenment standpoint, so that his statements on the separation of church and state are less representative of the pietistic Baptist position than are Backus’s. The Diary of Isaac Backus, Volume III, pages 1260-1261. That Leland would not fight against Sunday mail delivery can be seen from “Extract of a Letter to Col. R. M. Johnson, Dated January 8, 1830,” “Transportation of the Mail,” and “Extracts From a Letter to Hon. R. M. Johnson, March 29, 1830” as found on pages 561-569 in The Writings of John Leland, edited by L. F. Greene. Also, in the first document listed, he further commented on Congress paying chaplains for their services rendered. Note the following: I am sorry the Congress have committed themselves by a precedent of giving their chaplains a legal reward for religious services. How preposterous the sound! A far-fetched construction supports it. The law of reason and revelation enjoin a reward to the laborer; but if Congress should reward the chaplains with their own contributions, it would look more like simple Christianity. The people at large have none of the devotion or instruction of the chaplain, nor any voice in electing him; why then should they be taxed where they are not represented? The chaplain, who would not attend, on request, and trust to the promise of Christ and the benevolence of his friends for his reward, without legal obligation, would be selling his prayers for money, and turning the gospel into merchandise. The thing here spoken of, is a small thing, which the nation can never feel; but trace it to its root, and it contains that principle which is so pernicious in the world, and is now used as a stirrup, by the petitioners, to mount the steed and ride down the people. Page 563. I apologize for the abrupt ending, but our time is up for today. Farewell.

The Christian and Civil Government (39th)

The study today gives insights to the struggles and inconsistencies of the Baptist particularly in the New England states after securing religious freedom in the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States of America. It further outlines why many today are quick to give up their freedom to the government because of taxation advantages.) We closed our previous podcast in giving some inconsistencies among the Baptists regarding the influence of civil government in supporting religion, especially the Christian religion. It had to do with addressing “Congress about new editions of the Bible, to see that they were correct.” We further quoted from John Leland to show that he was more consistent in the separation of civil

government from religion than Isaac Backus. He admitted that it appeared to be a small and insignificant matter, but the principle of paying chaplains for their services in Congress can be "used as a stirrup, by the petitioners, to mount the steed and ride down the people." Though Isaac Backus supported the idea of Congress being an authority to validate which edition of the Bible was correct, he said regarding the government and Constitution of the United States that "the fear of the people is a greater check to the lusts of offices, than in any government ever erected before by men." The Diary of Isaac Backus, edited by William G. McLoughlin, Volume III, page 1304. Of this McLoughlin added in a footnote the following: This is Backus's justification of the political theory of democracy, or government by consent of the governed. Yet, while he holds that "fear of the people," whose power is manifested through frequent elections, is an essential check to government officials, he indicates that the people themselves must be held in check by the fear of God. Ibid. This is so true. It matters not how many checks and balances are set in place to keep a government (or any organization for that matter) pure and strong, if the people are immoral it will degenerate to the morals of the mass. In other words, if the people are wicked and depraved, the "fear of the people" by governmental officials will accommodate wickedness by legislating for political advancement. The Lord willing, I plan to say more about this later, but at this time I desire show another inconsistency of the Baptists in the early days of this country that continues to plague religious freedom today. This is the evil of incorporating congregations and religious denominations for the purpose of tax advantages. Many Baptists in Backus's day were covetous and did not support their ministers properly and this caused problems sometimes between the membership and the pastor. Some of the Baptist ministers followed the belief of the Congregational ministers of a stated salary before accepting the position of pastor. And though Congress passed the amendment for religious freedom, states such as New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Connecticut continued taxing and compulsion of the people for the support of religious ministers. In a letter to John Rippon, a Baptist minister in England, Backus wrote, "And as tax and compulsion for the support of religious ministers, is still continued … I know not of one of our churches, especially in Massachusetts, who are entirely free of the evil of giving in a list of their society to their oppressors, which draws covetous men among us, whose influence with others hast cruelly withheld reasonable support from many of our ministers, a number of whom have been dismissed from their people, and equity is amazingly shut out from us." Diary, Vol. III, page 1315. Of this McLoughlin noted, "In short, the old spirit of civil disobedience, expressed in the refusal to submit certificates, had sadly waned. Moreover, Backus now was accepting the claim of the Standing Order that among the Baptists were many tax dodgers, who, he felt,

persuaded other Baptists not to provide adequate, contractual support for their pastors. Thus he blamed the failure of the Baptists in this regard on the tax laws of the state." Ibid., pages 1315-1316. Backus spoke again to Rippon in a twenty-four page letter to him regarding the sad condition in which the state of Rhode Island had fallen concerning this matter. In Backus's entry for September 13-14, 1791, regarding the Warren Association, he said, "Two Baptist societies sent petitions to our Legislature at Boston last May, for to be incorporated by law, so as to support their worship by tax and compulsion; but Elder Stillman prevented their being presented, and our association now gave their testimony against any such thing." Ibid., page 1317. At this point McLoughlin entered the following footnote: The movement to incorporate Baptist churches was only partly motivated by the fact that the law, as interpreted in county courts, stipulated that only incorporated religious societies were entitled to a share of the religious taxes that were collected. The other reason for incorporation was that it enabled a pastor to collect dues from the members of his congregation who had subscribed to a contract and then failed to fulfill it. Backus and most other Baptists opposed the practice because it acknowledged the right of the state to determine which sects or congregations should be incorporated and which should not. At this meeting the Warren Association condemned the incorporation of churches: "After much dispute on the subject, old Elder Isaac Backus, … who was the oldest in the association, rose, and began an account of what had happened to him and others, in consequence of such power in other denominations, and before he had done, the proposal appeared so black and anti-Christian, that it was thrown out for that year." (E. Smith, p. 234). [E. Smith is The Life, Conversion, Preaching, Travels and Sufferings of Elias Smith. Portsmouth, N.H., 1816.] Despite this condemnation and similar ones by other associations, an increasing number of Baptist societies in Massachusetts sought and obtained incorporation from the General Court after 1791. And in 1810, when the Supreme Court of Massachusetts made its definitive ruling that no congregation could obtain it share of religious taxes unless it was incorporated, the assembly was flooded with Baptist applicants. Ibid., pages 1317-1318, McLoughlin added a footnote to Backus's entry regarding the Warren Association in 1794. He wrote, "The association again voted that it was wrong for any Baptist church to apply to the legislature for incorporation 'for the purpose of supporting the ministry of the gospel,' and voted to take up 'an annual collection … for the purpose of assisting the Widows for those Ministers deceased who have been members of this Association.'" Ibid., page 1374. Another footnote by McLoughlin regarding Backus's entry for the Warren Association for September 8-9, 1795, reads as follows: In a letter … that Backus wrote to this association meeting on behalf of his church he expressed his views on

the incorporation of Baptist churches: "Our Lord Jesus Christ hath made laws enough to incorporate and support his churches and ministers, and a law of this state, made in 1768, empowers the deacons of every church to receive and hold estates or donations which were given for religious purposes, and to manage the same at the direction for the good of the church; and we conceive this to be all that can be safely done in that respect. For if some who are of the church, and some who are not, are incorporated together to manage estates to support religious ministers, it binds the church and the world together, and tends to hinder the church from being governed wholly by the laws of Christ, which is essentially necessary for her acting as a chast [sic] virgin to him … all compulsion by secular power hath ever been hurtful to the souls of men, and hath filled the world with strife and envy and other evil works." The essence of this letter was included in the official minutes as advice to the other churches, but it did not stop an increasing number of them from seeking, and obtaining, incorporation. Ibid., pages 1387-1388. The idea of congregations today not seeking incorporation status and submitting themselves to the government under the 501(c)(3) tax code status for tax advantage is generally considered foolish. Equally, the banking system often insists that congregations be established under this governmental regulation before opening an account with them. If a congregation pushes back with the bank, it is, to my knowledge, that the congregation must at least have an Employer Identification Number to open a bank account. According to Wikipedia, "The Employer Identification Number, also known as the Federal Employer Identification Number or the Federal Tax Identification Number, is a unique ninedigit number assigned by the Internal Revenue Service to business entities operating in the United States for the purposes of identification." While the minister is a servant unto the Lord and the congregation, and the congregation should support him accordingly, he is not to be a hireling or preach for an established salary. The congregation may agree with generosity and love to support their minister, but the minister is not to demand or negotiate a salary before he preaches. But that is another study that we do not have time to discuss today. As the government continually seeks ways to bring the congregations of the Lord under its authority, we must labor, and if needs be, suffer, to be obedient to the Lord regarding such matters. However, our time is exhausted for today. Farewell.

The Christian and Civil Government (40th)

The study today gives insights concerning the overall status and confusion of many denominations and congregations regarding the importance of this subject. It is feared that not only all branches of so-called Christian religion, but the Baptists as

a whole are totally unaware of the importance of the place of the Christian and his association with civil government.) In our last study we saw some inconsistencies of the early Baptist, particularly in the New England states, as they sought religious freedom. We further outlined some of the dangers of many congregations and denominations registering with the government under the 501(c)(3) tax code status and the banking institutions demanding that congregations be identified by the government in order to have a banking account. More and more the government is stretching its tentacles to paralyze congregations and endeavoring to force them to totally bow to the state for any and all reasons. In some places it is suggested by the government to make it illegal for congregations to meet together for worship unless the members are vaccinated against certain diseases. We have seen all across this country, as well as many other countries, where religious institutions and Christian congregations bowed to the government and closed their doors under the recent scare of a virus. Additionally, some congregations continued to obey the Lord and exercise their First Amendment right and were fined and their ministers put in jail as well as fined. Needless to say, the spirit of our Baptist forefathers is rare today and in many places nonexistent. In fact, the status of the nation is more that of the days of the judges in Israel: "every man did that which was right in his own eyes," Judges 17:6b; 21:25b. To show somewhat the state of confusion today we will present some vignettes of this nation. In a previous podcast, we pointed out the inconsistency of the Baptists in 1790 when they joined with the Congregationalists in petitioning the Congress of the United Stated to govern over the publications of the Bible to assure that only "correct" bibles were printed. Thankfully this was rejected by Congress. Sadly, many today (even Baptists) would think this to be a great thing. While deciding which Bible might have been a simple thing in the 1790's, this would not be the case today with all of the different translations and other publications presented as the Bible. In March of this year (2021) the Tennessee House passed a resolution declaring the Bible as the official state book. The representative that presented the bill is not only a member of a Baptist congregation, but he had previously pastured the congregation for twenty-five years. He had presented this same bill two times previously knowing that it was in violation of the Tennessee Constitution. The "Baptist Press," the official news service of the Southern Baptist Convention, in their March 11, 2016 issue, reporting on this matter when the bill was previously presented in that year stated, "A similar bill was introduced in Mississippi in January and last year in Louisiana." While the "Baptist Press" reported on the article, it did not give any opinion regarding this issue. It is true that making the Bible a state book would not force religion on anyone; however, what if the state of Utah voted to make the Book of Mormons a state book, or if some other state voted to make the Koran a state

book? By default, such an action would declare that the government recognizes the religion propagated by such book as being superior to all others. Let us be clear: Caesar (civil government) has no authority in such matters and especially regarding the congregation of God. While I believe all men are responsible before God to worship and honor Him and they will give account to Him as to whether they do or not, it is not the place of civil government to be involved in such matters. Yes, ultimately, every knee will bow and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord over all (Philippians 2:9-11), but God will do that and not Caesar. To further show the confusion of some professed believers regarding the role of civil government in religion, a professed Christian news source named The World View in 5 Minutes gave the following in their broadcast on April 16, 2020, in their closing comments: And finally, 49 percent of Americans believe the Bible should have at least "some" influence on U.S. laws, while 23 percent say the Bible should have "a great deal" of influence, according to Pew Research. The study also found 28 percent of Americans believe that the Bible should take precedence over the will of the people in terms of influencing U.S. laws. Wisdom says in Proverbs 8:15-16, "By me kings reign, and rulers decree justice. By me princes rule, and nobles, all the judges of the earth." https://theworldview.com/#!news_broadcasts/doj-sides-wchristians-fined-for-drive-inservice-trump-pulls-world-health-funding-congo-muslims-kill-35-christians Note: over one-fourth of Americans believe the Bible should take precedence over the will of the people regarding the laws of governing the United States population. And this "Christian" new source evidently agrees from the passage from Proverbs quoted. Though the First Amendment to the U. S. Constitution, as well as the constitutions of many (if not all) of the states agree, that there should be freedom of religion for all, there continues to be a vast number of people that believe otherwise. Such people are either ignorant of the overall consequences of such a belief or they fully embrace the philosophy of the role of civil government in religion or the conscience of man as set forth by pagan philosophy and adopted by the Catholics and Protestants afterwards. Personally, I believe it is a mixture of both due to the mass indoctrination of the public school system, the ignorance and lack of teaching from the pulpits, and other contributing factors. In this day of instant mass communication, snippet conversations via text messaging, entertainments appealing to the base nature of man, and a total ignorance of true history as opposed to revisionist history, we have lost the insight of why there is a total breakdown of society and the remedy for it. Obviously, we live in a society of sinful people and ultimately all societies (kingdoms) will fail, but unless God changes the heart of man he will always follow the path to destruction. History has proven this. The Holy Scriptures proclaims and validates this truth as well. While the Christian will believe the Scriptures and the

unbeliever will reject it, he cannot escape the facts of history. Man refuse to believe the facts, but the facts still remain. Another sign of confusion and a display of total ignorance regarding the place of religion and the civil government is found a few miles from where it live. There is a Baptist congregation in the community that I frequently pass that has three American flags hanging on display on the front of their meeting house. I assume it is suppose to be some sort of display for the purpose to show respect to veterans, but I do not know that that is the reason. While I certainly have no problem in respecting our veterans who sacrificed so much to secure the freedoms we have been blessed with over the years, this is not the purpose of the congregation of God as established by the Lord Jesus Christ. The house of God is no place to display the flag of any country, outside or inside the building, or the Crusaders' flag either. The Crusaders' flag is not Christian. Also, the so-called Christian Flag equally should be removed from any congregation devoted to the truth of the gospel. The believer pledges his allegiance to Christ when he professes faith in Him and follows Him in scriptural baptism. Much more could be said regarding this subject, but I only submit this to show more the utter confusion of professing Christians regarding the overall issues concerning the Christian and civil government. While many people may consider this to be reactionary, it is as John Leland said regarding preachers being paid to perform a chaplain role in government: "The thing here spoken of, is a small thing, which the nation can never feel; but trace it to its root, and it contains that principle which is so pernicious in the world, and is now used as a stirrup, by the petitioners, to mount the steed and ride down the people." The Writings of John Leland, edited by L. F. Greene, page 563. Allow me at this point to say that I have great difficulty in seeing our flag being displayed on poles in all kinds of weather twenty-four hours of the day. I believe in honoring and respecting the flag as I was taught in my early days in grade school. In fact, occasionally, I was assigned the duty of either raising or lowering the flag which was done daily at our little country school. It was impressed on me the great importance of making sure that the flag in no way was desecrated by touching the ground, and if it did it had to be properly removed from service by either burning or burial. Obviously, when it began to rain we had to immediately take down the flag and store it in safety. Today, the flag may be on display more, but it appears to me that it is respected less, but that is another subject. Our purpose is to emphasize that the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ and His house is separate from the kingdoms of this world and the two are not to be joined together. Nevertheless, our time is up for today. Farewell.

The Christian and Civil Government (41st)

The study today provides some general suggestions regarding individual responsibility toward civil government. Obviously, no society or government will rise any higher than the people and the values and goals established by them.) We have presented several podcasts showing that the idea of civil government being a "nursing father" to the house of God or that civil government is to be a guardian to the congregation of God is a pagan/Catholic/Reformed/Protestant concept and not the historic position of the Baptists. As Charles F. James said, "The world—even the Christian world—was slow to understand and to lay hold of the true principle of soul liberty—a principle which had always been fundamental with the Baptists, and which, in the providence of God, they were destined to teach to their fellows." Documentary History of the Struggle for Religious Liberty in Virginia, page 141. It is sad (to say the least) that many professing Baptists today know nothing of this truth! It is hopeful that the past studies have given some enlightenment concerning this matter. Too many people are more interested in the pursuit of seeking intellectualism of the so-called classics or the vain philosophies of man than learning historical truth as given to us by the providential hand of Almighty God. Though it was previously mentioned in passing, I would like to discuss somewhat the role that a Christian may play in civil government. Obviously, there is a difference in the role of an individual Christian and that of a congregation or denomination or a religious institution in establishing government over mankind. One thing that should be known is that one of, if not the most powerful person in civil government is the county sheriff. Recently, while the federal and state governments in some places issued orders for congregations not to assemble due to certain diseases, many of the sheriffs made it clear that they would not enforce such orders. Some years back many sheriffs across the nation agreed that they would not support federal gun laws that violated the Second Amendment of the Constitution. Since the sheriff is one who is voted into office, the people of population of the county can control who does or does not occupy the office of county sheriff. Therefore, if you want to protect the right of freedom of religion, one of the most effective way to assure that you have the proper person in the office of the county sheriff. One important caveat is that the sheriff may be a tyrant and abuse the power given to him. We live in a sinful world and fallen man will do wickedly unless checked by either the power of man or by the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, it is important that the person occupying the office of sheriff is a man of honest integrity and under the microscope of the people over whom he serves. However, the reason that I mention the importance of the role of the county sheriff is if someone who desires to be active in

the political system and wants to know where to start to provide freedom of conscience and peace in the land is that he can be active in local politics and particularly with the office of the county sheriff. Obviously, this might equally include the office of the chief of police. While congress on the state or federal level may make laws, an unenforced law is ineffective. And, it is no wonder why the federal government is working to supply the local officials with training, equipment, and funds with strings attached so that they might control how sheriffs and chief of polices perform their jobs. With this being said, let us direct our attention more specifically with the difference in the role of the congregation and the individual regarding civil government. First, when studying the Scriptures, one is hard pressed to find anything that resembles an organized denomination as is generally found in organized religion today. Therefore, when such an organization places itself in the political arena supporting or campaigning against any political figure or political action it is outside the realm of scriptural support. Equally, such an organization does not have the biblical authority to impose its political ideologies on its membership, especially when such a member does not agree with the organized structure ruling over it. Secondly, this principle must equally apply to a congregation or assembly of the Lord. In other words, it is a violation of the conscience of each member when the leadership of a congregation strives to force some or all of the members to follow them in their political or civil opinions. Jesus Christ plainly stated in Matthew 16:18 that He would build His congregation. It is obvious that He did this before the Day of Pentecost because the three thousands that were converted that day were added to the one hundred and twenty that were previously meeting together in a congregational capacity. See Acts 1:15; 2:41. Prior to Christ going back to glory He gave the commission to His assembly to "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world," Matthew 28:19-20. (Regardless of whether one believes that this commission was given to the congregation or only to the apostles, the end results is the same because we are instructed in Ephesians chapter two that the assembly is "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone," Ephesians 2:20.) The teaching to be done in the great commission is only "all things whatsoever I" (that is, Christ) "have commanded you." Not one time is it found in the New Testament where the house of the Lord is commanded to change society, establish civil government, or become involved in the organizations and political arenas of the world. Jesus plainly stated that His kingdom is not of this world, John 19:36. While the house of the Lord is not to become involved in the civil affairs of the world, individual

members as citizens may do so. In fact, if we expect civil government to be established on righteous principles and govern righteously we must have just men in authority. The Holy Scriptures declare, "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God," II Samuel 23:3. Even pagans and unbelievers in general believe just and honest rulers are preferred over tyrants and unjust men. Obviously, when a Christian rules he will seek to be just in all his actions. For example, a judge who is a Christian cannot endorse or enforce an unjust law. He cannot knowingly support any law that is contrary to the Word of God. Too often senators or representatives will support an unrighteous ruling in order to try to get support later for a good law. Several years ago I visited our local state representative seeking his support for home schooling. There was a bill that I desired that he not support or vote for its passing. He said that he really was only supporting it to get other politicians to support a ruling for home school. I sought to persuade him to vote justly rather than for political expediency. I made it known to him that I wanted an honest representative that would only stand for just and right laws. While I was quite forthright in my appeal to him, I sought to not be offensive or self righteous. Each time I met him afterwards over the years we have always enjoyed each other's company, and he is still my state representative and is not aligned with a political system that I can support. I say this to say that we need to do all we can and to do it with a Christian spirit. I desire to say at this point that as a rule I believe it is best that ministers not be continually devoted to such work. When the congregation at Jerusalem ordained deacons, it was so that ministers would give themselves "continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word," Acts 6:4. Even though men like Isaac Backus, John Leland, and others in the early days of this country devoted time and were used of the Lord to secure religious freedom, most of their time was spent in preaching the gospel. The Lord may providentially use a minister on various occasions, but it is not their calling to run for political office and become involved the political system. On the other hand, we should pray that the Lord would raise up godly men who have the desire, wisdom, and strength to labor in the political arena justly. May the Lord deliver us from a system of politics where one only has the option of voting for the lesser of two evils. Where this is the case we only have evil men ruling over us. Also, we need to endeavor to hold such men accountable because when this is done even wicked men may be forced to vote for that which is right to keep their political station. It is obvious that we should always pray for those in authority over us, I Timothy 2:1-4. As Christians, we are to pray for our leaders: pray that God give them wisdom to rule over us justly; pray that God would either convert or restrain wicked rulers; pray that wicked rulers be revealed and removed from ruling over us. God can remove a Haman today as He did in the days of Esther. However, if we are going to sit back

and do nothing and the nation continue to decline into gross immorality, God has declared that the nation that forgets Him will be turned into hell, Psalm 9:17. In closing I want to say that the salvation of a nation and the security of the people do not rely on a perfect set of laws and constitutions, nor does it rely on honest and just leadership. It relies on the blessing of the Lord God. Obviously, the Lord will only bless a people that are just and righteous in their daily living. Much more can be said regarding this subject; however, I do not want to weary the audience by belaboring this matter. Our time is up for today. Farewell.

The Christian and Civil Government (42nd)

The study today concludes the topic of "The Christian and Civil Government." It provides some instructions regarding the individual responsibility of every individual toward God. Though the conscience of man is not to be forced by others in worshiping God, each person is responsible to bow to God and render obedience to Him as demanded by the Holy Scriptures.) While we live in a pluralistic society and the conscience of man is not to be forced by any other, especially civil government, each person is responsible to render proper worship and obedience to God. Without doing a lengthy study on the various religions of the world and seeking to verify which God is to be obeyed and worshiped, I will simply state that there is only one God and He alone is to be worshiped and there is only one book that gives this information to man. This God is Jehovah and He is designated as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ. The book is called the Holy Scriptures as given to man by divine inspiration in the Hebrew text of the Old Testament and the Greek text of the New Testament. The text of the Old Testament is designated as the Masoretic Text and the text of the New Testament is identified as the Textus Receptus or the Received Text. I am award of those designated as "higher critics" that challenge this but time will not allow us to validate why we make this claim. The Bible does not seek to prove the existence of God and creation as stated therein, it simply declares these truths. Likewise we are not taking the time to prove why we believe as we do, we are simply stating our position and leaving it with each man before God as to whether he believes it or not. Also, to avoid much confusion as to what these Hebrew and Greek texts say, we present the truths of the Word of God from what we believe to be the best English translation from them in the King James translation of 1611. Again, I am well aware of the plurality of translations today that have done more to confuse man than to clarify the truths declared in the Hebrew and Greek texts. Nevertheless, I believe (time permitting) the position I am taking is the best and wisest course in the obedience of man to the one

true and living God. As we previously stated, no man has the right to force another against his conscience as to how one should worship. Because we live in a pluralistic society that allows each person to worship as he pleases so long as he does not violate the rights of another, God does not give any man this freedom. The Scriptures plainly declare that God created the universe and man. He said that the earth is the place to be inhabited. Isaiah 45:18 declares, "For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the LORD; and there is none else." Therefore, we do not need to spend billions and billions of dollars to try to determine the origin of life or where life is found. Even the first verse of the Bible declares that the beginning of all things was created by God. The first chapter of the Bible tells us that God created all things in six twenty-four hour days. When comparing the creation with the fourth commandment given by God at Mount Sinai, it is obvious that the days in Genesis one were twenty-four hour days. Exodus 20:11 says, "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it." Throughout the Scriptures the Lord reminds us that He is the God of creation and that He is the Creator of the universe is a central part of the gospel. Revelation 14:6-7 makes this plain: "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." II Thessalonians makes it plain that those who do not obey the gospel will be punished with everlasting destruction: "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day." (II Thessalonians 1:7-10.) Man may deny the Creator and refuse to believe the truth of creation and the gospel concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, but in doing so it will be to his own destruction. Today there are many so-called gospels presented, but the Scriptures make it plain that there is only one gospel; there is only one declaration regarding the salvation of man. Galatians 1:6-9 declares, "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an

angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." To preach or believe a false gospel sets one in danger of eternal fire. This is the declaration of the Word of God. Therefore, it is essential to know and believe the truth of God. Modern man declares that there are many ways to God, but the Scriptures do not teach this. Yes, man in a pluralistic society may believe man things, but not before God. Immediately after the flood, God established capital punishment. "And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man. And you, be ye fruitful, and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein," Genesis 6:5-6. Regarding the validity of capital punishment, the Apostle Paul said to Porcius Festus, the Roman governor of Judea, "For if I be an offender, or have committed any thing worthy of death, I refuse not to die: but if there be none of these things whereof these accuse me, no man may deliver me unto them. I appeal unto Caesar," Acts 25:11. Modern man may deny the death penalty or legalize abortion, but in doing so he violates the plain teaching of God and shall be destroyed. Psalm 9:17 declares, "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." Study the history of the world and this truth is plainly seen. All of life is governed by the Holy Scriptures. We are told how we came to be and Who we are to worship. We are told how we are to worship Him and to deviate from the commands of God brings judgment on us individually and nationally. We were created as male and female. We were commanded as to how a family is to be governed. We are instructed how a congregation is established and how it is to function. We are taught how we are to treat each and every human being. We are taught how we are to work and how we are to serve each other. God did not leave any area of life to man as to how he is to conduct himself. It matters not what laws man and government passes or how judges disregard the validity of the Holy Scriptures, God will hold each individual responsible as to how he obeys the Bible. Regardless of your standing in life, from a world leader down to the child at home, you are responsible to God as to how you live. You do not have the right to do as you please. God holds you accountable and He will not overlook any sin. Jesus Christ said, "But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." Matthew 12:36-37. The Lord further stated in Revelation 21:7-8, "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. But

the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." Finally, the Lord stated the following that not only applies to the book of Revelation, but equally applied to the whole of the Holy Scriptures: "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." (Revelation 22:18-19.) Yes, in a pluralistic society, neither civil government nor any other authority has the right to dictate the conscience of any person regarding worship. However, each and every other individual is responsible before God as to how he lives and worships and unless he obeys God according to the Holy Scriptures he will be brought into judgment. As stated in a previous podcast, "the salvation of a nation and the security of the people do not rely on a perfect set of laws and constitutions, nor does it rely on honest and just leadership. It relies on the blessing of the Lord God." Obviously, the Lord will only bless a people that are living in obedience to His Word. I have only given a brief overview of this topic and books could be written along this line, but we will bring this subject to a close at this time. Farewell.

The Salvation of God

(The study for today is the first of a series concerning the doctrine of salvation. Obviously, this subject is an umbrella covering many other doctrines taught in the Scriptures. The lesson today introduces the need for such a subject because of the general misconceptions believed by many.)

Today we desire to begin studying a subject that is often misunderstood and misrepresented in many ways by both Baptists and Protestants. This is the doctrine of salvation. The modern concept of salvation considered from a so-called Christian perspective is that of a person making a decision regarding some religious standpoint. Regardless of the system of religious ideology and the form in which such a decision is made, this modern idea when reduced to its most basic concept is nothing more than a belief based on the thought of some person. The idea presented in most pulpits today is that Christ died for the sins of everybody. Such belief causes people to believe they can live anyway they please and still be saved or live with God in eternity. In 2009, a man went on a shooting spree and killed and wounded some people and then killed himself. In a diary prior to the shooting he wrote, "Maybe

soon, I will see God and Jesus. At least that is what I was told. Eternal life does NOT depend on works. If it did, we will all be in hell. Christ paid for EVERY sin, so how can I or you be judged BY GOD for a sin when the penalty was ALREADY paid. People judge but that does not matter. I was reading the Bible and The Integrity of God beginning yesterday, because soon I will see them." Such is the thinking of many and, sadly, such is the conclusion of the false teaching about salvation in many pulpits today. If, indeed, Christ paid for the sins of everyone then the obvious conclusion is that everyone will be saved. However, when one studies the Holy Scriptures he finds that there are many more things involved than a simple decision. Also the Scriptures do not teach that Jesus paid for the sins of every human being. There are other subjects that must align and fit together to better understand the doctrine of the salvation of God; such things as the following: the fall of man; sin; redemption; justification; adoption; faith; regeneration or the new birth; the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ; the resurrection of man; the judgment of man; election; reprobation; the will of God; the will of man; predestination; the sovereignty of God, and many other related topics. Some of these subjects are rarely taught by the modern preacher today.

When the idea of salvation is considered, one question should be salvation from what? Sadly, today the number is increasing where many question the reality of God and if there is no God then from what does man need to be saved? Likewise why do a vast amount of people believe in some kind of existence after physical death, if indeed there is no God? It is not uncommon to hear that when a person dies he is portrayed as someone who is continuing his avocation or dream in the after-life; for example, the golfer is playing golf; the race car driver is running his race; the gardener is enjoying his produce or his vast ocean of flowers and shrubs. The list can be expanded to almost any occupation or profession. However, if there is no Creator, how is it that such a state of after-life becomes a reality from non-living matter or from some type of cosmic explosion? Explosions do not create; explosions destroy. Obviously we cannot answer all of these questions or try to search out the end results of each of the different philosophies of life. As a Christian, our purpose is to study and seek the answers to such questions as found in the Scriptures of God—the book called the Bible.

Logic, as well as common sense, tells us that there must be a first cause of all cause that is without cause. This is not meant to sound sophisticated or to be some high profound philosophical statement. It is simply saying that there must first have been some intelligent being that created everything and that *nothing* caused this intelligent being to be. He always existed. He is God.

In order to know anything about God and His acts, God must reveal it to us. Man can study the creation of God and learn some things about Him, but such knowledge is limited and often perverted because of the sinful nature of man. In fact, man today

is spending billions with the space programs of the various nations and one of the main objectives is trying to find out how we got here. Man supporting such programs also are seeking to find sustainable life on other planets and if there are other forms of life different from what is found on planet Earth. Such people believe that life as we know it will cease here and that we need to establish life elsewhere to be saved from our current self-destructive path. However, let us turn our attention to the Bible because this is the only source that tells man how the creation was made, how man was made, why God created the universe, what caused the universe to be destructive, how man became sinful, from what does man need to be saved, how is it that man is saved, what is the purpose of salvation, what is the results of salvation, and many other things.

As stated before, the only way man can know God and the reason for creation is for God to reveal these things to him. God did this by inspiring man to write down the things that He would have man to know. As we will see in further studies, God must further work a change in man because of his fallen condition to better understand the written Word of God—the Holy Scriptures or the Bible. However, after God changes the will and understanding of many by the new birth, man is still unable to understand everything in the Scriptures. Yet, enough can be understood by man so that he is without excuse for his sinful lifestyle and his refusal to be obedient to the commands and laws of God. But when God initially created everything He said that all of creation was "good" and "very good," Genesis 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, and 31. It was not long before man sinned by eating of the one and only tree in creation forbidden to him. This sin by Adam caused a curse to be placed on the creation. See Genesis 3:14-24. Though Eve and the devil were involved in the fall in the Garden of Eden, the fall of man (mankind) was charged to the sin Adam. Romans 5:12 says, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Though the idea of representative headship is generally denied by modern man, it is still true. We will not at this time study out this truth, but for those who may be interested in a quick glance I would suggest a few additional passages that reveal this doctrine. They are Romans 5:12-19; I Corinthians 11:1-16; 14:34-35; I Timothy 2:11-14.

At this time I would like to give a definition of salvation that I have used for years to explain what I mean. It is as follows:

> Salvation is that all-inclusive word summing up all spiritual blessings bestowed by God on His elect people in Christ through the Holy Spirit. This wonderful word denotes perpetual deliverance beginning in the mind of God and experienced in the believer's life. Its highest claim is victory over sin, sorrow, and death. Its glorious and final reality is eternal life with Christ Jesus our Lord. This is common salvation; that is, it is common or it belongs to all the elect of God.

Jude 3.

As you can see from this definition, a lot is involve in showing the truth of this definition from the plain teaching of the Holy Scriptures. Obviously, it is much more than the concept of someone "making a decision," or believing that Christ paid the sin debt for every human being and regardless of how a person might live he will still be with God in peace forever after one's death. As we explore this definition, we will not necessarily start at the beginning of the definition and work our way through it. I believe it is important that we begin at the origin of salvation—God—or as stated in the definition "beginning in the mind of God." Therefore, since God is the first cause of all cause, then the cause of salvation resides in God. The Scriptures plainly declare that before the creation, God ordained the salvation of a people designated as the elect, the sheep, the believer, as well as other descriptive terms. Immediately, many will cry that such is not fair! The issue is not whether it is fair or not. The point is, "Is it just?" In fact, as we progress through the study of the subject, if God had not selected some to be saved then no one would be saved; the whole human race would be cast into eternal fire to suffer for their sins forever.

I covet your prayers as we work through this profound and voluminous subject. It is tempting to jump into the middle of the subject seeking to proclaim each facet of this glorious diamond all at the same time, which, of course, is impossible. May God bless us to build from the solid foundation of the Holy Scriptures and develop the picture so that all parts blend together into one glorious portrait magnifying the beauty of holiness in the salvation of God. Farewell.

Salvation—By What Standard

(The study for today establishes the standard by which we not only define and describe the doctrine of salvation and its related subjects, but it is the foundation on which all our podcasts are constructed. This seeks to avoid the confusion caused by the plurality of so-called translations propagated in modern times. It is essential that we know the will of God given by Him in the Holy Scriptures.)

In order to discuss anything there must be a standard whereby topics are to be measured. There cannot be two different standards used to derive the truth. For example, if two people desire to work together to build a house and one person believes twelve inches equals to a foot but the other person believes that a foot equals eighteen inches they cannot construct a house using different measurements. Likewise, when people do not agree on the standard of the Word of God they are likely never to agree as to what the truth is about salvation or any other ecclesiastical doctrine. Therefore, I will borrow from a previous podcast to establish the standard

that I will use to discuss the subject of salvation and the related doctrines. Much of the following paragraph is quoted verbatim with some adjustments to blend in with the subject at hand.

Without doing a lengthy study on the various religions of the world and seeking to verify which God is to be obeyed and worshiped and what salvation is, I will simply state that there is only one God and He alone is to be worshiped and there is only one book that gives this information to man. This God is Jehovah and He is designated as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ. The book is called the Holy Scriptures as given to man by divine inspiration in the Hebrew text of the Old Testament and the Greek text of the New Testament. The text of the Old Testament is designated as the Masoretic Text and the text of the New Testament is identified as the Textus Receptus or the Received Text. I am award of those designated as "higher critics" that challenge this but time will not allow us to validate why we make this claim. We may enlarge on this in later broadcasts. The Bible does not seek to prove the existence of God and the salvation as declared therein, it simply declares these truths. Also, to avoid much confusion as to what these Hebrew and Greek texts say, we present the truths of the Word of God from what we believe to be the best English translation from them in the King James translation of 1611. I am aware of the plurality of translations today and that this plurality of translations has done more to confuse man than to clarify the truths declared in the Hebrew and Greek texts. Nevertheless, I believe the position I am taking is the best and wisest course in the obedience of man to the one true and living God. This is not to say that the King James translation is without fault. There are some problems with it mainly due to the restrictions placed on the translators by the rules set forth by King James I. Still, I believe the virtues and merits far outweigh the difficulties found in it.

In order to show the confusion today that is caused by the plurality of the modern translations, let us look at one verse of the Scriptures; it is Hebrews 11:1. As stated in the King James Version (KJV), it reads, "Now faith is the ***substance*** of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." The New International Version (NIV) states, "Now faith is ***confidence*** in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see." The New American Standard Bible (NASB) says, "Now faith is *the* ***certainty*** of *things* hoped for, a proof of things not seen." The New English Translation (NET) declares, "Now faith is ***being sure*** of what we hope for, being convinced of what we do not see." The American Standard Version (ASV): "Now faith is ***assurance*** of *things* hoped for, a conviction of things not seen." The list could be enlarged but this should be enough to show why so many people are confused as to what the Bible teaches. All who believe the Bible agree that salvation is by grace through faith and that it is the gift of God, Ephesians 2:8. Therefore it is essential that we know ***what*** faith is. By looking at the different translations of Hebrew 11:1, we

find that they do not agree at least regarding one part of the verse. This is seen in the how the Greek word ὑπόστασις (hypostasis) is translated. The KJV says ***substance***; the NIV states ***confidence***; the NASB gives ***certainty***; the NET says ***being sure***; and, the ASV supplies ***assurance***.

Thayer gives the meaning of this Greek word as follows: … **1**. *a setting or placing under; substructure, foundation*: ... **2**. *that which has foundation, is firm; hence*, **a**. *that which has actual existence; a substance, real being*: ... **b**. *the substantial quality, nature*, of any person or thing. [Joseph Henry Thayer, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1967). pp. 644-645.] Richard Soule in his thesaurus give the following synonyms for substance: reality, hypostasis, ... essential nature, real being, real existence, ... essence, ... soul, chief part, essential part, vital part, body, ... stuff, ... (*Theol*.) divine essence, divine being. (Richard Soule, *A Dictionary of English Synonymes*, rev. ed. by George H. Howison (Boston, MA: Little, Brown, and Company, 1891, 1920). p. 413.) "By this we find that *faith* is the real *existence*, the *essence*, the *essential part*, the *vital part*, the *stuff* of things for which we hope. Faith is not a dream. It is not self-persuasion. It is not the product of one's imagination or something which has been conceived in the mind by emotional desires. This would be mysticism and existentialism. However, this is usually the contemporary concept of faith: a leap in the dark. But faith cannot actually be unless that in which faith rests is an actual fact." (*Justification: The Heart of the Gospel* by Jimmy Barber, page 102. From this we are told that faith is *reality, real existence, essence,* or *stuff* of that which is "hoped for" or of that which one expects to receive, it is not derived by the *confidence* or *assurance* that is conjured by a person's inner thoughts, mental process, or human will.

With all of these different ideas of faith as given by the various translations (and many other examples could be given), the average person is confused as to what faith is. One person thinks one thing and another person believes it to be something else. Multiply this by the many different ideas presented by the different translation and the average person in the pew is perplexed as to what faith really is. However, this is simply a small fraction of the problem. Multiply all the differences of the translations by the various translations and the confusion is so astronomical that hardly can any two people agree on anything that the Bible says. There must be a standard and that standard must be one and not two or three or more different concepts. Therefore, the standard that I use is the Masoretic Text of the Old Testament and the is Textus Receptus or the Received Text of the New Testament, with the English translation of the King James Bible as given by the providence of God.

(For those who desire to know more about why I believe as I do allow me to supply a partial list of books on this subject. They are as follows:

Two pamphlets by William O. Einwechter: *The Excellence of the Authorized*

Version and *English Bible Translations, by What Standard?*

The Legacy of the King James Bible by Leland Ryken;

The King James Version Defended by Edward F. Hills;

Defending the King James Bible by D. A. Waite;

Translators Revived; Biographical Notes of the KJV Bible Translators, by Alexander McClure;

Three books by David Otis Fuller: *Which Bible?, True or False?*, and *Counterfeit or Genuine: Mark 16? John 8?*

Three writings by John Owen as found in volume 16 of his writings as published by The Banner of Truth Trust: *Of the Divine Original, Authority, Self-Evidencing Light, and Power of the Sciptures …,* and *A Vindication of the Purity and Integrity of the Hebrew and Greek Texts* (Einwechter quotes from this in his English Bible Translations in Appendix I.), and *Some Exercitations About the Nature and Perfection of the Scripture ….*

For more information regarding the Hebrew vowel points see *A Dissertation Concerning the Antiquity of the Hebrew Language, Letters, Vowel Points, and Accents* by John Gill as found on Mount Zion Primitive Baptist Church's website. (The supplied link is for the first of sixteen dissertations: https://mountzionpbc.org/Gill%20John/John%20Gill%20A%20Disseration_1.pdf.)

Since words have meaning, it is important that everyone is on the same page and saying the same thing when discussing anything. To try to define salvation and its related subjects by using different translations that are portraying different words that sets forth different ideologies only creates confusion to say the least. Essentially, all Christian denominations and philosophies claim that salvation is the gift of God and/or it is by God. However, when looking at what is usually proclaimed and or practiced, salvation is presented as something caused by what man does rather than what God does. Just as we saw regarding the word "faith" in Hebrews 11:1 and the different translations, the newer translations presented faith as something that comes forth from and trusts in man. The Lord willing, we will discuss the subject of faith and its relation to salvation in future studies.

We have established the standard by which we believe and it is the standard whereby we will study the doctrine of salvation and all related topics. However, our time is up for today. Farewell.

Salvation—The Purpose of God

(Salvation was not an afterthought with God as a result of the fall of man. A brief study of some of the basic attributes of God proves this. The salvation of man was in

the mind and purpose of God from all eternity.)

It is unthinkable that someone would set out to do something and not have a purpose behind it. How much more unthinkable to believe that God determined to create the world and ordain salvation without a purpose? It is often portrayed that God created the universe but because of the fall of man He adapted a new plan so that man might retrieve himself from his fallen condition. In developing such a scheme one either forgets the nature of God or he willingly refuses to believe God to be Who He is. The Scriptures plainly teach that God has many attributes and some of these attributes reside solely in Him. Let us consider three of them at this time: omniscience; omnipotence; and, omnipresence.

Omniscience is that God knows all things. This does not mean that God knows everything that is going on at one time. No. It is greater than that. God knows everything that has happened, everything that is happening, and everything that will happen. The Psalmist said, "Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, Thou understandest my thoughts afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue but, lo, O Lord, Thou knowest it altogether," Psalm 139:2-4. Note well, God not only knows when we sit or lie down but He knows when we get up. God not only knows when we say a thing, but He knows what we think and that before we think a thing. When we compile this with every human being (and even all the angelic host—both good and bad) that have been in the past and shall be in the future, that is exponentially profound, to say the least because both the saved and the unsaved will continue to think in eternity. That is a lot of knowledge! That is God! However, that is not all. God not only knows all events and thoughts of the whole creation, but God also knows everything that could happen that does not happen. God knows all contingencies. In I Samuel chapter twenty-three, David saved the city of Keilah from the Philistines. King Saul discovered that David was in Keilah and planned to go destroy the city and capture David. When David discovered the plan of Saul, he asked the Lord if the city of Keilah would turn David over to Saul and the Lord told David, "They will deliver thee up," I Samuel 23:12. David left the city and escaped the hand of Saul. Therefore, we see that God not only knows everything that happens, but He know every possibility or as before stated—God knows all contingencies. Obviously, to any Bible reader, such examples and scriptural references can be multiplied to verify this truth. There are many good books on the attributes of God that one can purchase to broaden his mind concerning them.

The second attribute we previously mentioned is the omnipotence of God. This means that God has all power. As Arthur W. Pink said, "He who cannot do what he will and perform all his pleasure cannot be God." *The Attributes of God*, p. 50. God displayed His power in creation. Obviously, no one saw the creation but we do see

the evidence of that power as we study the creation as it now is. The Scriptures declare, "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse," Romans 1:20. There are many things in creation that are invisible of which some are gravity, electricity, the mind, life, and other like things. Also, there are new discoveries continually of things which God made that were previously unknown. Many passages from the Holy Scriptures can be produced to verify the omnipotence, but we will supply only a few. One classic passage is found in Daniel 4:35: "And all the inhabitants of the earth *are* reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and *among* the inhabitants of the earth: none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" Even in a previous verse it is declared "that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whosoever he will," Daniel 4:32. God declared by the prophet Isaiah regarding delivering Israel from Babylon of His power: "I, *even* I, *am* the Lord; and beside me *there is* no savior. I have declared, and have saved, and I have shewed, when *there was* no strange *god* among you: therefore ye *are* my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I *am* God. Yea, before the day *was* I *am* he; and *there is* none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who shall let it? Thus saith the Lord, your redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; … I *am* the Lord, your Holy One, the creator of Israel, your King. Thus saith the Lord, which maketh a way in the sea, and a path in the mighty waters; … I, *even* I, *am* he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins," Isaiah 43:11-15, 25. Just as God has power to save and deliver Israel in the days of ancient Babylon, Christ equally saved everyone for whom He died. Jesus stated that He (the Good Shepherd) laid down His life for the sheep and that He had the power to not only lay down His life, but that He would take it up again, John 10:11-18. Romans 4:25 tells us that Christ was raised again for our justification; therefore, He had the power to justify everyone for whom He died. He did not make salvation possible; He saved. Obviously, this attribute could be expanded but we will limit our space regarding this subject at this time and move on to the next attribute previously mentioned.

The attribute of omnipresence is one that is equally profound. Like all of the attributes of God, there is no limit to the presence of God. He is always everywhere present at all time. Just as God is all-knowing (omniscience) and all-powerful (omnipotent), He has these attributes presently always. There is no yesterday, today, or tomorrow with God; with Him everything is one eternal now. When Moses asked the Lord what His name was, the reply was I AM THAT I AM and the Lord further stated, "Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you," Exodus 3:14. This simply means that there is no change in God and that He is presently now what He has presently always been and presently what He will always be. This means that what God determined in eternity to accomplish in creation, the

power and knowledge resided in Him to do that. Equally, what resided in Him at that time is the same that resided in Him when Christ was on the cross and will be the same that resides in Him forever in eternity future. There is no change with God.

With a brief understanding of these three attributes (omniscience; omnipotence; and, omnipresence), it would be foolish to think that before creation God had no idea what He was going to do or what would happen after creation. Sad to say, but modern Christianity seems to think that God created the world and when man sinned in the garden that He needed to set up a way for man to be saved. It is further believed by many that under the Old Testament salvation was accomplished by keeping the law of God and under the New Testament because of the death of Christ man is saved by some kind of grace based on a common understand of natural faith. These are false ideas as seen from having a proper understanding of the three attributes previously mentioned. God not only had a plan and purpose for creation in eternity, but He equally had a plan and purpose regarding the salvation of man at that time, too, and that plan never changes.

In the first chapter of Ephesians Paul wrote concerning the glorious works of God in salvation. In verse nine it says, "Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself." Then in verse eleven declares, "In whom also we have obtained and inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Again, "Who hath saved us, and called *us* with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began," II Timothy 1:9. Obviously, many passages can be supplied regarding God having a purpose in eternity, but that He had a purpose about salvation as well. This purpose was not some general plan for salvation. It was specific. Listen to another passage from the Word of God: "And not only *this*; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, *even* by our father Isaac; (For *the children* being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger," Romans 9:10-12. Even Jesus made it plain that the reason for His coming into the world was to redeem those that His Father had given Him, John 6:35-40.

Yes, God had a plan, a purpose for creation and the salvation of man before the world was. This purpose of God is according to His omniscience, omnipotence, and omnipresence. Equally, all of the attributes are in harmony with each other in accomplishing His purpose.

In closing, allow me to quote again the definition given in a previous podcast regarding salvation:

> Salvation is that all-inclusive word summing up all spiritual

> blessings bestowed by God on His elect people in Christ through the Holy Spirit. This wonderful word denotes perpetual deliverance beginning in the mind of God and experienced in the believer's life. Its highest claim is victory over sin, sorrow, and death. Its glorious and final reality is eternal life with Christ Jesus our Lord. This is common salvation; that is, it is common or it belongs to all the elect of God. Jude 3.

Farewell until our next lesson.

Salvation—The Sovereignty of God

(Salvation is not left to the weakness of sinful man. God manifested His sovereignty in creation and He continues to manifest His sovereignty in providence. Equally, salvation is accomplished according to the sovereign grace of God.)

When the Psalmist declared the folly of the gods of the world and the glory and majesty of the true God of creation and the redeemer of Israel, he said, "But our God *is* in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased," Psalm 115:3. Also Proverbs 16:4 declares, "The LORD hath made all *things* for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." If anything is clear as we read the Scriptures, it is that God is sovereign and He has the right to do with His creation as He pleases. Obviously, God is holy, right, and just. Therefore, whatever He does is equally holy, right, and just. He not only will not, but He cannot violate His nature. As A. W. Pink said, "Being infinitely elevated above the highest creature, He is the Most High, Lord of heaven and earth. Subject to none, influenced by none, absolutely independent: God does as He pleases, only as He pleases, always as He pleases. None can thwart Him, none can hinder Him." *The Attributes of God*, page 32. Modern man does not like the idea that God is sovereign. He wants to place God in a box that limits Him to the designs and plans of man. Because we live in a pluralistic society where there are many different beliefs and philosophies and worship is multiplied, modern man thinks that God is receptive to and operates according to each and all of these different opinions. The Scriptures definitely do not teach this. Listen to a few more passages that declare that God is sovereign. Paul proclaimed to the highest court of Athens: "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; … And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation," Acts 17:24, 25. Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar, "And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling *shall be* with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as

oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will." And after the Lord finished His will with Nebuchadnezzar, he confessed, "And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion *is* an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom *is* from generation to generation: And all the inhabitants of the earth *are* reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and *among* the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" (Daniel 4:32, 34-35) Isaiah 46:9-10 says, "Remember the former things of old: for I *am* God, and *there is* none else; *I am* God, and *there is* none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times *the things* that are not *yet* done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." In Ephesians chapter one, God makes it plain that salvation is "according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his *own* will," Ephesians 1:11. And that salvation was not an afterthought on the part of God but was in His sovereign will and mind, II Timothy 1:9 declares, "Who hath saved us, and called *us* with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

It is plain from these passages that God does what He desires and is not hindered by man in accomplishing His will. Salvation was designed and purposed by God before the creation of the world. God did not purpose to make salvation possible; God determined to save. The classic passage of Ephesians 2:8 declares this truth: "For by grace are ye saved through faith: and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." This clearly says that salvation is by the grace of God; that it is not of "yourselves"; it is the gift of God. Some will say that the verse states that it is "through faith." This is true, but since faith too is a gift of God, and "all men have not faith" (II Thessalonians 3:2), we must conclude that God does not give faith to all men. Often men will cry that such cannot be fair, but the issue is not whether salvation is fair or not. The issue is the justice of God and the Scriptures declare that God is just in all of His works. Deuteronomy 32:4 says, "*He is* the Rock, his work *is* perfect: for all his ways *are* judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right *is* he." And Psalm 145:17 declares, "The LORD *is* righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works."

Romans chapter nine also addresses this question. The apostle Paul by the inspiration of God addresses the question as to why some Israelites were not saved when God had favored them as a nation for hundreds of years. Paul shows that because a person was born of Abraham or was a child of Isaac it did not guarantee them to be in the covenant of salvation. The Scriptures clearly declare that Jacob and Esau had the same parentage and were twins, but before either of them were born

and before either of them had "done any good or evil," God elected Jacob unto salvation. Furthermore, the Scriptures make it plain that this is not unrighteous on the part of God. Man raises his sinful head and seeks to question God by such an act, but God testified to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." Furthermore the Scriptures declare, "So then *it is* not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." Some try to object by saying that God is only talking about the Jews in this chapter, but verse twenty-four plainly teaches otherwise: "Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles." Clearly, salvation is not only by grace, but it is by the sovereign grace of God. God as the Creator has the right to do with His creation as He pleases. And since salvation is by grace, God has the right to bestow that grace on whom He chooses. For those who do not like God exercising His sovereign right and power as He does, they need to seriously consider the divine warning: "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed *it,* Why hast thou made me thus?"

It is generally taught that God is so loving, kind, and generous that He desires that each and every individual would be saved. This is contrary to the teachings of Jesus. In Matthew 11:20-25, our Lord declared that the cities of Tyre, Sidon, and Sodom would have repented if such works were done in them as were done in the cities of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum. In other words, God did not "give them a chance to be saved." And Christ further thanked God for hiding the truth of salvation from some: "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." Why did God hide those things from some? "It seemed good" in the sight of God to do so. In other words, it was because of the sovereign acts of Almighty God. Equally, we need to be reminded that God is still hiding the truths from many today. As Paul declared by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit this same truth: "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, *are called*: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, *yea*, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence," I Corinthians 1:26-29.

You see, salvation, like all of the acts of God, is first for the honor and glory of God and not for the praise and exaltation of man. Those who are saved and forgiven of their sins are blessed accordingly so that God might have the preeminence, Colossians 1:12-18. If salvation were left to the sinful will of man none would be saved; all mankind would be cast into the lake of fire for their sins. Thanks be unto the sovereign mercy and grace of God! He ordained some to be delivered from this

present evil world (Galatians 1:4) and from the wrath to come (Romans 5:9; I Thessalonians 1:10), and made them "accepted in the Beloved" (Ephesians 1:6), so that all the praise and honor be bestowed on God and not on sinful man.

The world has the idea that God is love and that this attribute is central to His being. Little do they know that only two times do the Scriptures proclaim that God is love (I John 4:8 and I John 4:16), while God is declared to be holy hundreds of times. Also, the attribute of holiness is the only attribute that is exalted to the third degree. The seraphims in Isaiah chapter six cried "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts." While the love of God is rich and glorious, the Scriptures never speak of the attribute of love in this way. When speaking of the love of God we never find it stated love, love, love. No. It is the sovereignty of a holy and just God that saves. God not only saves who He wills but He saves how He wills. The Scriptures never teach that God tries to save nor did He make salvation possible—God saves sovereignly. Farewell.

Salvation—Election (1st)

(The study for today is beginning to show that salvation is founded on the sovereign election of God and that it was not based on any action of man as foreseen by God in eternity. If man must do anything for his sins to be remitted then salvation is by works and not by grace.)

In our definition of salvation, we began by saying, "Salvation is that all-inclusive word summing up all spiritual blessings bestowed by God on His elect people in Christ through the Holy Spirit." We then closed the definition with the following: "This is common salvation; that is, it is common or it belongs to all the elect of God. Jude 3."

That election is taught in the Bible is clearly found by anyone who honestly reads it. In fact, there are many kinds of elections taught in the Scriptures. It was God Who elected Noah to build the ark to deliver him and his family from drowning in the flood. It was God Who elected Abraham and called him out of Ur of the Chaldees and created the nation of Israel from his seed. It was God Who chose Moses to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt. Many other examples could be given to support that God elected some for different purposes and omitted others. Likewise, the Scriptures teach that before God created the universe He elected some people to be saved from their sins and from the wrath to come and that He bypassed others. Immediately, sinful man cries that such an action is not right and that God would never do such a thing. However, we never hear man crying that it was unjust for God to elect some of the angelic host of heaven from falling while allowing others to sin and ultimately be cast into the lake of fire. I Timothy 5:21 tells us that God has elect

angels when Paul wrote to Timothy the following: "I charge *thee* before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality." That there are fallen angels see such passages as II Peter 2:4; Jude 6; Matthew 25:41; Revelation 12:7, 9. Obviously, these few verses are merely a small sample of the many passages that speak not only of Satan but of demons or devils which are fallen angels. However, our subject matter is concerning the salvation of God and we will see from the Scriptures that God elected some of the human race to salvation.

While some totally deny this truth and reject it outright, there are others who do accept the truth that God does elect some unto salvation but they affirm that God simply chooses them because of foreseen faith in the sinner. In other words, they teach that God in eternity looked into the future and saw those who would believe and elected them because of their faith. One such passage they used to support their view is I Peter 1:2, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied." Regarding this passage, all me to quote from Adam Clarke's commentary on this verse where he quotes the Arminian John Wesley as follows:

> Strictly speaking, there is no foreknowledge, no more than afterknowledge, with God; but all things are known to him as present, from eternity to eternity. Election, in the scriptural sense, is God's doing any thing that our merit or power has no part in. The true predestination or foreappointment of God is,
>
> 1. He that believeth shall be saved from the guilt and power of sin.
>
> 2. He that endureth to the end shall be saved eternally.
>
> 3. They who receive the precious gift of faith thereby become the sons of God; and, being sons, they shall receive the Spirit of holiness, to walk as Christ also walked.
>
> Throughout every part of this appointment of God, promise and duty go hand in hand. All is free gift; and yet, such is the gift, that it depends in the final issue on our future obedience to the heavenly call. But other predestination than this, either to life or death eternal, the Scripture knows not of: moreover,
>
> 1. It is cruel respect of persons; an unjust regard of one, and an unjust disregard of another: it is mere creature partiality, and not infinite justice.
>
> 2. It is not plain Scripture doctrine, (if true), but rather inconsistent with the express written word that speaks of God's universal offers of grace; his invitations, promises, threatenings, being all general.
>
> 3. We are bid to choose life, and reprehended for not doing it.
>
> 4. It is inconsistent with a state of probation in those that must be saved, or must be lost.

5. It is of fatal consequence; all men being ready, on very slight grounds, to fancy themselves of the elect number.

But the doctrine of predestination is entirely changed from what it formerly was: now it implies neither faith, peace, nor purity; it is something that will do without them all. Faith is no longer, according to the modern predestination scheme, a Divine evidence of things not seen wrought in the soul by the immediate power of the Holy Ghost; not an evidence at all, but a mere notion: neither is faith made any longer a means of holiness, but something that will do without it. Christ is no more a Savior from sin, but a defense and a countenancer of it. He is no more a fountain of spiritual life in the souls of believers, but leaves his elect inwardly dry, and outwardly unfruitful; and is made little more than a refuge from the image of the heavenly, even from righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. *Sword Searcher Bible Software*.

Obviously, time forbids us to enlarge on each and every issue mentioned by Wesley wherein we differ. However, allow me to address somewhat some of the things mentioned. Regardless of the nature of God and His being, God by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit had Peter to write "elect according to the foreknowledge of God." (While in the Greek text the word for elect is in verse one designating "elect strangers," that the translators put it later does not do violence to the interpretation.) God used the word "foreknowledge" to express His action toward those He saves. But Wesley declared that "there is no foreknowledge … with God." He further equated foreknowledge to predestination. Listen again to what he said, "The true predestination or foreappointment of God is, 1. He that believeth shall be saved from the guilt and power of sin. 2. He that endureth to the end shall be saved eternally. 3. They who receive the precious gift of faith thereby become the sons of God; and, being sons, they shall receive the Spirit of holiness, to walk as Christ also walked." Then he gives the follow summation: "Throughout every part of this appointment of God, promise and duty go hand in hand. All is free gift; and yet, such is the gift, that it depends in the final issue on our future obedience to the heavenly call." He says that all is a gift, but he qualifies it by saying that "it depends in the final issue on our future obedience to the heavenly call." In other words, salvation depends on our obedience and not on the sovereign grace of God.

For Wesley, "true predestination" is foreknowledge. However, this is not what the Scriptures teach. Romans 8:29-30 clearly distinguishes between the two. It says, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate." According to this verse, foreknowledge precedes predestination, and it is not ***what*** was foreknown but ***whom*** was foreknown. In other words, it was people that were foreknown and not what anyone did that was foreknown. It is obviously true that God did foreknow everything that would happen from the beginning because Isaiah 46:9-10 says, "Remember the

former things of old: for I *am* God, and *there is* none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times *the things* that are not *yet* done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." However, regarding salvation God predestinated and elected those "whom" He foreknew or loved before the world began. Jesus in His prayer as recorded in John chapter seventeen clearly stated that God loved His people before the world. In fact, those whom the Father loved were love equally as long as the Father loved Jesus Christ. Jesus said that the Father "loved them, as thou hast loved me" and that the Father loved Christ "before the foundation of the world," cf. John 17:23-25. No. The election of God unto salvation was not based on any condition or action that anyone would do; it was clearly a sovereign act of God bestowed on those He loved before the foundation of the world.

The Lord willing we will look at more passages that plainly show that election was a sovereign act of God, but our time is up for today. Farewell.

Salvation—Election (2nd)

(The study for today continues to show that election was not merely by the sovereign mercy and grace of God, but that it was purposed by Him in eternity and not based on any good in the creature. It was according to the will of God to the praise of His glory and honor.)

In our previous podcast we introduced the doctrine of election and gave an overview of this doctrine by those who believe that God elected some unto salvation based on Him foreseeing who would believe. Romans 8:29 shows that this is contrary to the teaching of God because it was "whom" God foreknew that He elected and not "what" was foreknown. Likewise, the Scriptures declare that sometimes to know someone refers to know intimately. Genesis 4:1, 17, 25 and Amos 3:2 are a few places where the word know is used to clearly show that it carries the idea to know intimately or to love. John 17:23-25 clearly shows that God the Father loved the elect as much as and as long as He love Christ Jesus and that was "before the foundation of the world." Therefore, since the election of God unto salvation was not based on any foreseen merits of man, we will direct our attention to a few of the many passages that show that it was solely on the sovereign mercy and grace of God.

Ephesians 1:3-14 is a classic passage that teaches many things regarding the salvation of God and verse four states that God "hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world"; that is, God chose some in Christ Jesus unto salvation before creation. The verse further testifies that the purpose of election is that the elect "should be holy and without blame before him in love." Whether the "in love" should be connected with verse four or to the beginning of verse five is for scholars to answers; however, in either case, it is obvious that those loved by God before creation

are the ones elected and predestinated unto salvation. As we continue with this passage, it is the elect that are to be "holy and without blame," "made accepted in the beloved," "obtained an inheritance," and "sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise." All of these things (and others things that we did not mention) were "predestinated according to the purpose of him" (i.e., God) "who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." In other words, these things included in the salvation of God were not based on any foreseen merit of man; they were done according to the "purpose" of God that works "all things after the counsel of his own will." Election unto salvation was by the sovereign will of God and not based on any action of man, not even his will. (That the elect will seek the Lord is certain, but that is for a later study.) Not only is salvation according to the counsel of the will of God but it is also according to "the good pleasure of his will" as stated in verse five. This verse further states that the elect are predestinated unto adoption into the family of God. (We plan to discuss the subject of adoption in a future podcasts.) Furthermore, verse seven declares that the saved "have redemption" and "forgiveness of sins" through the blood of Christ according to the riches of the grace of God. Note: they have, not will have these things if something is done. To clarify that all of these things (as well as other blessings listed in this passage) are according to the sovereign purpose and grace of God, verse nine also states that God purposed all of it "in himself." No wonder Paul began the passage with such a paean of praise to God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Dear believer, when is the last time you thanked God for sovereignly electing you unto salvation. No, the doctrine of election is not something for believers to argue about; it is for the honor and glory of God. Verse six says that it is "to the praise of the glory of his grace," and verses twelve and fourteen resonate with to "the praise of his glory." Yes, dear believer, election honors and glorifies the sovereign majesty of God and we should render that praise to Him for electing us before creation.

Another passage that clearly proclaims that election unto salvation was according to the sovereign purpose of God is found in the ninth chapter of the book of Romans. Paul begins the chapter discussing his love and concern for his ancestors. After listing some of the blessings of the Jewish people, he shows that because one can trace his lineage back to Abraham it does not mean that he is in the family of God. First he notes that the promise was given to Isaac and not to Ishmael. Then he sets forth the children of Isaac and Rebecca—Jacob and Esau. While some may say that it is obvious that the promise was to Isaac and not Ishmael because Ishmael was a child of Abraham by a servant and not his wife like Isaac. However, Jacob and Esau, being twins, had the same father and mother, but God elected Jacob and rejected Esau before their birth while in the womb of Rebecca. Verse eleven makes this plain: "For *the children* being not yet born, neither have done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth." Here

again we see that this was "the purpose of God" and that it was "according to election." Furthermore, the election of Jacob was not of works because it was before either of them had "done any good or evil." God did not elect Jacob because he was deserving of it nor did He overlook Esau because of doing evil. God elected according to His purpose. Immediately, many will cry that this is not right because God did not give Esau a chance to be saved. Verse fourteen and following addresses this with the question: "What shall we say then? *Is there* unrighteousness with God? God forbid." This "God forbid" is the strongest negative that can be made. In other words, the idea that God does anything that is unrighteous is absurd and should never enter into the mind of anyone. God, the Creator of the universe, has the right to do with it as He pleases. In fact, He said to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then *it is* not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy," Romans 9:15-16. Therefore, salvation is not according to the will of anyone nor is it because anyone seeks after it. It is because of the purpose of the sovereign God of heaven and earth. Actually, when one seriously desires salvation and seeks for it, it is because God has already begun a work of grace in them. These things are evidences of salvation, but we plan to say more about this in a later study.

The natural man and, sad to say, many professed believers do not like this truth. Several years ago, a young minister came into my office inquiring about my belief. As I tried to explain the Scriptures to him, he became somewhat upset and argumentative. Finally, I simply opened my Bible and began reading the ninth chapter of Romans. At one point he stopped me and said, "That's your interpretation." I said to him that I had not interpreted anything and that I was simply reading the Scriptures. At that point he slammed his fist on my desk and cried out, "I won't have any part of a God like that." It is certainly a sad day when professed believers refuse to bow their mind and heart to the plain teaching of the Word of God. I can certainly understand unbelievers saying such things because before the Lord changed my wild and rebellious heart I said that I would never believe this doctrine of the sovereign election of God unto salvation. However, I am appalled that someone who professes to believe the Scriptures would refuse to believe what God says about anything, much less the doctrine of sovereign election. At this point what is the answer to the logical question as to why God elected some and bypassed others? Listen to the Divine answer to this question given to us by Paul : "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his (i.e., God's) will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing form say to him that formed *it*, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? *What* if God, willing to shew *his* wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make

known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?" See Romans 9:19-24.

Some try to say that this passage is only referring to the Jewish nation, but verse twenty-four denies this interpretation because it plainly declares this election ("whom he hath called") is "not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles." Man, especially in his natural state, does not like this truth and hates the idea that he is under the rule of the sovereign God of all creation. However, he can never succeed in fighting against God. His only hope is bowing to God and submitting to His sovereign rule to which he is commanded. Even in the beginning when Adam was in the garden God did not leave it to Adam as to how He was to be served. Adam was not given a choice regarding the tree of knowledge of good and evil. God commanded him not to eat of it and told him the consequences if he did. Equally, election unto salvation, like all of the creation of God, begins with God and not with man. In closing, allow me to quote from Robert Traill: "Election is that eternal and adorable act of free grace, wherein God the Father passed over his love to a select company of mankind, that were to come into the world; appointing them to salvation; appointing a Saviour for them, and all means fit to accomplish his design of love on them, to the praise of his grace, Eph. 1. 4, 5, 6." *The Works of Robert Traill*, Volume 1, page 76. Farewell until our next study.

Salvation—Election (3rd)

(The study for today continues studying the doctrine of election unto salvation. In this podcast we find that it is the elect of God that are preserved and kept by faith not only in this life but they shall be ushered into the presence of the Lord in the world to come.)

We have scripturally shown in previous podcasts that the election of some people unto salvation was not something that God decided to do after the fall of man. It was further proven that election was not based on anything that man would do but that it was purely by the sovereign mercy and grace of God. It was purposed by God in eternity before the creation of the universe and it was by His good pleasure. The basic objections to the doctrine of election were equally addressed in previous studies and it was discovered that those objections revealed essentially that natural man refuses to bow to his Creator and the plain teaching of the Holy Scriptures. In our study today we will look at other passages that substantiate this blessed truth.

When our blessed Lord was answering the disciples questions regarding the destruction of Jerusalem, the signs of His return, and the signs of the end of the world (Matthew 24:3), He said that those historical events would be customized for the

elect. In verse twenty-two He stated, "And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." While many things are taught in the context of this verse, one thing that stands out is that in the times of trials and afflictions the Lord providentially overrules so that the elect will never have to endure more than he can bear. God equally teaches this truth when Paul instructed the congregation at Corinth the following: "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God *is* faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear *it*," I Corinthians 10:13. Back in Matthew chapter twenty-four, our Lord followed in verse twenty-four with this blessed consolation: "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great sign and wonders; insomuch that, if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect." These verses give comfort and consolation that the doctrine of election is not a subject for theologians to debate but that it encourages and strengthens the elect as he lives out his life in this sinful world. The believer is taught to seek the Lord and His kingdom first and foremost (Matthew 6:33) and to strive to enter into the strait gate (Matthew 7:13-14) and to "live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" (Titus 2:12), but he is not left to himself. God overrules the events in history and works in the elect so that he will not be deceived by false teachers, cf. Philippians 2:12-13. Then in Matthew 24:31, we find that at the return of the Lord the Son of Man will "send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." By this we find that those elected before the world began and kept in the midst of trials and affliction, will not be deceived by false prophets, and will be gathered unto the Lord by His angels at the end of this world. Therefore, election unto salvation is a comforting doctrine and one for which we ought to thank the Lord continually for His great love bestowed on us before the foundation of the world. No wonder the apostle Paul wrote "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world …, Ephesians 1:3ff. The doctrine of election is no dry doctrine when properly understood; it is a glorious truth that honors and glorifies the Lord that none of His will be lost and they shall be with Him in glory to worship Him forever.

These passages in Matthew twenty-four clearly reveal that the Lord Jesus Christ believed that there are a group of people that are designated as the elect and that ultimately it is this group that will be gathered together in the last days by the holy angels. Therefore, the doctrine of election was not some new belief that originated by man; it is the truth of God which was affirmed by our Lord Jesus Christ.

There is another classic passage which shows that our Lord believed there is an elect of God. It is Luke 18:7: "And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry

day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?" Christ did not simply speak of them as the elect but as "his own elect"; that is, God's own elect. Even in Matthew 24:31, the angels are to gather together "his elect"; that is, the elect of God, the very ones chosen by Him before the world was created. However, our passage in Luke is set in the context of Jesus teaching us about prayer. Luke tells us that the parable was for the purpose "that men ought always to pray, and not to faint," Luke 18:1. The Lord gave the story about a widow going before a judge that did not fear God nor did he care what man thought about his judgments. The woman desired to be avenged of her adversary, but the judge refuse to consider her case. However, because the widow refused to give up, finally the judge granted her request so that she would quit bothering him. With this, our Lord encourages us to continue in pray and that though the people of God have many enemies and adversaries, they often pray to see justice done that eventually God will avenge them. Here our Lord designates His people as "his own elect"—God's own elect. By this we see that the doctrine of election is a comforting doctrine associated with our prayer life.

The doctrine of election is not something that is disconnected from other truths of the Scriptures. In fact, the doctrine of justification (of which we plan to study at a later podcast) is directed related to the truth of election. Romans 8:33 states, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? *It is* God that justifieth." This verse is in the context of a glorious passage of Scripture that sums up the overall doctrine of salvation. It begins with God loving or knowing His people before the world and followed by those people being predestinated unto the image of Christ. Then it moves to the predestinated being called and justified and, finally, glorified. God identified this group of people in our verse as the elect of God. In other words, the rhetorical question in the verse is answered by the fact that no one can lay any charge against the elect of God because it is God that justifies them. If a person is justified, he is considered as being not guilty before the law, and since Christ died and rose again for the justification (Romans 4:25) of those chosen by the Father and given to the Son (John 6:37-40), we find that no charge can be brought against the elect of God.

Another verse that shows that the doctrine of election is not detached from other doctrines of faith and truth is Titus 1:1: "Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness." Note three things listed in this verse: "faith of God's elect"; "truth"; and "godliness." (Our plans are to show the connection of election and godliness in our next podcast and, therefore, we will not consider that at this time.) Now we will consider the subjects of faith and truth in their connection with the doctrine of election.

The phrase "the faith of God's elect" may be considered with reference to the doctrine of the Christian faith or to the faith which the believer possesses as given to him by God in regeneration. Either way, it is qualified as that which only the elect

have. Allow me to share a quote from A. W. Pink: "Therefore do we read of 'the faith of God's elect' (Titus 1:1), which differs radically from the 'faith' of formal religionists and wild enthusiasts. First, because it is a divine gift and not the working of a natural principle. Second. Because it receives with childlike simplicity whatever is states" [sic. Possibly stated--JKB] "in the Word, quibbling not at 'difficulties' therein. Third, because its possessor realized that only God can sustain and maintain that faith in his soul, for it lies not in the power of the creature to either exercise or increase it." *The Doctrines of Election and Justification*, page 103.

The faith of God's elect is equally connected to the "acknowledging of the truth." Again, we see that the doctrine of election is not an independent doctrine separated from the truth of the Holy Scriptures. This is a vital connection to the gospel because without the truth of the Scriptures there is no gospel and the Word of God clearly tells us that there is only one gospel. Listen to Galatians 1:6-9: "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any *man* preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." Therefore, it is obvious that the doctrine of election unto salvation is a central element of the gospel and the Christian faith and is to be believed by all of the sheep for which Christ died (John 10:11). May the Lord bless us to honor and glorify the Lord for the election of grace for our salvation.

The Lord willing we will consider the doctrine of election and the connection of godliness in our next podcast. Nevertheless, our time is up for today. Farewell.

Salvation—Election (4th)

(The study for today continues with the doctrine of election unto salvation. In this podcast we are simply seeking to answer the charge that believing the doctrine of election will cause one to live a life of sinfulness.)

In previous studies regarding the doctrine of the election of God unto salvation, we showed the origin of election, the purpose of election, and some of the benefits of this doctrine as it relates to the final destination of the elect. Some object to this doctrine by saying that if this is true it will cause those who believe it to live anyway they wish and continue to commit sin because if they are an elect they will go to heaven anyway. However, the Scriptures do not teach this. In fact, we will see that the Word of God declares that the elect desire and seek to live godly. Paul, while teaching about salvation in his letter to the Romans, addressed such an objection. Because salvation is by the sovereign work of God and not by the works of man,

Paul's objectors falsely accused him of teaching, "Let us do evil, that good may come." Paul answered that anyone who teaches such a doctrine his "damnation is just." (See Romans 3:8.) However, let us now see what the Scriptures teach about the life-style of the elect.

In our last podcast we studied somewhat Titus 1:1, "Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness." In that session, we looked at "the faith of God's elect" and "the truth" connected with it. Now we will consider these things as they are associated with "godliness." In reality, it should not be necessary to comment on this because the verse plainly states that the elect of God live in faith and in the truth of salvation in such a way that godliness is reflected in their lives. Even John Gill stated regarding this verse, "the Gospel is a doctrine according to godliness; the truths of it have an influence, both on internal and external godliness; they direct to, and promote the worship and fear of God, and a religious, righteous, sober, and godly life and conversation."

When Paul wrote his first epistle to the saints at Thessalonica, he commented that he knew that they were elected by God because of the way they responded to the gospel. They did not simply hear the gospel and make a profession as so many do today. They became followers of Paul and the others that preached to them and their obedience brought "much affliction" in their lives. Furthermore, their obedience to the gospel and life of godliness was a witness to every region that heard about their conversion. Paul commended them for how they "turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, *even* Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come." (See I Thessalonians chapter one.) Equally, we saw in a previous podcast that Peter designated the believers as "scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia" as being sanctified by the Spirit of God and he closed out his epistle stating that the saints at Babylon were "elected together" with them, I Peter 1:1-2; 5:13. Throughout the Scriptures obedient and faith of the saints are described as the elect of God.

Another passage that proves that the doctrine of election promotes holy living is Colossians 3:12-13, "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also *do* ye." From this inspired word of the Holy Scriptures, it is plain that the Lord intends and commands the elect to live a godly and holy life. Yes, "put on" in verse twelve is not a suggestion, it is a command from God; it is in the imperative mood. In fact, the previous verses in this chapter direct the saints to set their affections on the things of God and not the world; that the elect are to "mortify" sin in their bodies; "put off" the sins of the flesh; and other exhortations to

live a life of holiness because they were "the elect of God." No, when the doctrine of election is properly understood and believed, it does not produce lazy and slothful Christians; it produces believers that walk in the footsteps of the Lord Jesus Christ seeking to honor Him in their lives in every way.

Another passage that authenticates the elect of God living a holy and godly life is II Peter 1:1-11. Obviously, time does not permit us to consider and study each verse in the passage, but it is imperative that we understand that it refers to the elect of God. In fact, verses ten and eleven say, "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Recently, a dear friend and beloved brother in the ministry said while commenting on this overall passage of Scripture (i.e. verses 1-11), "Sanctification is the only sure mark of election."

Peter begins with designating those to whom he was writing as those "that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ," II Peter 1:1. The Greek word for obtain means to receive by divine allotment. The faith they had was given to them by God. Steven Charnock said, "Election is the cause of faith, and not faith the cause of election." (*Sword Searcher Bible Program*, footnote to John Calvin's comments on Titus 1:1.) However, Peter continued by divine inspiration instructing the believers to actively incorporate various godly virtues into their lives and by doing so it would verify their election of God. In fact, the only way a person can know that another individual, or the believer himself, is an elect of God is by his godly life. As Jeremiah 17:9 says, "The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" Therefore, assurance of salvation is not in one's feelings or emotions; assurance of salvation is found in a person living in obedience to the commandments of God. Even John in his first epistle verified this truth: "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments," I John 5:1-2.

Primarily, so far we have been reviewing verses that contain the word elect or election. Since II Peter 1:10 equated "calling" with election, we could expand our study on the doctrine of election unto salvation to include verses that have this Greek word, too, but that should not be necessary since our purpose is not to give an exhaustive study of the subject. However, I would like to draw our attention back to the epistle of Ephesians to show that the doctrine of election rightly understood and believed does not lead to a life of lasciviousness.

It was pointed out in a previous podcast that the people of God were chosen (elected) in Christ Jesus "before the foundation of the world." The purpose was that the elect "should be holy and without blame" before God. While ultimately all of the

redeemed will be found justified in the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ in glory, this conformation begins in this life. Even Romans 8:29 tells us that those whom the Father foreknew (or loved) before the world was created were predestinated to be "conformed to the image of his dear Son." Obviously, there are many things included in this conformation that begins with the new birth. Ephesians chapter two and other passages teach that we are born into this world "dead in trespasses and sins." For this reason our Lord told Nicodemus that he must be born again by the Spirit of God before he could "see" or "enter" the kingdom of God, John 3:3-8. Also, we have seen from previous verses in our study today that the elect of God are changed and drawn to the Lord to live a life of holiness. (By holiness we do not mean sinless. The Lord willing we will address this more in future studies. In this podcast we are simply seeking to answer the charge that believing the doctrine of election will not cause a true believer to live a life of sinfulness.) Paul brings out many things in the book of Ephesians to show this truth. Obviously we cannot address everything the Lord teaches in Ephesians but there are a few things we must consider. Ephesians 1:6 says that the elect are "made … accepted in the beloved." Verse seven declares that we "have redemption" even "the forgiveness of sins"; not that we will have it, but we have it now. Verses 13-14 tell us that were "were sealed with the holy Spirit of promise" after believing the gospel. Verses 19-20 state that the same power that raised Christ from the grave works in the elect causing them to believe. Ephesians 2:10 declares, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." In other words, the elect of God will not walk in ungodliness and follow after the world in their overall walk after the Lord quickens them by the Holy Spirit. Yes, they struggle with sin, and, sadly, sometimes fall into sin and have sins of the mind and attitude, but they do not openly walk on a continual basis portraying a lifetime of sin. We are God's workmanship created to walk in good works.

Many other passages could be set forth to prove this truth, but these should be sufficient for any who believes the Scriptures of God. Though I do not have time in this lesson to say more about it, I want to make it clear that a proper understanding and belief in the doctrine of election does not hinder the gospel. This is proved by the confession of the apostle Paul: "Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory," II Timothy 2:10. The Lord willing we will discuss this more in future studies but our time is up for today. Farewell.

Salvation—Adoption (1st)

(The study for today is concerning the doctrine of adoption unto salvation. In this podcast we see that many theologians are at odds with the Scriptures as to the origin

of adoption.)

In the previous podcasts we studied somewhat the doctrine of election unto salvation. Now we direct your attention to the subject of adoption. It is sad that we hear so little about this doctrine in the pulpit or see in the writings of men. When the subject is addressed it is often presented as being something God does for the believer at faith. However, when we look at this subject as it is addressed in the Holy Scriptures we see that it, like election, has its origin in eternity before the foundation of the world. The Greek word for adoption is υἱοθεσία and it is only found five times in the New Testament. The meaning is *the placing of a son*. It was often used when a person did not have an heir to carry on his estate and the person would adopt a son to continue his family lineage. Of the five times this word is used, only four times does it refer to the salvation of God. In Romans 9:4, Paul uses the word to describe Israel as a nation under the Old Testament economy where God "adopted," as it were, Abraham and his descendents to form the nation of Israel. It says, "Who are Israelites; to whom *pertaineth* the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service *of God*, and the promises." While various types and figures regarding Israel could be used to describe and to teach many lessons about adoption unto salvation, the other four verses should be sufficient to show that adoption, like all other doctrines related to salvation, is a sovereign act of God that originated in Him before creation.

Ephesians 1:5 says, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." Obviously, this declares that adoption is directly connected to the doctrine of election because those that were predestinated unto the adoption of children were the ones chosen in Christ Jesus as mentioned in verse four.

As we said before, too often adoption is taught as something that takes place when a person exercises faith. Francis Turrettin said that adoption is "a jurdicial act of God, by which from his mere mercy, he adopts through faith in Christ, those whom he elected to salvation from eternity, into his family and bestow upon them the name and right of sons as to inheritance." *Theological Institutes* (Selections), as published in 1980 by the Theological School of the Protestant Reformed Churches, Page 534. Prior to this, Turrettin said that adoption is the other part of justification. Page 533. While there is a legal aspect to adoption, I believe it is confusing to equate adoption to justification. Justification (of which we plan to discuss in future podcasts.) is a judicial term whereby one is legally declared not guilty before the law. Justification is the opposite of condemnation. When a person is either justified or condemned in a court of law, the pronunciation of guilt or innocence does not make the person to be such; it only declares him to be what he is—either not guilty or guilty. While Turrettin's definition of adoption identifies those adopted as those elected to

salvation as clearly stated in Ephesians, I find it interesting that in the entire article on adoption he referenced all other four verses containing the word but never referenced Ephesians 1:5.

Though it is true that those adopted into the family of God will come to faith and will receive the blessings of it at that time, this is not the origin or beginning of adoption. As when a couple (or a person) enters the orphanage and selects a child for adoption, often the recipient (or child) has no idea what is happening nor does he consciously "accept" the adopting parent or parents. Once the legal process is completed the child is a member of the family and takes on the family name. Likewise, when God elected a portion of the human race to be His family they were then predestinated unto adoption. The process was started; adoption was certain and as sure as all the purposes of God.

It seems that many confuse the legal act of becoming a child into a family and that of engendering a child into the family. While it is true that regarding the salvation of God that the adopted child will receive the "Spirit of adoption" (of which we will discuss later), the child must first be adopted and not become adopted at the reception of the Spirit. As the Scriptures declare in Galatians chapter four, it because one is already a son that he receives the "Spirit of his Son" or the "Spirit of adoption." This must be clarified or one identifies adoption as something that initially takes place at faith. In fact, A. A. Hodge combines these two and their accomplishment at faith. Listen to the following:

> It appears, however, to us that the words "Adoption" and "Sonship," as used in Scripture, express more than a change of relation, and that they are more adequately conceived of as expressing a complex view, including the change of nature together with the change of relation, and setting forth the new creature in his new relations.
>
> The instant a sinner is united to Christ in the exercise of faith, there is accomplished in him simultaneously and inseparable, 1st, a total change of relation to God, and to the law as a covenant; and, 2d, a change of *inward condition or nature*. *Outlines of Theology*, page 516.

Though Hodge does later say that regeneration precedes faith, in the quote given he affirms that "a change of *inward condition or nature*" takes place at faith and this is the origin of adoption. It cannot be both ways. Also in the quote given above, Hodge says that adoption expresses "more than a change of relation," but that it includes a "change of nature … with the change of relation." Obviously, when a child is adopted in nature there is not a "change of nature" of the child; there is only a change of relationship according to law. (Allow me to add at this point that the change in relationship is so strong legally that while a parent made disinherit a natural off-

spring, he cannot disinherit an adopted child. Adoption is more legally binding than a natural relationship.)

Many references can be supplied to show that many equate adoption to justification. However, I will quote from a couple of others to show this. R. L Dabney said, "Adoption cannot be said to be a different act or grace from justification. Turrettin devotes only a brief separate discussion to it, and introduces it in the thesis in which he proves that justification is both pardon and acceptance. Owen [i.e. John Owen—JKB] says that adoption is but a presentation of the blessings bestowed in justification in new phrases and relations. … The chief doctrinal importance of this idea then is, that we have here, the strongest proof of the correctness of our definition of justification, and of the imputed righteousness upon which it is based, in the fact that it is both a pardon and an adoption." *Lectures in Systematic Theology*, page 627. Though it is true that pardon, justification, acceptance, and other benefits of salvation are in conjunction with adoption, they are not the same. Even if one asserts that each is simply a different facet of the diamond of salvation, it must be understood that it is still a separate and independent feature. Since Dabney also referenced John Dick's *Lectures on Theology*, I will supply some quotes from him.

Speaking of adoption, Dick wrote, "At the same time, it appears to me to be virtually the same with justification, and to differ from it merely in the new view which it gives of the relation of believers to God, and in the peculiar form in which it exhibits the blessings to which they are entitled. As it implies a change of state, it must be the same; for this change can take place but once; and whether we say that a sinner passes from a state of guilt and condemnation into a state of favour with God, or that he is translated from the family of Satan into the family of heaven, we express the same fact, and only diversify the terms. He who is justified is adopted, and he who is adopted is justified." *Ibid*, page 391. You will notice in Dick's assessment that he is expressing the experimental application of adoption to the believer and bypassing the fact that the predestination of some unto adoption before the world as stated in Ephesians 1:5 was before one was in "a state of guilt and condemnation." Like Turrettin, Hodge, Dabney, Owen, and many others, Dick ignores the origin of adoption and begins with the application of adoption to those adopted.

After giving some history of different ways in which adoption was transacted with the Romans, Greeks, Egyptians, and other nations, Dick says, "Adoption, according to the scriptural sense of the term, is an act of God, by which he pronounces sinful men to be his sons, admits them into his family, and gives them a right to the privileges of his children." *Ibid*, page 392. I might add that Dick goes on to give many good benefits in the application of adoption to the people of God, but our primary focus here is that this is not the origin of adoption. Adoption originated in the mind and purpose of God before the foundation of the world.

Nevertheless, our time is up for today. The Lord willing we will continue the

origin of adoption in our next podcast. Farewell.

Salvation—Adoption (2nd)

(Today we continue studying the doctrine of adoption unto salvation. This podcast continues to show that adoption does not originate at faith and that it is an eternal and immanent act of God before the foundation of the world.)

In the previous podcast we quoted from a few theologians to show the general belief that adoption is something that is not only a part of justification but that it takes place at faith. We showed from Ephesians 1:5 that this cannot be and that adoption originated in the mind and purpose of God before the creation of the world. To provide further information that adoption is an eternal and immanent act of God we will first quote from John Gill. Obviously, we cannot quote everything Gill wrote, but I will quote somewhat extensively from him. These quotes will come from his *Body of Divinity*, Book II, Chapter V and Book VI, Chapter IX. I highly recommend studying both sections and his commentaries on the verses containing the subject of adoption which are as follows:

Romans 8:15, "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father."
Romans 8:23, "And not only *they*, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, *to wit*, the redemption of our body."
Romans 9:4, "Who are Israelites; to whom *pertaineth* the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service *of God*, and the promises."
Galatians 4:5, "To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."
Ephesians 1:5, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."

First, we quote from Book II, Chapter V, where Gill shows that adoption is an eternal and immanent act of God.

Adoption; as predestination to it stands next to election, Eph. i. 5. which is no other than his will to adopt the chosen ones, which is his adoption of them; for as the will of God to elect any is his election of them, so his will to adopt the same is his adoption of them; and the complete essence of it lies in his will, and is as such an eternal immanent act of it; in like manner as election is, and may be

considered as a branch of it, at least of the same nature with it; and which agrees with the sense of the word *adopto*, from whence adoption comes, which is compounded of *ad* to, and *opto* to choose; so that adoption is God's choice or election of some to be his children; and by this option, or choice, of his they become so. The Greek word for adoption throughout the New Testament is υἱοθεσία, which signifies *putting among the children*; the phrase used by God, Jer. iii. 19. *How shall I put them among the children?* or a putting one for and in the room of a son, that is a stranger and not a son by birth; a constituting and accounting such an one as a son, according to choice, will, and pleasure: and divine adoption is an act of the sovereign grace and good will of God, Eph. i. 5. to which he is not induced by any motive out of himself; not by any excellency in the creature; nor for want of a son; one or other of which is the case in human adoptions; as of Moses, a goodly child, by Pharaoh's daughter; and of Esther, a beautiful person, and a relation by Mordecai; but divine adoption is of persons exceeding unworthy and undeserving, nothing engaging in them; not only strangers, but children of wrath even as others, and like the wretched infant in Ezek. xvi. It is an act of distinguishing grace; it is of men, and not angels; who are servants and not sons, at least not by adoption; and of some men and not of all, though all are alike in their nature-state; and it is a most amazing act of unmerited love and free-grace, 1 John 3:1. Now this is an eternal act of grace:

First, It did not begin in time, but commenced from eternity; it is an act of God's will, and has its complete essence in it; and the will of God is eternal, no new will, nor any new act of will, arises in God in time; or otherwise he would not be the unchangeable God he is.

1. It is an act that does not first take place at believing; indeed the saints are *all the children o f God by faith in Christ Jesus*, openly and manifestatively, Gal. iii. 26. but then it is not faith that makes them children, but what makes them appear to be so; adoption is the act of God, and not of faith; …
2. Adoption does not first commence at regeneration; adoption and regeneration are two distinct blessings, and the one is previous to the other; though they are commonly confounded together by divines. Regeneration is not the foundation of adoption, but adoption the foundation of regeneration; or, the reason why men are adopted, is not because they are regenerated, but they are regenerated because they are adopted. By adoption they are put into the relation of children, and by regeneration they have a nature given them suitable to that relation; …
3. The act of adoption is previous to any work of the Spirit of God upon the hearts of his people; *Because ye are sons*, sons already, sons by adopting grace; *God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts*,

both to convince, convert, regenerate, and effectually call by his grace, and sanctify, and also to comfort, and to enable to cry Abba Father, witnessing to their spirits, that they are the children of God; and hence he is called, *the Spirit of Adoption*; and it is his influences, teachings, and leadings, which are the evidences of adoption; *For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God*; not that those influences, operations, and leadings, make them, but make them evident to be such, Gal. iv. 6. Rom. viii. 14.

4. Divine adoption, or sonship, took place before any work of Christ was wrought in time, for any of the sons of men; it was before his incarnation and birth; *forasmuch then*, or because *the children are partakers of flesh and blood*, the children of God, who are so by adopting grace; therefore *he also*, Christ, *himself took part of the same*; for though the nature he assumed was what was in common to all mankind, yet he assumed it with a peculiar view to the children of God, the spiritual seed of Abraham; whose nature he is said to take, and for whose sake he was the child born, and the Son given, Isa. ix. 6. Heb. ii. 14, 16. and in consequence they must be the children of God before Christ suffered and died; …

Secondly, Adoption is an act of God's free grace from all eternity.

1. The elect of God are frequently spoken of as a distinct number of men, given to Christ, and as previous to their coming to him by faith, which is the certain fruit and consequence of that gift; see John xvii. 2, 6, 9, 24. and vi. 37. yea, they were given to Christ before the world was; for if grace was given to them in him before the world began, they themselves must be given to him, and be in him before the world began, 2 Tim. i. 9. Now these were given to Christ in the relation of children, and therefore must be children so early; *Behold, I, and the children which God hath given me*, Heb. ii. 13.
2. The elect of God were espoused to Christ in eternity; …
3. The elect of God were taken by him into the covenant of his grace, as children; the sum and substance of which runs thus, *I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord almighty*, 2 Cor. vi. 18. Now this covenant was from everlasting; as the setting up of Christ the Mediator of it so soon; and the promises and blessings, made and provided before the world began, do abundantly testify.
4. Predestination to the adoption of children, is mentioned along with election, as of the same date with it, and as an illustration of it, and as an addition to it, or rather, a branch of it; as men by election are not only

> chosen to holiness, but to adoption, and the inheritance annexed to it, Eph. i. 4, 5. Adoption is a sentence of grace conceived in the divine mind, and settled by the divine will, and pronounced in divine predestination, which is an eternal act of God; and so says Dr. Ames[1] "Adoption is a gracious sentence of God—which sentence is pronounced in the same variety of degrees as justification; for it was first pronounced in divine predestination, Eph. i.5. afterwards in Christ, Gal. iv.5. then in believers themselves, ver. 6."

Next we desire to quote from Book VI, Chapter IX, of Gill's *Body of Divinity*. However, our time is up for today and we will continue with this in our next podcast. Farewell.

Salvation—Adoption (3rd)

(Today we continue studying the doctrine of adoption unto salvation. This podcast continues to show more information that adoption does not originate at faith and that it is an eternal and immanent act of God before the foundation of the world.)

In the previous podcast, we quoted from Book II, Chapter V, of Gill's *Body of Divinity*. Showing that adoption is an eternal and immanent act of God before the foundation of the world. Now we direct your attention to Book VI, Chapter IX, of Gill's *Body of Divinity*. After a brief introduction and summary regarding adoption as an eternal and immanent act of God as discussed in Book II, Chapter V, from which we previously quoted, Gill considered adoption "as openly bestowed upon believing in Christ, and as manifested, applied, and evidenced by the Spirit of God." Again, we will quote somewhat at length while trying to provide a brief overview or outline of the application of adoption with reference to the passages in Romans and Galatians. Prior to taking up this part of the subject, in giving a brief statement showing that adoption is distinct from justification and pardon, Gill wrote: "A subject may be acquitted by his sovereign from charges laid against him; and a criminal, convicted and condemned, may be pardoned, yet does not become his son; if adopted, and taken into his family, it must be by a distinct and fresh act of royal favour."

After Gill discussed some things wherein civil adoption and spiritual adoption agree and disagree, he considers (1) the *causes* of adoption; (2) the *objects* of adoption; (3) the *nature and excellency of the priviledge* of adoption; and, (4) the *effects* of adoption. Under the *causes* of adoption, he lists the *efficient cause* which is God and then the *moving cause* of adoption which is "the love, grace, free favour,

[1] Medulla Theologiae, 1. 1. C. 28. s. 2, 3.

and good-will of God." The *objects* of adoption are those who are the objects of the love of God: the children of God; the chosen of God; the redeemed; the believers; those who live so that they "become the sons of God." Discussing the *nature and excellency of the priviledge* of adoption, Gill enlarges on the various benefits and blessings that are enjoyed by those adopted. In closing by considering the *effects* of adoption, Gill gives the following:

1. A share in the pity, compassion, and care of God, their heavenly Father; who, as a father pities his children, so he pities them that fear him, and reverence him as their Father; in all their afflictions he is afflicted, and sympathizes with them, and delivers them out of all their troubles; when they are in want of whatsoever kind, and particularly of food, he supplies them, and for which they are encouraged to ask it of him, as children of their parents; so our Lord reasons, *If a son*, etc. Luke xi. 11-13.
2. Access to God with boldness; they can come to him as children to a father, use freedom with him, tell him all their complaints and wants, and come boldly to the throne of grace, and ask grace and mercy to help them in their times of need.
3. Conformity to the image of Christ, the firstborn among many brethren; which is begun in this life, and will be perfected in that to come; when the sons of God shall be like him, and see him as he is.
4. The Spirit of adoption, given to testify their sonship to them; for *because they are sons, God sends forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts, crying, Abba, Father*, Gal. iv. 4. 6.
5. Heirship; for *if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ*, Rom. viii. 17. heirs of the grace of life, heirs of a kingdom, of an inheritance most glorious, to which they are entitled, and for which they are made meet by the grace of God.

Now I would like to direct your attention to an article written several years ago by Elder J. D. Shain. The complete article can be found on Brother Leroy Rhodes' website of Mount Zion Primitive Baptist Church at the following address: https://mountzionpbc.org/Weekly/Adoption-1Elder%20J%20D%20Shain.pdf. Brother Shain wrote:

Adoption is so obviously by grace that it proves conflicting in any system of salvation by works that any or all men could devise. Therefore, they leave it entirely out of their preaching. And may I further suggest why the ministers who believe and advocate the doctrine of grace mention it so rarely. They seem to have no clear concept as to its position, or significance in the economy of grace. Some

hold that adoption comes with, or is accompanied with regeneration; while others hold that it is manifested only in the resurrection. Then some hold that adoption applies to the body only; that while the soul of man is born again in regeneration and takes on a spiritual change, the body remains natural, but is admitted into the service of God by virtue of adoption. … But, as they differ so widely on the real and proper application of the term, I can come to but one conclusion, and that is there was and is a lack of proper understanding of the term among them. In my opinion, none of the aforementioned positions are correct in the light of the Scriptures. While it may sound presumptuous for me to say so, I think these varied opinions have grown and continue to grow out of a failure to recognize the fundamental element of adoption in the theme of grace, and hence, the failure to ascertain its real nature and meaning in common scriptural usage.

After defining adoption from various sources, Brother Shain selected the *American College Dictionary* (definition No. 2) as follows: "To take another's child as one's own, by a specific legal act of law." Then he said:

Let us now note the order in which adoption is effected. 1st, there must be a decision or purpose to have an heir or heirs to one's estate. In Eph. 1:11, this is clearly expressed. "Being predestinated according to the PURPOSE of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will." 2nd. The choice or selection of those who are to be heirs. Eph. 1:4, "According as He hath chosen us in Him." 3rd. The estate described which the heirs are to inherit. Eph. 1:3, "Who hath blessed us with ALL SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS in heavenly places in Christ." 4th. A court, or tribunal of law, of competent jurisdiction to confirm and publish the Decree of adoption, naming the Adopter, the heir or heirs, and describing the legacy they are to inherit. Read Eph. 1:5, "*Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children* by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will."

After explaining the legal aspect of adoption of which he addressed "God's Foreknowledge, His eternal purpose to adopt, His choice of those to be adopted and His predestinating them to sons by adoption," he proceeded to unfold "the doctrine as revealed in Scriptures of the New Testament." Then he gave the following regarding the principle of adoption:

But before we take up the consideration of the other passages in the New Testament bearing on the subject, we will emphasize two points that are necessary to the proper understanding of the subject. These two points are—The nature of adoption, and the proceedings necessary to accomplish or complete it. First, the

nature of adoption is to take a child that is not a child by birth, and by an act in law, make it a legal heir. Please remember this: only legal relations are established by adoptions; never vital or blood relation. So, in adoption, only title to and right of an estate is conveyed. It cannot convey a fitness or a likeness of nature. It makes one an heir to a home, but does not prepare one for the society or life of the home. The principle of adoption was practiced on a national scale by the government of Israel. They admitted Gentiles to come under the Government of Israel as adopted sons. The adopted Gentiles could enjoy most of the blessings and privileges of the National Israelites but adoption could not make the Alien Gentiles so admitted, natural or national Jews. It could not remove the alien blood in the adopted Gentiles and give them the royal blood of the seed of Abraham. From these facts, it must be clear to the reader that adoption constitutes only legal relationship and does not convey a likeness of nature. You could adopt a Negro child, but you could not make it white; you could adopt a Chinese child, but you could not put Anglo-Saxon life in its bloodstream.

I regret to interrupt this because at this point Brother Shain makes a transition to enlarge on "the incredible and incomprehensible obstacles and difficulties that must be removed or overcome before the heirs can be admitted to that home of eternal joys." The Lord willing we will continue at this point in our next podcast. However, our time is up for today. Before closing, I want to emphasize that I am only giving some of the highlights from his article and I would highly recommend going to the web site supplied to download and study the entire article. Farewell.

Salvation—Adoption (4th)

(Today we continue studying the doctrine of adoption unto salvation. This podcast continues to show more information that adoption does not originate at faith and that it is an eternal and immanent act of God before the foundation of the world. It also concludes with the lengthy quote from an article on the subject by Elder J. D. Shain.)

In the previous podcast we ended while quoting from an excellent article on the subject of adoption by Elder J. D. Shain. We stopped where he clearly showed that adoption was a legal act that only placed a child into a legal relationship and that adoption "does not convey a likeness of nature" to the person that adopted the child. Our concluding quote from Brother Shain was as follows:

From these facts, it must be clear to the reader that adoption constitutes only legal relationship and does not convey a likeness of nature. You could adopt a Negro child, but you could not make it white; you could adopt a Chinese child,

but you could not put Anglo-Saxon life in its bloodstream.

At this point, he passed on "to consider the proceedings necessary to accomplish or complete" adoption unto salvation as taught in the Scriptures. In his transitional comments, he wrote:

> … As before pointed out, there must be, first, the decision or purpose to adopt an heir; second, to select or choose the heir; third, to define and pledge estate to the heir; fourth, apply to a court of law to validate your acts and intentions on behalf of the heir by the decree of adoption. Fifth, we come now to the last and final steps in completing the process of adoption, and that is to gather all the heirs from every clime, country, tribe and nation and conduct them safely to that heavenly Home which they have inherited. …

Before enlarging on this, Brother Shain describes what he calls "the incredible and incomprehensible obstacles and difficulties that must be removed or overcome before the heirs can be admitted to that home of eternal joys." He proceeds to show the fallen and depraved condition of the adopted through the fall of Adam and how they are redeemed by the Person and work of Jesus Christ. Then he shows that the redemptive work is applied experimentally to them. He summarizes as follows:

> These are the adopted heirs that will hear and live. So the Father and Son have each testified that the work of giving life, cleansing, sanctifying and calling must go forward to reach each and every heir by adoption, making them to be living, vital, quickened heirs, by being born again into the family of God. Then they will know that God has ever been their Father by adoption; and that He is now their Father by the new birth, wherein they have received His Spirit and been made partakers of His divine nature, whereby they cry ABBA FATHER.

In closing, allow me to exercise your patience more by quoting at length from the last part of the article. He wrote as follows:

> Now please turn to Galatians 4:1-6. There Paul reminds us that a child, though an heir, does not possess his inheritance, but is under governors and tutors until the time appointed by the father. Even so we, when we were children (children by adoption) were in bondage under the elements of the world: Here Paul likens our state as adopted sons as being unregenerate and still under bondage of sin in nature, to the underage child that is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. So, just as the natural father appointed a time to liberate his heir from the limitations of childhood, the Father of heavenly adoption has

appointed a day when He will release His adopted children from the rudiments of the world by regeneration, the New Birth, or being quickened and made a new creature in Christ. To argue that adoption comes in or with the new birth is to press a point that has no example in human or divine affairs. What good could accrue to one by adoption that is already a child or heir by birth? Where is there a law, human or divine, that provides for a parent to adopt his own child? There is none. Now to answer the last, and I think the final question on this point, we will consider the 5th verse in this chapter, which reads—"To redeem them that were under law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." With a casual reading of this passage, one might be inclined to understand that this is the point where the sons were adopted. But a careful look will convince us that this could not be the case. The verse does not read, "That we might be adopted as sons," but that "we might receive the adoption of sons." Adopted is a verb, which expresses action, state or being. Adoption is a noun, and is the name of a thing or an object. And here they received a thing, and that thing was adoption. So adoption existed before this point, even before the world was. And so the 6th verse reads—"And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." So because ye are sons by adoption, God sends the Spirit of Jesus Christ into your hearts, making you vital, living, born-again sons. And now you are not only sons by adoption, but you are sons by birth and brought into vital relationship with God. And now you gladly, humbly and joyfully call Him, "OUR FATHER." So as the adopting father, who adopts an heir that abides in a place distant from where he intends the heir to live, sends a son or servant to see that the new heir reaches his home in safety; even so, God the Father sends His only Son from the heavenly world into this sin-blighted and ruined world to gather His adopted children from all walks and conditions of life, from nations and climes. First He redeems them, then He quickens them into eternal life, changing their wicked and hateful hearts into hearts that love Him and cry out for Him; turning their ways from the downward path of destruction to start on their journey home. Can you not in your imagery see them as they start on this heavenly journey, some as mere children from the playground, some from the dark alleys of hopeless despair, some from the grog-shops and houses of infamy and shame, some from the leper colony, some from the prison-house? Yes, I can even see a poor blind man groping in physical darkness, but lighted inside with a torch of light that will never be extinguished. He is on his way home calling out, "O, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me!" The cripple at the gate, the daughter of Abraham who is bound in fetters by Satan is released from her fetters and joins the chorus of heavenly praise. Yes, I can see the proud Pharisee bow his arrogant and defiant head to this Lord of Lords and say in humble and plaintive tones—"Lord, who art thou," and "What wilt thou have me do?" We could go on and on

in our imagery until this apparent trickle of human misery at the beginning swells into a countless throng, pressing onward and upward in their journey home. And the beauty of this is, not a one will fall by the wayside and be left to perish. Every adopted son must appear in the Holy City of the New Jerusalem; because He who started them on this journey will never quit their side. And so, we now come to the last text to be considered in this article.

In Romans 8:23 we read these heavenly words—"Even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." If we should contend that we are adopted in regeneration, we would also have to, by the same rule, contend that we are adopted in the resurrection of our bodies. But as in Galatians, the noun form is used as it is in Romans. In this text Paul points out the glorious end of adoption, which is the resurrection and glorification of our bodies. Then shall we appear before Him, holy and without blame before Him in love. Here, the Lord that has brought His adopted brethren from the deepest depths of degredation, shame, and ruin will present them to the Father in spotless purity, clothed in celestial apparel of fine needlework and wrought gold, which is His perfect righteousness. And here they will out-shine all suns and be sublimely fitted for the royal society of the Courts of their King. Thus in the jubilance of eternal victory of their Lord and King over death, the grave, and the awful plague of sin, they will join that song of triumph—"Thou was slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation."

So adoption, like election and predestination in the primary sense was before time began. While election, predestination and adoption did not affect the heirs when the Lord acted in these matters, these acts did PROVIDE for the heirs in the ages to come when they would receive the things provided. The things provided and described as "All spiritual Blessings in heavenly places," and are particularly mentioned as redemption, reconciliation, justification and the new birth or regeneration, sanctification, faith, repentance, love, hope, peace, joy, preservation, resurrection and finally, glorification. All these things are made sure and secure in the covenant of mercy.

In the first chapter of Ephesians Paul defines the eternal phase of adoption. In the fourth chapter of Galatians he defines the time phase when we as the heirs begin to experience the glorious riches of it. When the Spirit of adoption comes to us, we begin to know and feel that the Lord hath provided sweet and precious things for us here, and hereafter. In the eighth chapter of Romans, Paul points out the final and last phase of adoption. If possible, this is the sweetest of all. At the last great day, our poor weak, worn-out and worm-eaten bodies at His command will arise, bone to bone, limb to limb, and in flawless perfection and eternal beauty will do honor and praise to Him who through love unbounded, suffering, tears and death has brought us safely Home.

We preach much about election and predestination, and we rarely mention adoption; yet we preach adoption every time we preach election and predestination. Many people object to election and predestination when preached, but never raise an eyebrow when we preach adoption. And yet, we cannot preach the truth of adoption without preaching election and predestination. So brethren, speak more about the truth of adoption and you will have God's children rejoicing in all of them.

As glorious as the thought is, our time is exhausted for today. May this glorious truth be sanctified to your heart and soul. Farewell.

Salvation—Predestination (1st)

(Today we begin studying the doctrine of predestination and its connection to salvation. In this lesson, we define the term and begin to investigate more specifically how the word is used in the salvation of the people of God.)

In previous podcasts, we covered the purpose of God, the sovereignty of God, election, and adoption and their relationship to salvation. In those studies, we mention predestination but we did not enlarge on this subject *per se*. Though predestination is included and directly connected with the purpose of God, election, and adoption, as well as other subjects, I believe it is good for us to look at it specifically. While many people and even some professed Christians deny predestination, every Bible reader knows that it is a scriptural word and a subject that must be addressed if he is going to truly worship God as He revealed Himself to man in the Holy Scriptures. Many quotes could be supplied from the writings of Arminians like John Wesley, John Fletcher, and others to show their arguments against the truth of predestination that reveal those who argue against it today are the same sophist arguments of human "logic" and misrepresentation of Scripture. Their claims are basically that it either makes man a puppet or that God is the author of sin. However, my desire is simply to try to explain the passages as found in the Word of God in a literal, grammatical interpretation as with all of the Scriptures and to show the subject in the connection of salvation.

The Greek word for predestinate, predestination, etc. is προορίζω (proorizo) and means "to limit in advance, i.e. (figuratively) predetermine:—determine before, ordain, predestinate." (*SwordSearcher* computer Bible program.) It is used six times in six verses in the New Testament: **Acts** 4:28 (determined before); **Romans** 8:29 (did predestinate); 8:30 (he did predestinate); **I Corinthians** 2:7 (ordain); **Ephesians** 1:5 (having predestinated); 1:11 (being predestinated). According to Thayer's *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, the word is defined as *to predetermine, decide*

beforehand; to foreordain, appoint beforehand. This compound word is composed from the preposition πρό (pro) which means "in front of, before," etc. and ὁρίζω (horizo) which means "to mark out or bound ("horizon"), i.e. (figuratively) to appoint, decree, specify:—declare, determine, limit, ordain." (*SwordSearcher*). When studying ὁρίζω we find that it is used eight times in eight verses in the New Testament: **Luke** 22:22 (it was determined); **Acts** 2:23 (by the determinate); 10:42 (was ordained); 11:29 (determined); 17:26 (and hath determined); 17:31 (he hath ordained); **Romans** 1:4 (declared); **Hebrews** 4:7 (limiteth). Our English word horizon comes from this Greek word. Obviously, the horizon does not cause anything; it marks out the boundary between the earth and the sky. In all of the definitions given for the Greek word translated predestinate not one time is the word "cause" mentioned. In the omniscience of God all things that come to pass were marked out or determined by Him from all eternity but this in no way infers that He caused what was declared. Some events *were* caused by God. Creation is such an event. But in no way God is the author of sin nor does He have fellowship with sin. When man sins he is the "cause" of that sin, not God. When Lucifer sinned, he was the cause of his sin. When the non-elect angles sinned, they were the cause of the sins they committed. Yet while "Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel ***determined before*** to be done" in crucifying Christ, they were the cause of their sins. See Acts 4:23-28. Note that ***determined before*** is προορίζω or the Greek word for predestination. Note also that ***what*** they did was according to the ***hand*** and ***counsel*** of God. Nevertheless, they were the cause of their sins and not God. This one example should be sufficient to show that the predestination of God is not the cause of sin. To say that it is, is to teach contrary to the Scriptures and we are to submit our mind and reasoning to the Scriptures whether we understand it or not. God forbid that we force the Scriptures to our sinful reason and understanding. We are taught in Romans chapter nine that God hardened Pharaoh's heart and the question is raised as to why does God find fault when His will is irresistible. The Divine answer is, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" This would have been an excellent time for God to explain or simplify His sovereignty and the responsibility of man, but He did not do that. God simply said that we are to not try to explain it and we are to submit our thinking to what the Scriptures say. We are not to try to rationalize it to the understanding of sinful thinking. I believe if one would do a thorough and honest study of the verses with the words προορίζω and ὁρίζω and the context in which they are found that he will find that God predestinating all things does not cause anything and certainly does not cause sin. Much, much more can be said to show that predestination merely marks out, determines, ordains, decrees, etc. events but does not cause the events that were determined or marked out.

With this overall brief introduction to the subjection of predestination, let us now direct our attention more specifically to predestination as it relates to the salvation of God. In doing so we will first consider Romans 8:29-30: "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." It is obvious from this passage that not only is predestination a biblical subject but that it is vitally associated with the salvation of God. The whole book of Romans could be identified as a theological exposition regarding the fall and salvation of man. In Romans 1:16, the gospel regarding salvation is the power of God to the believer. Then in verse seventeen, it is clearly stated that "the righteousness of God" is revealed in the gospel to the man who has faith. In studying how it is that a person is justified before God, we find that the ground of that justification is "the righteousness of God." (The Lord willing, we will discuss this more fully in future podcasts as we study the doctrine of justification.) However, the passage in Romans 8:29-30 is a brief, but profound, description of the salvation of God.

The passage begins with "for whom he did foreknow." It should be obvious that the "he" in this phrase is God and there are some people that God foreknew in a way different from others. In studying the omniscience of God, it is obvious to any Bible believer that God not only knows all things, but that He knows everyone that has ever lived, is alive today, and will ever live on the earth in the future. It is also plain to everyone who believes the Scriptures that someday God will cast some individuals into the lake of fire with the beast, false prophet, and the devil, cf. Revelation 19:20; 20:10, 15. Therefore, those foreknown by God in verse twenty-nine is a group separate from all others. It is further obvious that the phrase does not say "what" God foreknew but "whom." In other words, God knew some people specially and separate from all others. In fact, the word "know" is so used in the Scriptures to indicate an intimate knowledge or love. In Genesis 4:1, it says, "And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the Lord." From the very earliest of the history of man we find the word "know" used to indicate an intimate knowledge or love. Then in Genesis 4:17, it states, "And Cain knew his wife; and she conceived, and bare Enoch …." Afterwards, Genesis 5:25, affirms this special or intimate love when it was said, "And Adam knew his wife again; and she bare a son, and called his name Seth …." Also, when Gabriel was sent to Mary and announced that she was to give birth to Jesus, she said to the angel, "How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?" Amos 3:2 equally testifies of this special knowledge or favor regarding God knowing Israel in a separate way from all the other families or tribes of the earth. Many other examples can be supplied throughout the Scriptures to show this truth for the word know but these should be sufficient. Therefore, the idea that "foreknow" in Romans 8:29 refers to the love of God for a special people

is not some farfetched idea but is completely in harmony with the clear teaching of the Holy Scriptures and is in agreement with the overall truth of the salvation of God. Those predestinated by God to be conformed to the image of his Son, Jesus Christ, are those whom the Father loved before the world began. As we studied in previous podcasts regarding the subject of election, we see that it is the elect that are the objects of the love of God. Note the words of John Gill after giving an explanation of what this phrase is not, he said, "this regards the everlasting love of God to his own people, his delight in them, and approbation of them; in this sense he knew them, he foreknew them from everlasting, affectionately loved them, and took infinite delight and pleasure in them; and this is the foundation of their predestination and election, of their conformity to Christ, of their calling, justification, and glorification."

The Lord willing, we will discuss this further in our next podcast, but our time is up for today. Farewell.

Salvation—Predestination (2nd)

(Today we continue studying the doctrine of predestination and its connection to salvation. In this lesson, we study the calling of those predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ Jesus. It is obvious that the calling is limited in scope to those loved by God before the world began.)

In our previous podcast we introduced, defined, and began studying somewhat the subjection of predestination as it relates to the salvation of God. We ended that study considering Romans 8:29-30, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." We showed from the Scriptures that the phrase "for whom he did foreknow" refers to a special people that God loved from everlasting and that this special people corresponds to the elect or sheep of God. From previous studies we have noted that Jesus said that He gave His life for the sheep. In fact, Jesus plainly said, "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep," John 10:11. Therefore, those that the Father loved in eternity are the ones He marked out or predestinated to be "conformed to the image of his Son." The salvation of men was not an afterthought on the part of God after the fall of man; it was marked out (predestinated) before the world began. Much could be said regarding all that is involved in this conformation to the image of the Son of God, but time will not allow us to discuss that at this time. Needless to say, the salvation of God is not something left up to the will and actions of man. It was predestinated by God before the world was and it was given to those whom God loved. In fact, a case could be made for

those in the phrase "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father" in I Peter 1:2 that the foreknowledge in that place is also referring to the love of God.

Verse thirty of Romans eight further enlarges on this predestination of those whom God foreknew or loved. It clearly declares that those predestinated by God are called, justified, and glorified. The Greek word for *called* is used in many ways throughout the New Testament, and the English word *called* is identified particularly two ways with regard to the called of the gospel and the internal call by the Holy Spirit in regeneration. Such examples of this is found in Matthew 20:16, "So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen," and in Matthew 22:14, "For many are called, but few are chosen." Concerning Matthew 20:16, note the closing comments from Matthew Henry's *Whole Bible Commentary*: "This is applied to the Jews (Mt 22:14); it was so then, it is too true still; many are called with a common call, that are not chosen with a saving choice. All that are chosen from eternity, are effectually called, *in the fulness of time* (Ro 8:30), so that in making our effectual calling sure we *make sure our election* (2Pe 1:10); but it is not so as to the outward call; *many are called,* and yet refuse (Pr 1:24), nay, as they are called *to* God, so they go *from* him (Ho 11:2, 7), by which it appears that they were not chosen, for *the election will obtain,* Ro 11:7. Note, There are but few *chosen* Christians, in comparison with the many that are only *called* Christians; it therefore highly concerns us to build our hope for heaven upon the rock of an eternal choice, and not upon the sand of an external call; and we should fear lest we be found but seeming Christians, and so should really come short; nay, lest we be found blemished Christians, and so should *seem to come short,* Heb 4:1." And regarding Henry's comments for Matthew 22:14 he gave the following: "The parable is concluded with that remarkable saying which we had before (Mt 20:16), *Many are called, but few are chosen,* Mt 22:14. Of the many that are called to the wedding feast, if you set aside all those as unchosen that make light of it, and avowedly prefer other things before it; if then you set aside all that make a profession of religion, but the temper of whose spirits and the tenour of whose conversation are a constant contradiction to it; if you set aside all the profane, and all the hypocritical, you will find that they are few, very few, that are chosen; many called to the wedding feast, but few chosen to the wedding garment, that is, to *salvation, by sanctification of the Spirit.* This *is the strait gate, and narrow way,* which *few find.*"

Therefore, the called in Romans 8:30 must likewise be a unique calling that God gives to some and not to others. As we previously stated, "It clearly declares that those predestinated by God are called, justified, and glorified." It should likewise be clear that this calling does not include each and every person that ever lives on the earth because if so then each and every individual equally would be justified and glorified. Since the Scriptures do not teach that everyone will be justified and glorified, then the calling must be limited to those that are justified and glorified; that

is, to the saved. To further identify the called, we will bring to our attention other passages where this Greek word is used.

In chapter nine of Romans, we find this word used three times: in verses seven, eleven, and twenty-four. From these passages and in their context, it is obvious that the call is limited specifically to those under the blessing of God that are called unto salvation. In verse seven, it is stated that not everyone who is a descendant of Abraham are children of the promise. The children of promise are those called of the seed of Isaac. Paul further elucidates the sovereignty of God in election or calling some unto salvation by the example of God exhibiting His love on Jacob and bypassing his twin brother Esau. Clearly verse eleven states election unto salvation is not of works but of God that calls specific individuals unto salvation. In the verses that follow, it is further explained that God has mercy on those that He wills to have mercy and that salvation is "not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy," Romans 9:16. Then in verses twenty-three and twenty-four we see that God is not only speaking of salvation for the Jews because the riches of the glory of God are bestowed on the vessels of mercy that God "had afore prepared unto glory." Then it is made plain that this blessing unto glory is "not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles." Please note that this glory in verse twenty-four corresponds with the "glorified" in Romans 8:30.

Many other passages could be supplied to support this truth. Obviously, we will not take the time to comment on each one. However, I will quote some and provide a small list of other verses that teach the same truth that you may study as well.

In **Galatians 1:15-16a**, Paul said, "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called *me* by his grace, To reveal his Son in me."

II Timothy 1:9 states, "Who hath saved us, and called *us* with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." Notice again that this "holy calling" is "not according to our works, but according to" the "purpose and grace" of God, "which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

I Peter 2:9 says, But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." Note that Peter was writing to the elect of God as designated in chapter one, verse two. Also, he clearly states that it is God that calls us "out of darkness into his marvellous light." (We will have more to say about this, the Lord willing, when we discuss regeneration.)

I Peter 3:9 declares, "Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing." While much could be discussed concerning this verse, it is apparent that the blessing to which we (the elect, I Peter 1:3) are called is not something earned; it is an inheritance given to us by the Lord.

I Peter 5:10, "But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle *you*." Here again Peter tells the elect, to whom he was writing (I Peter 1:3), that they were called to the "eternal glory" of God. Obviously, this "eternal glory" identifies with the "glorified" in Romans 8:30.

Lastly we draw your attention to **Revelation 19:9**, "And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed *are* they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God." Here we see that those that are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb are the same ones that were predestinated, called, justified, and glorified as recorded in Romans 8:30.

A few other verses for further study may be I Corinthians 1:9; Galatians 1:6; Ephesians 4:1; I Thessalonians 2:12; 5:24; II Thessalonians 2:14; Hebrews 11:8; I Peter 2:21; II Peter 1:3.

Time fails us to discuss the justified and glorified from Romans 8:30. The Lord willing we will consider these topics in connection with predestination in the next podcast. Nevertheless, our time is up for today. Farewell.

Salvation—Predestination (3rd)

(Today we continue studying the doctrine of predestination and its connection to salvation. In this lesson, we briefly study the justified and glorified as listed in Romans 8:29-30.)

In previous podcasts concerning predestination, we introduced, defined, and began studying somewhat the subjection of predestination as it relates to the salvation of God. The last podcast ended while studying verse thirty of Romans 8:29-30, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." We saw that those foreknown or loved in verse twenty-nine were called unto God by His grace and that was "was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began," II Timothy 1:9. First, we desire today to look at those who were predestinated unto justification. We plan to cover more fully the subject of justification in future studies; therefore, we will briefly give the essence of justification, identify who are the justified, and Who it is that justifies.

The doctrine of justification is a central truth in Christianity and has been the focus of many books and articles written from various viewpoints. An incident related to me by a friend some years ago illustrates from everyday experience the need for a clear and an understandable explanation of this crucial subject. During a break at work, my friend discussed with an associate the apparent differences between present

day Christian writers and those of the past. The associate or fellow worker asserted that modern writers and Christians possess greater spiritual insight into the Scriptures than did Christians in previous eras. To the amazement of his co-worker my friend disagreed pointing out that very few people presently had a satisfactory understanding of important Bible doctrines such as justification. The ruffled co-worker replied, "What's that?" This professed "spirit filled Christian" was totally ignorant of the essential doctrine that is required for any individual to be saved. Why do we say this? It is because unless a person is justified before God he cannot be at peace before God or admitted into the glory world of the redeemed. Also, while there are many benefits of justification, I will only list three at this time—biblical or true assurance of salvation, strength for Christian warfare, and the only proper incentive to a holy life. The Lord willing we will say more about these when the address justification more fully.

Several writers and dictionaries could be quoted to give the meaning of justification; however, I will only quote a couple that I believe summarizes it as clearly as any. First, I will quote John Dick from his *Lectures on Theology* (Cincinnati: J. A. & U. P. James, 1850), p. 371. It is as follows:

> Justification is a forensic term, which denotes not a change of personal disposition, but a change of his state in relation to the law. It does not make him righteous by an infusion of holy habits, but pronounces him righteous on valid grounds.... To justify the righteous is not to make him, but to pronounce him, righteous upon proof of his innocence, and of the goodness of the cause…. In the New Testament, the word δικαιόω always bears a forensic sense, or a sense closely connected with it, importing not to make, but to pronounce righteous.... The forensic sense of justification is manifest from its being opposed to condemnation. "It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth?" ... Justification is a change, not of our nature, but of our state.

The second is a simple quote that summarizes it even further. It is from John Gill's *Sermons and Tracts*, (London: T. Smith. 1814; repr., Streamwood, IL: Primitive Baptist Library, 1981). vol. 2, p. 457.

> ... justification is a pronouncing a person righteous according to law, as though he had never sinned …

Again, we remind you that justification is a legal or forensic term that does not make a person righteous; it only pronounces him righteous according to the law. The individual does not do anything to become righteous; he is righteous. To help show this further, justification is the opposite of condemnation. When a person appears in

a court of law due to some charge against him there must be proof of the crime charged for the court to condemn him. When such proof is provided without question, the evidence does not make him guilty; the evidence is proof that he is guilty. The judge or jury does not make the criminal guilty; the man is simply declared to be what he is—guilty. Likewise, when no evidence is provided regarding the crime charged the person is not made righteous or not guilty, he is simply declared to be what he already is—not guilty or righteous according to the law.

One other example given to show that justification does not make a person righteous but only declares him to be righteous is found in Luke 7:29-30. It says, "And all the people that heard *him*, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him." Obviously, those who submitted themselves to the baptism of John did not make God righteous. Their actions were saying that what God required of them was right. It is without question that there is nothing anyone can do to make God righteous; however, when we submit ourselves to the commandments of God we are confessing that God is just, right, or righteous. We will, the Lord willing, review other passages when we study justification more fully in the future, but this brief overview should be sufficient to show that when one is justified before God he is declared to be righteous. It is without question that this righteousness is not something produced by us. It is the righteousness of Christ "which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began," II Timothy 1:9.

Returning to Romans 8:29-30, we see that those foreknown or loved by God are predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ. Further, the predestinated are called, and the called are justified. Note also it is God that predestinated, called, and justified. It is not man or the gospel that predestinated, called, and justified. Also, it is not the gospel minister that predestinated, called, and justified. It is God. Romans 8:33 plainly declares, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? *It is* God that justifieth."

Thankfully, the passage does not end with justification, but it extends to the final state of all the redeemed—glorification. You will notice that this too, like the calling and justification, is in the past tense. How can this be? We are not yet glorified. This is called a *prolepsis*. A prolepsis is "… the representation of a thing as existing before it actually does or did so." Another definition of prolepsis is "… when we anticipate what is going to be done, and speak of future things as present." The Scriptures tell us that God declares "the end from the beginning, and from ancient times *the things* that are not *yet* done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure," cf. Isaiah 46:9-10. From the perspective of God, the calling, justifying, and glorifying are viewed as being completed because of how sure it is that they will all come to pass. Therefore, every individual that will be glorified and live with the Lord in that glory world to come, are justified, called, and predestinated by God. This passage in

Romans 8:29-30 is a summary of the salvation of God. Salvation originated in eternity past when God set His love on those that were predestinated to be called, justified, and glorified. To deny the predestination of God is to deny that salvation is of the Lord, cf. Jonah 2:9b.

The Lord willing we will begin our next podcast by studying predestination in connection to the salvation of God by examining Ephesians 1:5, 11. Nevertheless, our time is up for today. Farewell.

Salvation—Predestination (4th)

(Today we continue studying the doctrine of predestination and its connection to salvation. In this lesson, we will consider predestination as given in Ephesians 1:5, 11.)

So far in our study of the subject of salvation we have given a basic and overall definition of salvation, identified the standard for studying this subject (the King James Bible), the purpose of God, the sovereignty of God, election, adoption, and are now studying the doctrine of predestination. While these topics are controversial among some people and professed believers, my primary purpose in examining these subjects is not to idolize one theology over another. It is to show the grand and majestic design of the salvation of God from the beginning of the world and that all the glory, praise, and honor for salvation goes to God and Him alone. Why He purposed to save some and not others is beyond our understanding and comprehension. It is clear that if He left all or any part of salvation up to sinful man then no one would be saved. Therefore, dear believer, I pray the various facets of the diamond of salvation that we are considering will not be a stake for controversy but that they bless your soul to praise and bless the Lord for loving you and setting His grace on you before you had any knowledge of Him. “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable *are* his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counseller? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom *be* glory for ever. Amen.” Romans 11:33-36.

With this in mind, we will continue our topic of predestination as it relates to salvation by considering Ephesians 1:5, 11. To fully comprehend these verses, we should consider verses three through fourteen because they are one paean of praise to the Lord for His salvation. While we will allude to various things in these verses as we particularly study verses five and eleven, time prevents us from a detailed exegesis of each verse or subject matters contained therein. The two verses are as follows: Verse five: “Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus

Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." Verse eleven: "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his will."

If you have been following our studies on salvation, you will remember that we covered Ephesians 1:5 somewhat when we considered the doctrines of election and adoption. Verse four says that God chose us (His sheep; the elect) in Christ "before the foundation of the world." Then verse five declares that the chosen were predestinated "unto the adoption of children … according to the good pleasure of" the will of God. So why is it that God predestinated some and not others? He did it "according to the good pleasure of his will." The reason God loved some and not others is because of "the good pleasure of his will." Many people argue that it is not right if God does not give everyone a chance to be saved. However, it must be remembered that salvation is not by chance; it is by grace, Ephesians 2:8. Since it is by grace, then it is not by works, Ephesians 2:9. In other words, if a person must perform some function to be saved from their sins then that function is a work and grace would be excluded. Not only does Ephesians 2:9 state that salvation is "not of works," but Romans 11:6 plainly declares that it is not a combination of works and grace, but that it is either one ***or*** the other: "And if by grace, then *it is* no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if *it be* of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more work." Therefore, those who were chosen before the world was and predestination according to the good pleasure of the will of God should worship and adore the Lord for bestowing grace on them and not try to figure out the details as to why God would choose one and not another. The Scriptures admonishes us to remember that "The secret *things belong* unto the Lord our God, but those *things which are* revealed *belong* unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law," Deuteronomy 29:29. So, instead of trying to figure out what the Lord does not tell us, let us believe the Scriptures as given to us and as Ephesians 1:6 suggests, praise and glorify the grace of God for making us "accepted in the beloved."

Now let us consider Ephesians 1:11, "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his will." As we know an inheritance is not something that we earn, and clearly, the verse says that the inheritance of salvation is due to "being predestinated according to the purpose of" God that works "all things after the counsel of his own will." Remember that earlier we quoted Romans 11:33-36 and there it was said "For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counseller?" Also Isaiah 40:13-14 says, "Who hath directed the Spirit of the LORD, or *being* his counseller hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and *who* instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding?" Therefore, the predestination of the

elect in Christ is hidden in the counsel of God.

Ephesians 1:11 further speaks of our predestination being "according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his will." However, we will not look into the "all things after the counsel of his will." This would require expanding our study beyond the umbrella subject of salvation. Nevertheless, we will make this observation. Predestination is part and parcel of the will of God regarding all things. Regarding these things, hear the declaration of Isaiah 46:10 where it is said of God that He declares "the end from the beginning, and from ancient times *the things* that are not *yet* done," and further says "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." From this and many other passages that could be supplied that teach the same truths, it is clear that salvation was not an afterthought on the part of God.

Often the objection is raised that a person has to believe in order to be saved. (The Lord willing we plan on discussing faith and believe in future studies.) While we maintain that the Lord will bring His sheep to follow Him (John 10:14-16), our believing has nothing to do with payment for our sins. Concerning this I will give a quote from Volume 10 of *The Works of John Owen*, pages 173-174, as published by The Banner of Truth Trust.

> To which I may add this dilemma to our Universalists:—God imposed his wrath due unto, and Christ underwent the pains of hell for, either all the sins of all men, or all the sins of some men, or some sins of all men. If the last, some sins of all men, then have all men some sins to answer for, and so shall no man be saved; for if God enter into judgment with us, though it were with all mankind for one sin, no flesh should be justified in his sight: …. If the second, that is it which we affirm, that Christ in their stead and room suffered for all the sins of all the elect in the world. If the first, why, then, are not all freed from the punishment of all their sins? You will say, "Because of their unbelief; they will not believe." But this unbelief, is it a sin, or not? If not, why should they be punished for it? If it be, then Christ underwent the punishment due to it, or not. If so, then why must that hinder them more than their other sins for which he died from partaking of the fruit of his death? If he did not, then did he not die for all their sins. Let them choose which part they will.

The quote may be somewhat confusing; therefore, here is a modern simplified version of the quote of John Own in a syllogism. It is as follows:

The Father imposed his wrath upon the Son, and the Son was punished for:
1. All the sins of all men.
2. All the sins of some men.
3. Some of the sins of some men.

In which case, it may be said:

a. That if the last be true, all men have some sins to answer for, and so none is saved.

b. That if the second be true, then Christ, in their stead suffered for all the sins of some men (i.e., all the elect in the whole world), and this is the truth.

c. But if the first be the case, why are not all men free from the punishment due unto their sins?

You answer, "Because of unbelief." I ask, "Is this unbelief a sin, or is it not? If it is, then Christ suffered the punishment due unto it, or he did not. If he did, why must that hinder them more than their other sins for which he died? If he did not, he did not die for all their sins!"

This should be clear as to the question of what about "the sin of unbelief." However, we have exhausted our time for today. Farewell.

Salvation—Predestination (5th)

(Today we continue studying the doctrine of predestination and its connection to salvation. In this lesson, we will consider predestination as associated with Acts 4:28 and I Corinthians 2:7.)

In previous podcasts concerning predestination and its relationship to salvation, we studied Romans 8:29-30 and Ephesians 1:5, 11. The other two passages that contain the Greek word προορίζω (proorizo) that is translated predestination in the verses we have studied are Acts 4:28 and I Corinthians 2:7. They are as follows: Acts 4:28, "For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." I Corinthians 2:7, "But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, *even* the hidden *wisdom*, which God ordained before the world unto our glory." Hopefully, by studying these two passages you will be blessed to have a fuller understanding and appreciation of the rich meaning of the Greek word that is translated as predestination. These verses as seen in their context further enlightens us to the fact that our salvation in all of its aspects is not something that God had to invent after man fell in the Garden of Eden, but that salvation originated in the Lord before creation. Furthermore, in that it originated in the mind and purpose of God, He did not determine who would be saved based on anything that man would or should or could do. Salvation, from beginning to the end and all things in between, is purely by the purpose and grace of God "given us in Christ Jesus before the world was," II Timothy 1:9.

Now we will consider Acts 4:28, "For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." This verse is part of a prayer offered to God by the

congregation at Jerusalem after Peter and John were threatened and released from the Sanhedrin Council due to their healing the lame man at the Beautiful Gate and preached repentance to the people. Though the council "commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus," Peter and John replied that they were to obey God rather than man, Acts 4:18-20. Being assembled with "their own company" they "reported all that the chief priest and elders had said to them," Acts 4:23. Unlike professing Christians today, the early Christians did not bow to the commands and threatenings of the rulers in their day. They continued to assemble together and glorified the God that "made heaven, and earth, and the sea, all that is in them" and recognized the prophetic words of the Holy Scriptures that foretold of the "kings of the earth" and the "rulers" conspiring against "the Lord, and against his Christ," verse 26. They further spoke of how "Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, For to do whatsoever" God's "hand and counsel determined before to be done," Acts 4:27-28. In other words, the wicked rulers and people were gathered together to fulfill the counsel and predestination of God because the Greek word προορίζω (proorizo) that is translated predestinate in the previous verses studied is the same word that is translated "determined before" in this verse. They recognized that when Christ was crucified by wicked men for the salvation of His people it was according to the predestination of God.

Predestination is a core factor in the salvation of God. As we have seen in previous podcasts, those that God loved in eternity and chosen in Christ and adopted to be in the family of God were predestinated to these things. They are the ones that are to be conformed into the image of Christ Jesus, justified, and eventually be glorified to live eternally with God. Though after creation they fell in Adam and were dead in trespasses and sins, the payment for their sins whereby they will be ultimately fully saved was equally included in the predestination of God. (The Lord willing we will study about the fall of man in future studies.) The early saints recognized this glorious truth and rejoiced in it in their prayer and praise to God because of being persecuted for the truth of the gospel.

Because "Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done," this did not excuse them anymore than it excused Pharaoh for his wicked acts. Yes, God raised up Pharaoh for the purpose to show His power and declare His name "throughout all the earth"; nevertheless, Pharaoh was guilty for his wicked deeds, Romans 9:17-24. Likewise, those who crucified our Lord are guilty for their sinful acts. Peter, and the other apostles, declared to the Jewish crowd on the Day of Pentecost, "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Acts 2:23. (While the word "determinate" is not the Greek word προορίζω as Acts 4:28, it is ὁρίζω, the root of predestination as pointed out in our first podcast on this

subject.) Though what they did was by "the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God" they did it by their "wicked hands." How do we reconcile this with, or in, our fallen minds? We can't. Just as Romans 9 addresses those who would raise the question of why or how God finds fault with wicked men (like Pharaoh) that He raises up to do His (i.e., God's) will so must we give the same inspired answer: "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed *it*, Why hast thou made me thus?" Therefore, instead of trying to figure out the dividing line of the sovereignty of God and the responsibility of man in connection with predestination, let us follow the Christians in the first century by worshiping, honoring, praising, and glorifying our great God Who upholds "all things by the word of his power," Hebrews 1:3. God did not predestinate and tell us of His predestination in the Scriptures for men to argue and debate over details that He did not tell us in the Scriptures. He did it for His honor and glory, and the reason and logic of sinful man is too low to comprehend the secret things of God. Let us simply give the glory and honor to the Lord for His predestination.

Let us briefly consider our last passage: I Corinthians 2:7, "But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, *even* the hidden *wisdom*, which God ordained before the world unto our glory." The Greek word of προορίζω (proorizo) is "ordained" in this verse. The context of this verse and the subject matter is the gospel. (Time does not allow for a thorough study of the gospel. We may consider this in future studies, but we are trying to limit this to predestination and its relation to salvation. I will say that I believe the gospel was commission to the only ecclesiastical authority, the ἐκκλησία ekklēsía of God—the congregation of God which is the house of God.)

From this verse, in connection with many others, we see that the gospel is included in the predestination of God. Like the love of God for His sheep, the calling of God, the justification of God, the glorification of God, and redemption by the crucifixion of Christ, the gospel of the salvation of God was equally included in the predestination of God. Revelation 14:6 alludes to it as "the everlasting gospel." No. The gospel is not some afterthought that God added after the crucifixion of Christ. In fact, no part of the salvation of God is disconnected from the overall purpose and counsel of God. The whole of salvation from the beginning to the end and all things in between is of God. God did not love His people before the foundation of the world, predestinate their calling, justification, and glorification, and then leave them on their own while they live out their lives in this world. A loving and caring natural father brings children into the world and does his best to provide food, clothing, and shelter for them. Likewise, our Heaven Father Who, is greater and more loving and caring than a natural father, provides for His children while they, too, live their lives in this sinful world. In the wisdom and mystery of God, Who works all things together for good for His children (Romans 8:28), He sees to it that His children know, love, and follow their God and Father and that they enjoy their Savior. Allow me to give a

small sample passages to exhibit this glorious truth. First, the words of Jesus as given in John 6:37, 44-45: "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. … No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." Next, John 10:3, 5, 14-15: "… the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out … And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers. … I am the good shepherd, and know my *sheep*, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep." Notice from these verses that the sheep of God know the voice of the Shepherd because He calls each one by name; they follow the Shepherd and not another (stranger); the Shepherd knows the sheep (Yes, even by name.) and the sheep equally knows the Shepherd. Just as the Shepherd knows the Father, so likewise does the sheep know the Shepherd. Time fails me to multiply such verses. However, allow me to impose on your time with one more. "Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory," II Timothy 2:10. Just as the apostle Paul was willing to "endure all things" to preach the gospel to the elect, so likewise should every gospel minister (as well as any knowledgeable Christian) seek to give the gospel to any and all who will listen.

There are many mysteries of predestination that God was pleased to hide from us, but we have seen that it is a glorious truth regarding the salvation of the believer from beginning to the end. Though there are many mysteries and questions that we are unable to know, answer, or understand, I close with a quote from *The Works of Robert Traill*, Volume II, p. 32. It is as follows: "It was a good saying, I think, of the blessed martyr Mr. Bradford, 'No man should go to the university of predestination, till he be well trained up in the grammar-school of faith and repentance.'"

For time sake and because our study would take us beyond the doctrine of salvation, we will not consider the root word of προορίζω (proorizo) which is ὁρίζω (horizo). A list of those passages was given in our first lesson on predestination.

Our time is up for today. Farewell.

Salvation—Creation

(Today we are studying the doctrine of creation and its connection to salvation.)

At first sight it may seem strange that the topic of creation would be included in studying the salvation of God. The truth of creation is essential in many ways and concerning many aspects of the various doctrines of the Holy Scriptures and regarding the life and lifestyle

of the believer. We cannot cover all of these topics due to the nature of our podcast since we are merely considering creation in relation to the salvation of God. In fact, one of the major reasons that God created the universe was for the salvation of those He loved and elected in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. Since God elected some in Christ Jesus and predestinated that they would be called, justified, and glorified, it was necessary that they should be born into this world. Because eternal life was promised before the world began (Titus 1:2) and salvation by the death of Christ was foreordained in eternity (II Timothy 1:9), even to the names of the redeemed being written in the book of life from the foundation of the world (Revelation 13:8; 17:8), and all other components of salvation were to be fulfilled, it was necessary for God to create the universe. God created the earth in the universe for the habitation of mankind. Note Isaiah 45:18, "For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I *am* the LORD; and *there is* none else." Therefore, all who believe the Holy Scriptures of God are not carried away with the pseudo-science of the world and know that God created the heavens and earth. As any Bible reader knows, the revelation of God begins with this declaration: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," Genesis 1:1. Equally, the true believer knows that the earth is the habitation of man.

Many today go to great lengths to deny the truth of creation as stated in the Bible. However, if man evolved from eternal matter the only salvation he needs is to be saved or delivered from are adversities while living in this life: sickness; financial dilemmas; death; or, other such like issues. After all, if there is no hereafter; there is no salvation. But there is a general belief found in the history of man of a supreme being that created the universe and that there is life after death or a state where a person dwells forever. Nevertheless, as previously stated, every Bible believer knows and understands that God created the heaven and earth. Even our Lord testified of this. In Mark 13:19, Jesus said, "For *in* those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be." Furthermore, Jesus stated that God created mankind as male and female: "But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female," Mark 10:6. Jesus further stated the purpose of creating male and female: "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." Mark 10:7-9. From this and other passages regarding creation, we know that the first couple was a male and a female and their names were Adam and Eve. This is what God ordained for the human race. The Scriptures further declare, "Marriage *is* honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge," Hebrews 13:4. While the ungodly may deny this and practice their unholy lifestyle, believers who are saved by the grace of God will honor this by living according to the commands of God. The Lord willing, we will have more to say about this in the future, but for now we need to direct our attention more specifically to the need for creation regarding

the salvation of God. In many ways, I believe it is rather obvious, yet we will try to give some light concerning this topic.

Previously we studied the purpose of God, the sovereignty of God, and the election, adoption, and the predestination of God regarding salvation. In order for these things to materialize it was necessary for those elected, adopted, predestinated unto calling, justification, and glorification to be created. A plan is of no benefit unless is comes to pass.

I want to interject at this point that salvation is not limited to those whom the Father loved before the foundation of the world, but the whole creation is involved. Romans 8:19-23 speaks of the creation groaning and travailing as it waits for the manifestation of the fullness of salvation. It says, "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected *the same* in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only *they*, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, *to wit*, the redemption of our body." (It is to be noted that the words "creature" and "creation" are the same Greek word.) There are other passages that affirm that the creation is connected with salvation. However, we will give two of many that could be supplied: (1) II Peter 3:13 says, "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." (2) Revelation 21:1, "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passes away; and there was no more sea." The holy city of God is to dwell on this "redeemed" earth with the redeemed people of God.

While there are various opinions as to how all of this may play out, we are not prepared to discuss that in this podcast. Our only purpose for introducing this in our study is to clearly demonstrate that the study of the salvation of God includes knowing the truth about creation and that it was necessary that God create the universe. In connection with this, it might be good to keep in mind that not only was creation essential, but it was vital that the creation is exactly what we have. In other words, due to the wisdom and perfection of God there could be no other creation. It is true that God has the power to create a different world but since He does all thing "good" and "very good" and to harmonize with His perfection and wisdom, this is the only world that could be.

The creation, like salvation, is for the glory of God. Listen to Revelation 4:11, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." Earlier when we studied about those elected unto salvation and predestinated unto the adoption of children, we saw that that, too, was according to good pleasure of God and for His glory. "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace,

wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." And again, "That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." Ephesians 1:4-6, 12-14. Obviously, we can multiply verses throughout the Scriptures to show that the creation of God and the salvation of God are so intertwined that one is as essential and the other. While modern Christianity sing the praises of and applauds the importance of salvation and the preaching of the gospel for the attainment of this salvation, little is said regarding the importance and beauty of worshiping the God of creation. The angel in Revelation 10:6 said, "[S]ware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein." And the angel in Revelation 14:7 equally proclaimed, "Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."

Unless there was a creation, there would be no salvation. It is not a matter for philosophical reasoning of what God might have done or what He could have done. The creation of God was essential for the salvation of God. All the purposing, election, predestination, and other activities of God before the foundation of the world would have been of not benefit without the creation. Hopefully, you are blessed to see the divine importance of creation and that this subject is far more important and man trying to determine his origin. Man continues to spend billions and billions searching the depths of the ocean, the archeological digs of the earth, the planets, and the expanse of space trying to figure out how we got here. Equally, because the philosophers and so-called scientist tell us that our earth is wearing down and we need to establish some colony or outpost for the salvation of life. The creation of the universe by God is for the salvation of God. It is the Christian that is at peace with God because he knows how he got here, why he is here, and where he is to spend eternity. Equally, he knows that the creation of God is a vital part of salvation.

The Lord willing in our next podcast we will devote some time to the providence of God over His creation. Nevertheless, our time is up for today. Farewell.

Salvation—Providence

(Today we are studying the doctrine of providence and its connection to salvation.)

In previous podcasts regarding salvation, we studied the purpose of God, the sovereignty of God, and the election, adoption, and the predestination of God, and the creation of God. Not only did God plan and put in motion the salvation of those He foreknew before the world, but He must see to it that each child of grace be created

and brought to salvation. As has been said before, a plan is of no benefit unless it comes to pass. Unless Divine providence overrules the whole of creation how can one be certain that any child of grace would be created and be the individual that he should be unless God overrule in every detail of his life to bring him to the culmination of being conformed to the image of Jesus Christ, cf. Romans 8:29? Remember that Revelation 13:8 and 17:8 tells us about the redeemed whose *names* were "written in the book of life of the Lamb … from the foundation of the world." The name of a person is descriptive of the individual and includes his chromosomal makeup down to his DNA. Think of this. You are who you are because of your ancestry. This includes your father and mother, grandfather and grandmother, and going back in your lineage to the beginning. Suppose your lifetime to be one generation, and your parents to be the second generation, and your grandparents are the third generation, and so on. With this in mind if you go back ten generations, 512 people had to be alive and involved in who you are; go back to twenty generations, 524,288 people would be needed to be for you to be born with your genetic makeup. If you extend it to thirty generation the total would be 536,870,912. According to *Wikipedia*, a generation is considered to be from twenty to thirty years, with an average of twenty-five years. Therefore, it is possible that if the records were available your genealogy could be traced back beyond thirty generations. What is the point in all of this? Simply that you are not here by accident. You are here and who you are by the providence of God. If you are redeemed, your name was written into the book of life of the Lamb; you, with all of your chromosomal makeup with your DNA. You are who you are on purpose. You are not a random product of human nature. As the psalmist said, you are "fearfully *and* wonderfully made," Psalm 139:14. Allow me to quote the surrounding context: "For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise thee; for I am fearfully *and* wonderfully made: marvellous *are* thy works; and *that* my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, *and* curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all *my members* were written, *which* in continuance were fashioned, when *as yet there was* none of them." (Psalm 139:13-16.) In fact, the whole psalm is about the providential dealings with the psalmist throughout his life and is, equally, applicable to us today. One will find a rich goldmine of spiritual treasure by studying this psalm.

When we consider the above statistics and the providence of the Lord this is astounding! Think of all the wars, plagues, famines, sicknesses, diseases, birth defects, and other factors surrounding the birth of each individual and his lifespan and his mate in producing their offspring in our genealogy, surely we ought to give praise to the Lord in seeing to it that we were born naturally in this world so that we would be born spiritually by the Holy Spirit and eventually live with God in glory

forever. This is only one of many factors in the subject of salvation that shows that God is involved from beginning to the end and with everything in between in conforming us into the image of His darling Son and blessing us to enjoy Him forever.

The English word providence is found only one time in the Scriptures. It is in Acts 24:2, where the orator Tertullus was testifying against Paul before Felix after the high priest Ananias arrived in Caesarea: "And when he was called forth, Tertullus began to accuse *him*, saying, Seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietness, and that very worthy deeds are done unto this nation by thy providence." The Greek word is πρόνοια (prónoia) and is from a word meaning "forethought." The meaning of πρόνοια is *provident care or supply* and is translated providence or provision. It is translated provision in Romans 13:14, "But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to *fulfil* the lusts *thereof*."

The question may be asked that if the Lord has providential care over the whole of creation as well as His people, why is it that He allowed and so ordained that there should be sin in the world and that it should be necessary for the people of God to be saved from their sins? In reality, the human mind is unable to plumb the depths of the wisdom and knowledge of God. Many men have written and preached and discussed this and there are many questions that are unanswerable. We can only know what He has revealed to us in the Holy Scriptures. However, I believe the *1689 Baptist London* (and *Philadelphia Confession of 1742*) *Confession of Faith* explains it as well as man can. Forgive me for trying your patience by quoting Chapter V, "Of Divine Providence," in total as found in William L. Lumpkin's *Baptist Confessions of Faith*. (The pronouns "He," "His," etc. with reference to God is capitalized. Also, the numbering of the references are corrected.) For time sake, I will not quote the references though they are supplied in the written text of the podcast.

1. God the good *Creator* of all things, in His infinite power and wisdom, doth uphold, direct, dispose, and govern all His creatures and things, (1) from the greatest even to the least, (2) by *His* most wise and holy providence, to the end for which they were *Created*, according unto His infallible foreknowledge, and the free and immutable counsel of His own will; to the praise of the glory of His wisdom, power, justice, infinite goodness, and mercy. (3)

(1) Heb. 1:3; Job 38:11; Isa. 46:10-11; Ps. 135:6; (2) Mt. 10:29-31; (3) Eph. 1:11

2. Although in relation to the foreknowledge and *Decree of God*, the first cause, all things come to pass immutably and infallibly; (4) so that there is not anything befalls any by chance, or without *His Providence*; (5) yet by the same *Providence* He ordereth them to fall out according to the nature of second causes, either necessarily, freely, or contingently. (6)

(4) Acts 2:23; (5) Prov. 16:33; (6) Gen. 8:22

3. God, in *His* ordinary *Providence* (7) maketh use of means, yet is free (8) to work without, (9) above, and (10) against them at *His* pleasure.

(7) Acts 27:31, 44; Isa. 55:10-11; (8) Hos. 1:7; (9) Rom. 4:19-21; (10) Dan. 3:27

4. The Almighty power, unsearchable wisdom, and *infinite* goodness of God, so far manifest themselves in *His providence*, that *His* determinate counsel extendeth itself even to the first fall, and all other sinful actions both of angels and men; (11) and that not by a bare permission, which also He most wisely and powerfully boundeth, and otherwise ordereth and governeth, (12) in a manifold dispensation to *His* most holy ends; (13) yet so, as the sinfulness of their acts proceedeth only from the creatures, and not from *God*, who, being most holy and righteous, neither is nor can be the author or approver of sin. (14)

(11) Rom. 11:32-34; 2 Sam. 24:1; 1 Chron. 21:1; (12) 2 Kings 19:28; Ps. 76:10; (13) Gen. 50:20; Isa. 10:6-7, 12; (14) Ps. 50:21; 1 Jn. 2:16

5. The most wise, righteous, and gracious *God* doth oftentimes leave for a season His own children to manifold temptations and the corruptions of their own hearts, to chastise them for their former sins, or to discover unto them the hidden strength of corruption and deceitfulness of their hearts, that they may be humbled; and to raise them to a more close and constant dependence for their support upon Himself; and to make them more watchful against all future occasions of sin, and for other just and holy ends.(15) So that whatsoever befalls any of His elect is by His appointment, for His glory, and their good. (16)

(15) 2 Chron. 32:25-26, 31; 2 Sam. 24:1; 2 Cor. 12:7-9; (16) Rom. 8:28

6. As for those wicked and ungodly men whom God, as a righteous judge, for former sin doth blind and harden; (17) from them He not only withholdeth His grace, whereby they might have been enlightened in their understanding, and wrought upon their hearts;(18) but sometimes also withdraweth the gifts which they had,(19) and exposeth them to such objects as their *corruption* makes occasion of sin; (20) and withal, gives them over to their own lusts, the temptations of the world, and the power of Satan, (21) whereby it comes to pass that they harden themselves, under those means which God useth for the softening of others. (22)

(17) Rom. 1:24, 26, 28; 11:7-8; (18) Deut. 29:4; (19) Mt. 13:12; (20) Deut. 2:30; 2 Kings 8:12-13; (21) Ps. 81:11-12; 2 Thess. 2:10-12; (22) Ex. 8:15, 32; Isa. 6:9-10; 1 Pet. 2:7-9

7. As the *Providence of God* doth in general reach to all *Creatures*, so after a more special manner it taketh care of His Church [people-JKB], and disposeth of all things to the good thereof. (23)

(23) 1 Tim. 4:10; Amos 9:8-9; Isa. 43:3-5

Our time is up for today. Farewell.

Salvation—The Fall and Depravity of Man (1st)

(Today we are studying the fall and depravity of man and its connection to salvation.)

Like all of the other ways and works of God, why God allowed man to fall is incomprehensible. God could have created man as He did with the elect angel by keeping him from falling. Also, the Lord could have only created those He elected to salvation so that all mankind would be saved and none would be eventually condemned to the lake of fire. Equally, God could have only created elect angel (cf. I Timothy 5:21) and not others that would be cast into the lake of fire with the non-elect. While theologians have supplied their reasons or answers to such questions, in reality the answers lie in the depths of "the wisdom and knowledge of God," Romans 11:33. As with all things, we can only say what the Scriptures reveal. It cannot be quoted too much and must be continually remembered: "The secret *things belong* unto the LORD our God: but those *things which are* revealed *belong* unto us and to our children for ever, that *we* may do all the words of this law," Deuteronomy 29:29. All too often man seeks to know or explain "the secret things" of God instead of doing what the Scriptures declare unto "us and to our children for ever." I believe Robert Traill wisely said regarding the creation of Adam: "But it pleased God (and against that no man should reply) not to give him establishing, preserving grace. It seemed fit to God, that establishing grace should only be dispensed in and by Jesus Christ, who was to restore fallen man, and to be the head of *a new and better covenant, of which Christ is Mediator, which was established on better promises, Heb. viii. 6."* Volume II, Page 208 of his *Works*.

After the Lord created the moon, stars, sun, and all the vegetative life and animal life He created the apex of His creation—man. Listen to the inspired words of Holy Scripture: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth," Genesis 1:26-28. Further on, God revealed somewhat how He created the first man and woman. "And the LORD God

formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. … And the LORD God said, *It is* not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. … And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This *is* now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh," Genesis 2:7, 18, 21-24. God created everything "very good," Genesis 1:31. Man was placed in a garden called Eden and was given the command to dress and keep it, Genesis 2:15. Furthermore, the Lord told Him that he could eat of everything in the garden except of "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil … for in the day that" he ate of it he would "surely die," Genesis 2:16-17. Some have suggested that if Adam had lived long enough he would have attained eternal life. I find it strange that those who affirm such a belief never state how long Adam needed to live to attain such a state. All we can say is that as long as he obeyed he would have lived. There is no hint that if he or Eve lived so many years that either or both would have achieved eternal life. In reality, it is futile to suppose or infer what would have happened in the future because we know that he disobeyed the Lord and ate of the forbidden fruit.

Allow me to digress shortly and say that the forbidden fruit was not an apple as have been suggested by so many for many years. The question might be raised, "If not an apple, then, what was it?" It was the fruit of "the tree of knowledge of good and evil," Genesis 2:9, 17. No, we do not (as far as we know) have such a tree today but that does not mean that it did not exist. Just as there were dinosaurs and other creatures and plants that do not exist today, does not mean that they did not exist prior to the flood.

The command was that man was not to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil and the consequence of eating it was death. Since Adam represented the whole human race, the Scriptures tell us, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned," Romans 5:12. Note carefully that the verse says "all have sinned" by "one man." Even in the nineteenth verse declares, "by one man's disobedience many were made sin." The Greek word (καθίστημι [kathístēmi, *kath-is'-tay-mee*]) translated "made" means "constitute" among other synonyms, and carries the idea to be legally constituted sin. In Adam all mankind became "dead in trespasses and sins," Ephesians 2:1. This means everyone (other than Jesus) is born a sinner. He is not born sinless. David spoke to this in Psalm 51:5, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." At conception in the womb of his mother, David was a sinner. Note the words of John Gill regarding this verse: "Hence we learn the earliness of the corruption of nature; it is as soon as man is conceived and shapen; and that it is propagated from one to another by natural generation; and that it is the case of all men: for if this was the case of David, who was born of religious parents,

was famous for his early piety, and from whose seed the Messiah sprung, it may well be concluded to be the case of all. And this corruption of nature is the fountain, source, and spring of all sin, secret and open, private and public; ….” Equally, the comments of Matthew Henry are apropos: “It is to be sadly lamented by every one of us that we brought into the world with us a corrupt nature, wretchedly degenerated from its primitive purity and rectitude; we have from our birth the snares of sin in our bodies, the seeds of sin in our souls, and a stain of sin upon both. This is what we call *original sin,* because it is as ancient as our original, and because it is the original of all our actual transgressions. This is that foolishness which is bound in the heart of a child, that proneness of evil and backwardness to good which is the burden of the regenerate and the ruin of the unregenerate; it is a bent to backslide from God.” Even the Arminian, Adam Clarke, said of this verse: “I believe David to speak here of what is commonly called original sin; the propensity to evil which every man brings into the world with him, and which is the fruitful source whence all transgression proceeds.” His concluding remark translates this verse as follows: “As my parts were developed in the womb, the sinful principle diffused itself through the whole, so that body and mind grew up in a state of corruption and moral imperfection.” Obviously, we could provide many other comments from various authors to support the truth that man is defiled and designated a sinner, not only at birth, but even in the womb. In the Gospel of John, chapter nine, the disciples asked Jesus about the man that was born blind, “who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?” (John 9:1-3) Jesus replied, “Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.” Notice that Jesus did not correct the disciples by saying that the man could not sin while in the womb of his mother. He simply declared that the man was born blind “that the works of God should be made manifest in him.” It is obvious that if the man was not a sinner he could not have been born blind because the reason there are diseases, sicknesses, and other deformities in life is because of sin. Likewise, death is the result of sin. Nevertheless, this man was allowed to be born blind so “that the works of God should be made manifest in him” by his healing by our Lord. However, the point regarding our subject is the possibility of him sinning or being a sinner prior to birth.

It is believed by many that the book of Job is the oldest book of the Bible and, if so, Job indirectly acknowledged the sinfulness of man. In Job 14:4, Job declared, “Who can bring a clean *thing* out of an unclean? not one.” In other words, since the parents of Job were sinners they could only produce another sinner. They could not produce an offspring different from their nature. Science teaches us that snakes produce snakes, dogs produce dogs, birds produce birds, and the list could be expanded. There is no proof of the contrary regardless of the presuppositions of some men who suppress or “hold the truth in unrighteousness,” Romans 1:18.

Regarding Job 14:4, again we quote the comments of John Gill, “Either produce a clean person from an unclean one: it is not to be expected that one, perfectly free from sin, should be generated by, or brought out of, one that is defiled with it; which is the case of all men;

the first man, though made upright, sinned, and by sinning defiled himself, and all human nature in him: and so those that immediately descended from him were polluted likewise, and so on in all generations, every man being conceived and shaped in iniquity; so that it is not possible that man that is born of a woman, sinful and unclean, should be clean himself, or be free from sin; by which it is manifest, that the sinfulness of human nature is unavoidable; it is natural and necessary, and cannot be otherwise, such being the case and circumstances of immediate parents, from whom men descend; and that this is the case of all men that come into the world by ordinary and natural generation; there is none righteous or pure from sin." Even the Arminian John Clarke admitted the same in his comments: "The text refers to man's original and corrupt nature. Every man that is born into the world comes into it in a corrupt or sinful state. This is called original sin; and is derived from fallen Adam, who is the stock, to the utmost ramifications of the human family. Not one human spirit is born into the world without this corruption of nature. All are impure and unholy; and from this principle of depravity all transgression is produced; and from this corruption of nature God alone can save."

It is clear to honest men that according to the Scriptures man fell in the Garden of Eden and all mankind being represented in Adam sinned in him. (Romans 5:12)

Our time is up for today. The Lord willing we will have more to say regarding this subject in our next podcast. Farewell.

Salvation—The Fall and Depravity of Man (2nd)

(Today we conclude our study of the fall and depravity of man and its connection to salvation.)

In the previous podcast regarding the fall and depravity of man we saw that when God made man He put him in the Garden of Eden to dress and keep it, and that he could eat of everything in the garden with the exception of one tree—the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Furthermore, Adam was told that if he ate of that tree he would die. Literally, we are told that it says in "dying thou shall die." In other words, he not only would die spiritually, but that he would begin to die naturally which concluded 930 years later. The Scriptures affirm in several places that death, spiritual death, passed on all mankind as the results of the sin of Adam. Roman 5:12 declares, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Notice "death passed upon all men." Earlier in the epistle of Romans, Paul proved that "both Jews and Gentiles" are "under sin," and that "all the world" is "guilty before God." Romans 3:9-19 gives a good description of the natural man and his deadness in sin. He is "under sin," unrighteous, does not understand, does not seek God, unprofitable, does not do good, has deceitful and poisonous speech that is "full of cursing and bitterness," quick "to shed blood," a lifestyle of "destruction and misery," does not have peace in his life, and has no

fear or respect for God. In addition, Ephesians 2:1 tells us that before regeneration man is "dead in trespasses and sins."

I Corinthians 2:14 speaks to the natural state of man as follows: "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned." It is amazing that many teach and preach to sinners that they will be saved if they will only believe. However, the Scriptures teach that the natural man does not receive the things of God. He not only cannot receive the things of God but they are foolishness to him. Furthermore, the text tells us that the things of God are foolishness to him and he cannot receive them, but that he also cannot know them. It is misleading for a minister to teach his congregation that if a person will simply believe he will be justified and saved. It is true that the believer will be saved, but it is misleading and confusing to preach that "if you will believe you will be saved" without further instructing that it is essential for the Lord to first open the heart of the sinner before he can believe.

Some will content that a person can believe if he will, but the Scriptures teach otherwise. Jesus said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day," John 6:44. Notice the language, "no man ***can*** come" to Christ except first the Father draws him. Even I Corinthians 2:14, as previously quoted, affirmed that the natural man "neither ***can***" know the things of God. Therefore, the natural man is unable to come to Christ or believe on Him. Why? Because he is "***dead*** in trespasses and sins." Again, Jesus told the unbelieving Jews, "Why do ye not understand my speech? *even* because ye cannot hear my word," John 8:43. The reason the natural man does not understand the gospel and obey it is because he "***cannot hear***" the Word of God. Previously, in the Gospel of John, Jesus told the unbelieving Jews that with all of their searching and studying the Scriptures that they would not come to Him. He said, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life," John 5:39-40. So we see that the natural man does not have the ***ability*** (***cannot*** hear) nor the ***will*** to hear the truth of the Word of God. Therefore, a dead sinner ***will*** not go to Christ nor ***can*** he go to Christ. The only reason a person has a will to go to hear the gospel or go to Christ is because God first changes his will. Psalm 110:3 says, "Thy people *shall be* willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth." When God moves on the heart and soul of a person in regeneration his will is changed so that he then desires "the things of the Spirit of God." Equally (as previously seen in John 6:44) the reason a person can go to Christ, or has the ability to believe in Him, is because God the Father draws him. The Greek word for draw in this verse is ἑλκύω (helkýō, *hel-koo'-o*) and literally means "to drag." Note how this word is used in a few other places in the New Testament. John 10:18 declares, "Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus." Obviously, there was no resistance or assistance from the sword of Peter. Next in the Gospel

of John we see the word in chapter twenty-one and verses six and eleven as it relates to dragging fish in the net: "And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes." … "Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken." Allow me to impose on your patience by quoting Acts 16:19 and 21:30: "And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew *them* into the marketplace unto the rulers," … "And all the city was moved, and the people ran together: and they took Paul, and drew him out of the temple: and forthwith the doors were shut." It should be abundantly clear that the drawing of the Father as stated in John 6:44 is an irresistible force acting on the dead sinner causing him to have the ability and/or will to flee to Christ. (The Lord willing, we will say more about the irresistible force of God in regeneration later.) The point is that in the fall of Adam, the whole human race was condemned and come into the world "dead in trespasses and sins," Ephesians 2:1.

When we say that a person is dead in sin and totally depraved, we do not mean that each and every human is as wicked and sinful as he can be. No, there are many people that have a kind spirit or disposition and perform many beneficial acts toward others. However, their acts are not done for the glory of the Lord. Notice Proverbs 15:8, 29; 21:27: "The sacrifice of the wicked *is* an abomination to the LORD: but the prayer of the upright *is* his delight." "The LORD *is* far from the wicked: but he heareth the prayer of the righteous." "The sacrifice of the wicked *is* abomination: how much more, *when* he bringeth it with a wicked mind?" From these verses we find that if the heart (or motive) is not right it is not accepted by God. For example, if a person worships, sacrifices, or offers prayers to God for the purpose of obtaining spiritual benefits or salvation from God, his sacrifices are unacceptable to God. When the heart is made right by God, the person worships, sacrifices, and prays to God to simply honor and glorify Him because God gave him salvation. As I John 4:19 says, "We love him, because he first loved us." However, before the Lord moves on the heart of an individual, he not only ***will not*** come to Christ, he ***cannot*** come to Christ; he does not have the will or the ability to seek and know the Lord. Even our Lord Jesus Christ told Nicodemus that unless one is born again (literally from above) he "cannot see" or "enter into the kingdom of God," John 3:3, 5. Note again that it says ***cannot*** see or enter the kingdom; that is, he does not have the ability to do so.

The Scriptures further teach that the man who is dead in trespasses and sins is unable to do anything toward his salvation, but they also teach that all of his actions are unacceptable to God. Proverbs 21:4 says, "An high look, and a proud heart, *and* the plowing of the wicked, *is* sin." While plowing and providing for his family is beneficial for their health and livelihood, his labors are not done for the glory of God, but for his personal gain. Many people are involved in many religious activities and charitable organizations and from all outward appearance it appears that many good deeds and works are being performed. Nevertheless, unless their actions are tempered by a heart prepared by the Lord in

regeneration, they are merely treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath, cf. Romans 2:5. This is the condemnation Paul wrote regarding the religious Jews and their being "ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness," cf. Romans 10:3.

Though the Lord regenerates and changes the will of man in His people, they still retain this fallen nature so that there is a continual warfare and struggle within them. Paul writes of this struggle in the seventh chapter of Romans. While we do not have time to quote all the verses and comment on them, I will quote verses fifteen through twenty-three to show this struggle. "For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that *it is* good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but *how* to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." Paul also spoke of this warfare in Galatians 5:17, "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." While the conflict rages with the child of grace due to his sinful nature, it is encouraging that the battle goes both ways. Though our sinful nature does prevent us from living as holily and godly as we desire, thankfully the Spirit equally wars against the flesh so that we, as regenerated children, do not go into the depths of sin that we would otherwise. I John 4:4 says, "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world."

Yes, the whole world fell into sin in Adam, and were it not for the ruling power of the Holy Spirit in regeneration we would not have the will or ability to believe on Christ and obey His Word. Thankfully, we who have been born again have the Holy Spirit to lead, guide, and sustain us in our daily walk with the Lord. As the prophet Jonah declared, "Salvation is of the Lord," Jonah 2:9.

Our time is up for today. Farewell.

Salvation—Justification (1ST)

(Our study for today introduces the subject of justification. Not only is justification defined, but a brief overview of justification by faith, blood, Christ, and grace reveal that faith or man believing is not the means of justification.)

Thus far we have been looking at the overall work of the redemptive work of Christ. Now we desire to study more specifically the doctrine of justification. Previously in other

podcasts we briefly mentioned this subject, but now we desire to further show that the justification of a child of grace is solely by the imputed righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. One thing must be kept in mind as we study this doctrine and that is that justification is a legal term and is not an experiential concept as is sanctification. Too often theologians and preachers present justification as something that happens at belief and as a result of belief, and if they do not believe that faith is the cause of justification, too often they are not clear in the relationship of faith and justification. This is because of the phrase "justified by faith" or other expressions where faith is used in connection with the subject of justification. The problem with this is that often other statements or verses are generally ignored when explaining the doctrine of justification. Notice the following verses:

Romans 3:28, "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by ***faith*** without the deeds of the law."

Romans 5:9, "Much more then, being now justified by his ***blood***, we shall be saved from wrath through him."

Galatians 2:17, "But if, while we seek to be justified by ***Christ***, we ourselves also are found sinners, *is* therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid."

Titus 3:7, "That being justified by his ***grace***, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."

James 2:21, "Was not Abraham our father justified by ***works***, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?"

We will discuss James 2:21 at a later time, but now we will focus our attention to the other four verses.

It should be obvious that we are not justified four different ways and that the words ***faith***, ***blood***, ***Christ***, and ***grace*** are used to express the same thing; that is, that they are words used to declare that justification is by the Person and work of Christ or that justification is by the imputed righteousness of Christ. I believe Romans 3:27 gives insight to this as it is supplied in the discussion of justification. It says, "Where *is* boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith." Here we see that there are two laws or principles: works and faith. To be clear as to what we mean by the term principle, we are following this definition of principle: "A fundamental truth; a comprehensive law or doctrine, from which others are derived, or on which others are founded; a general truth; an elementary proposition; a maxim; an axiom; a postulate." *Webster's 1828 Dictionary* from Sword Searcher Bible program. From this definition, our focus is on "a fundamental truth; a comprehensive law or doctrine." Therefore, regarding verse twenty-seven God clearly established two laws (or principles) that are mutually exclusive of each other—works and faith. It is this principle of faith to which I direct our attention regarding justification. Also, I remind you that in the passages previously quoted, we found that ***faith***, ***blood***, ***Christ***, and

grace are synonymous in the justification of sinners. This brings to our attention that justification is by the law or principle of ***faith***. Equally, we might say that our justification is by the law or principle of ***blood***, or by the law or principle of ***Christ***, or by the law or principle of ***grace***. Therefore, "justification by faith" is that we are justified by the principle of faith and not by an act of believing; that is, we are justified by the fundamental truth of faith or the comprehensive law or doctrine of faith. In other words, the principle or law of faith is defined as the whole Person and work of Christ. I believe our Lord directed the Apostle Paul to sum it up in Galatians 3:23, "But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed." Faith is used here to refer to the whole economy of faith or grace that was fulfilled in the Person and work of Christ. Justification by faith is being justified by the imputed righteousness of Christ as fulfilled in His Person and work and not by man believing. This is what some theologians call being justified by the object of faith—Christ. It is true that when one believes he received the blessings and benefits of justification in his heart and soul, but faith does not create justification. It is equally true that faith is an evidence that one is justified. Yet, a person must first be justified before the law prior to faith because faith does not create, but more about this, the Lord willing, in future studies. However, at this point we will focus our attention to the definition of justification and, thereby, show that justification does not change a person or make a person just or righteous; it only pronounces one to be righteous or just. This cannot be better illustrated than by Luke 7:29-30. It says, "And all the people that heard *him*, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him." Here we see that those who heard the preaching of John repented and were baptized "justified God." Did they make God just or righteous? Obviously not! They simply declared God to be what He is—just. Much more can be said regarding this passage but we will limit our remarks to the fact that justification does not make one righteous or just, but it simply declares one to be just or righteous. With this being said, we will now turn our attention to the Greek words for justification and quote from some major theologians and their definition for justification.

James Buchanan wrote, "Justification is a legal, or forensic, term and is used in Scripture to denote the acceptance of any one as righteous in the sight of God." This is from his work *The Doctrine of Justification, An Outline of Its History In the Church and of Its Exposition From Scripture,* p. 226.

The renowned John Owen stated, "And I say, that in no place, or on any occasion, is it used in that conjugation wherein it denotes an action *towards another*, in any other sense but to absolve, acquit, esteem, declare, pronounce righteous, or to *impute righteousness;* which is the *forensic sense* of the word we plead for;—that is its constant use and signification, nor doth it ever once signify to make inherently righteous, much less to pardon or forgive: so vain is the pretense of some, that justification consists only in the pardon of sin, which is signified by the word in any one place of Scripture. Almost in all places this

sense is absolutely unquestionable; nor is there any more than one which will admit of any debate, and that on so faint a pretense as cannot prejudice its constant use and signification in all other places. Whatever, therefore, an *infusion of inherent grace* may be, or however it may be called, *justification it is not*, it cannot be; the word nowhere signifying any such thing.... This word, therefore, whether the act of God towards men, or of men towards God, or of men among themselves, or of one towards another, be expressed thereby, is always used in a *forensic sense*, and doth not denote a *physical operation*, transfusion, or transmutation." *The Works of John Owen,* Volume 5, pp. 125-126.

John Dick said, "Justification is a forensic term, which denotes not a change of personal disposition, but a change of his state in relation to the law. It does not make him righteous by an infusion of holy habits, but pronounces him righteous on valid grounds.... To justify the righteous is not to make him, but to pronounce him, righteous upon proof of his innocence, and of the goodness of the cause…. In the New Testament, the word *δικαιουν* always bears a forensic sense, or a sense closely connected with it, importing not to make, but to pronounce righteous.... The forensic sense of justification is manifest from its being opposed to condemnation. 'It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth?' (Romans 8:33-34).... Justification is a change, not of our nature, but of our state." *Lectures on Theology*, p. 371.

After supplying the Hebrew and Greek words for justification, Herman Hoeksema wrote, "Both these verbs have uniformly a legal, or judicial, significance: that is, they refer to declaring one just, placing him in a state of righteousness, setting forth as righteous by a legal decision." After confirming that the New Testament word has the same meaning as the Old Testament word, he said, "It does not refer to one's ethical righteousness, but to the state of righteousness which is the result of a judicial or legal decision." *Reformed Dogmatics*, p. 493.

John Gill summed it up simply by saying that "... justification is a pronouncing a person righteous according to law, as though he had never sinned ...." *Sermons and Tracts*, Volume 2, p. 457.

Many such like quotes could be added declaring this same truth as to the meaning of justification but these should be sufficient. Nevertheless, it cannot be said too much that justification does not make one righteous or just; justification, as simply stated by Gill, "is a pronouncing a person righteous according to law, as though he had never sinned."

Knowing our sinful nature we can exclaim with Job when he said, "I know it is so of a truth: but how should man be just with God?" (Job 9:2).

It is not simply that we are sinners, but we are sinners from conception. David declared in Psalm 51:5, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." He did not mean by this that his birth was illegitimate. He knew that his parents were sinners and they could not produce a sinless child. As Job 14:4 declares, "Who can bring a clean *thing* out of an unclean? not one." Furthermore, when Adam sinned in the Garden of Eden, the whole human race was declared sinners. This is stated in Romans 5:12, "Wherefore, as

by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Notice it does not say "all are capable of sinning"; it says "that all have sinned." The whole human race were legally represented in Adam and sinned in him. Just as Levi, the son of Jacob, paid tithes unto Melchisedec because he was in the loins of Abraham when he paid tithes to Melchisedec. Hebrews 7:9-10 says, "And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, payed tithes in Abraham. For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him."

Therefore, since man is guilty before God from the fall of Adam, and, equally a sinner by nature because he is born of parents who are sinners, how is it that an individual can be declared not guilty? Or to echo Job 9:2 again, "I know it is so of a truth: but how should man be just with God?" Yes, a person may commit a crime and be sentenced by the judge and later pardoned by the governor, but he is still guilty of the crime committed. But we are not talking about God pardoning a sinner; we are talking about God justifying an individual. Not merely justifying a sinner, but as Romans 4:5 declares, God justifying "the ungodly."

The answer to these questions will have to wait until future podcasts because our time is up for today. Farewell.

Salvation—Justification (2ND)

(Our study for today continues with the subject of justification. In this study we show how it is that sinful man is declared to be righteous before the holy God in his being represented in his Surety from all eternity.)

We previously saw that justification is a legal term that does not change a person but it merely declares a person to be what he is—just or righteous. It is the opposite of condemnation; therefore, when a person is condemned in a court of law it does not make the person guilty, it simply declares him to be what he is, and conversely, when the judge declares a person not guilty he is simply publicly saying what the individual is—not guilty. Therefore, since justification is a forensic term that pronounces a person to be just, how is it that a guilty sinner can be not guilty before God? Romans 5:6 tells us that Christ "died for the ungodly." Also in Romans 4:5 we are told that God "justifieth the ungodly." And since all mankind died and sinned in Adams (Romans 5:12) and we are conceived in sin (Psalms 51:5), how is it that one can be declared to be just before the law of God? In other words, how can a guilty person be legally just before God? It is true that a person may commit a crime and sentenced to be punished for the crime committed and later pardoned. However, though pardoned, he is still guilty for committing the crime. Yet, in defining the meaning of justification, we saw that "justification is a pronouncing a person righteous according to law, as though he had never sinned." (John Gill, *Sermons and Tracts*, Volume 2, p. 457.) Again, we ask, "How can this be?" I believe this can be resolved by understanding the meaning of the word "surety." Hebrews 7:22 says, "By so much was

Jesus made a surety of a better testament." Without explaining this verse in its context, let us focus on the word "surety." This Greek word (ἔγγυος [éngyos, *eng'-goo-os*]) is only used here in the New Testament and the general meaning is that of a bondsman. In *Webster's 1828 Dictionary*, we find this definition, "In law, one that is bound with and for another; one who enters into a bond or recognizance to answer for another's appearance in court, or for his payment of a debt or for the performance of some act, and who, in case of the principal debtor's failure, is compellable to pay the debt or damages; a bondsman; a bail." A simple illustration might give further insight to the meaning of surety. The first vehicle I purchased my father signed the note because I did not have enough collateral or security to cover the cost of the vehicle in case I failed to pay for it. My father was well known in our community and he was so well respected that he could borrow money in his name alone from banks in two separate towns. Nevertheless, when he signed the note for the vehicle I was buying it meant that in reality he was responsible for the note and would have to pay it if I failed to do so. (Obviously, I respected my father and the Barber name and did not want to spoil it either. Equally, I wanted to please my father and thereby never missed a payment.) My father was the surety for my note.

Christ is not only the "surety of a better testament," but obviously, He is equally the surety of the election of grace. The subject of election was covered in a previous podcast, but it would be good to review it somewhat at this time. Ephesians 1:4 informs us that some were chosen in Christ "before the foundation of the world, that" they "should be holy and ***without blame*** before" God. This Greek word (ἄμωμος [ámōmos, *am'-o-mos*]) translated "without blame" carries the idea of "unblemished." It is not only translated "without blame," but also "unblamable" and "faultless." Since it is only used seven times in the New Testament, it would be good to look at the other uses to get a fuller understanding of the intensity of the word. In Ephesians 5:27, we find that the ἐκκλησία (or congregation) of God is to be without "having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and ***without blemish***" before the Lord. In Colossians 1:22, we are told that the redeemed will be presented "holy and ***unblameable*** and unreproveable in his sight." Hebrews 9:14 and I Peter 1:19 declare that Christ is "***without spot***" and "***without blimish***." Jude 24 declares that the redeemed will be presented "***faultless*** before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." And lastly, in Revelation 14:5, we find those redeemed were identified as being "***without fault*** before the throne of God." Therefore, when we are told that we were chosen in Christ before the creation of the world to be "holy and without blame before" God, it is self-evident that Christ is the Surety of the elect and was set up to be so in eternity past. From the beginning, Christ was the Surety of the election of grace and the full payment would fall on Him. As Ephesians 1:4 says, we were chosen in Christ to be "holy and without blame before" God. The verse furthermore says that this election was in accordance with the love of God.

This brings us to John 17:23-24. It says, "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved

them, as thou hast loved me. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." Here we find that God loved His sheep (elect, believers) as He loved the Son, and, furthermore, that this love was "before the foundation of the world." What a profound thought! God not only loved us in Christ before the world, but He loved us as He loved the Son. In other words, there was never a moment in eternity when God began to love the election of grace. They were always loved in the Son and loved as much as He loved the Son.

We are creatures of time and the concept of eternity is beyond our comprehension. This is not the case with the eternal, triune God. There was no beginning with God and, obviously, there will be no ending with Him. He is "the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever," Hebrew 13:10. This is what God revealed to Moses when He told him that His name is I AM. God does not change. He does not increase in any attribute, nor does He decrease. As John 17:23-24 declares, there was never a time when the Lord did not love His sheep. God did not decide at some moment that He would love and give some to Christ. This was established in His eternal being. While our love to Him waxes and wanes continually, His love is ever the same. In fact, we will not be loved more when we are glorified than we are now. Truly, we can sing the hymn by W. Tucker, as found in *A Selection of Hymns for Public Worship* by William Gadsby, No. 65.

Election in Christ. Eph. 1. 5, 11; 2 Tim. 1. 9

1 Expand, my soul, arise and sing
The matchless grace of Zion's King;
His love, as ancient as his name,
Let all thy powers aloud proclaim.

2 Chosen of old, of old approved,
In Christ eternally beloved;
Adopted too, and children made,
Ere sin its baleful poison spread.

3 Though sin and guilt infest them here,
In Christ they all complete appear;
The whole that justice e'er demands
Received full payment from his hands.

4 In him the Father never saw
The least transgression of his law;
Perfection, then, in him we view;
His saints in him are perfect too.

5 Then let our souls in him rejoice,
As favoured objects of his choice;
Redeemed, and saved by grace, we sing
Eternal praise to Christ our King.

Yes, Christ being our Surety from all eternity, Mr. Tucker stated it gloriously when he penned

In him the Father never saw
The least transgression of his law;
Perfection, then, in him we view;
His saints in him are perfect too.

Yes, we fell in Adam and, by nature, are sinners from conception. Historically, we were lost and "dead in trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1), but prior to our fall and sinful condition God ever saw us justified in the imputed righteous of the Lord Jesus Christ. Though Christ actually completed the payment for the sins of His people some two thousand plus years ago, God always saw us in our Surety. While it is true that we do not experience the benefits of justification in our conscience until faith, the fact of justification must first be prior to faith. Faith does not create. The truth and state of justification must first be established before we believe because justification does not change a person or make a person righteous; justification merely pronounces a person to be what he already is—righteous before the holy law of God. Yes, God ever saw His sheep secure in Christ (the Surety) from all eternity. Nothing summarizes this glorious truth more than II Timothy 1:9, "Who hath saved us, and called *us* with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

May the Lord sanctify this truth to our soul more and more each day so that we might honor and glorify our Lord Jesus Christ increasingly as we live out our lives on this earth. However, our time is up for today. Farewell.

Salvation—Justification (3RD)

(Our study for today continues with the subject of justification. In this study we begin discussing the ground of justification. Obviously, there must be a reason or a basis on which a person is justified.)

In a previous podcast we showed that justification is a judicial or legal term that does not change the individual but that it merely pronounces a person to be just or

righteous before the law. In our last podcast we discussed how it is that a sinful person can be justified because Christ was the Surety of His people in eternity before the world began. Regarding Christ as our Surety from all eternity, allow me to quote from a sermon entitled "The Justification of God's elect [*sic*]" by John Bailey, preached in a Baptist meeting house in Brockham Green, Surry, England, on September 21, 1806. He said as follows:

Justification is a law term, and is never understood to make any one righteous, but is judicially pronouncing a person so, as in Isai. xliii. 25, *26. I, even I am he, that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins. Put me in remembrance, let us plead together, declare thou that thou mayest be justified.* But it may be asked, when God did justify his elect? 1. I answer, from all eternity. For justification is an act of God's grace, an immanent act in the divine mind and eternal, for nothing new can arise in the mind of God: hence saith the apostle, Eph. i. 3, 4. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings, in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world.* Now the apostle says we were chosen in Christ (that is elected) before the foundation of the world (that is, from all eternity); and as we were elected from all eternity, so likewise justified; for eternal justification must be among the all spiritual blessings the apostle speaks of. Thus we were justified when first elected, though not in our own persons, yet in our dear Lord and Head, as he had our persons then given him, and we came thereby to have a being and interest in him: so that those who object to the glorious doctrine of eternal justification, on the ground that persons cannot be justified before they exist, must also on very same ground object to the soul-supporting doctrine of eternal election, for it may as well be asked how can a person be elected before he exists. Such greatly err not knowing the Scriptures, and the power of God, for known unto God are all his works from the beginning, or from all eternity. Yes, blessed be God from everlasting he knew his people, and from all eternity, they had a representative being in Christ, were chosen in him, and blessed in him with all spiritual blessings; and why not then justified in him? for God's will to elect is election; so, God's will to justify is justification.

Bailey enlarged on this much more in his sermon but it would require multiple podcasts to quote all of it. Nevertheless, I thought it good to give this one small quote because it seems to summarize, and hopefully, gives more insight of the mystery of the Divine workings of our glorious God and Savior. Now I want direct our attention somewhat concerning the ground of justification.

George Smeaton stated that *the righteousness of God* "is descriptive of the

finished work of Christ, as approved at the divine tribunal, and the meritorious cause of our acceptance....” He further said, “The term righteousness ... does not in any passage mean the state of justification. If the state of justification does not proceed on an underlying righteousness as its basis, we are lost in the mists of uncertainty.” And when showing that this righteousness is not the attribute of God, he states, “God does not demand from man His own essential righteousness, but that which is competent to a creature….” (*Atonement According to the Apostles*, pp. 52-55.)

Charles Hodge said, “Hence this righteousness is not our own. It is nothing that we have either wrought ourselves, or that inheres in us. Hence Christ is said to be our righteousness; and we are said to be justified by his blood, his death, his obedience; we are righteous in him, and are justified by him or in his name, or for his sake. The righteousness of God, therefore, which the gospel reveals, and by which we are constituted righteous, is the perfect righteousness of Christ which completely meets and answers all the demands of that law to which all men are subject, and which all have broken.” (*Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, p. 31.) Allow me to clarify one thing regarding this quote from Hodge. We do not mean to imply that the Person and work of Christ was for the whole human race in the last part of the quote by Hodge when he said that the righteousness of Christ “completely meets and answers all the demands of that law to which all men are subject, and which all have broken.” Though Hodge may have meant to imply this, it is clear from our previous studies that the salvation of God and the justifying righteousness of Christ is only for those given to Christ before the world began. Christ only became the Surety for the sheep for which He died. See John 10:11. Nevertheless, Hodge was correct in that the *righteousness of God* whereby we are justified “is not our own,” but it is “the perfect righteousness of Christ which completely meets and answers all the demands of” the law.

Commenting on Romans 1:17, John Gill said that the phrase *the righteousness of God* does not mean, “the essential righteousness of God, the rectitude of his nature, his righteousness in fulfilling his promises, and his punitive justices which though revealed in the gospel, yet not peculiar to it; nor the righteousness by which Christ himself is righteous either as God, or as Mediator; but that righteousness which he wrought out by obeying the precepts and bearing the penalty of the law in the room of his people, and by which they are justified in the sight of God.” (*An Exposition of the New Testament*.)

“Many other citations also affirm that *the righteousness of God* refers to the finished work of our glorious Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. But before we enlarge on the ground of our justification, let us pause and consider the blessedness of this truth. Oh, the wonder that a sinner is found not guilty before the bar of God and that Christ Jesus has taken his sins and paid the debt in full! Dear one, is this your hope and stay? Are you trusting only in the finished work of Christ? Do you have rest and

peace in falling at the feet of the Lord Jesus and offering sacrifices of praise unto Him? How miserable are those who look to anything or anyone else for acceptance with God. Know well that God will accept nothing other than pure, flawless, complete, and total obedience. One can never meet God's conditions. *It is Christ or nothing*!" (*Justification: The Heart of the Gospel* by Jimmy K. Barber, p. 57.)

The Scriptures abundantly teach that the ground of justification is called *the righteousness of God.* Let us look at a few.

In Philippians 3:9, Paul wrote, "And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." Here Paul clearly stated that he did not want to be found in his own righteousness but in "the righteousness which is of God." Paul again spoke of this righteousness in II Corinthians 5:21, "For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." This verse plainly says that God made Christ "to be sin for us" so "that we might be made the righteousness of God" in Christ. It is this same righteousness that Paul desired in the verse supplied above from Philippians.

It is to be regretted, to say the least, that there are some that deny that Christ took our sins and bore the penalty for our sins against the law of God. Listen to the words of Albert Barnes commenting on Galatians 3:13 regarding Christ being made a curse for us. He wrote, "It cannot be meant that the Lord Jesus properly bore the penalty of the law. His sufferings were *in the place* of the penalty, not *the penalty itself*. They were a *substitution* for the penalty, and were, therefore, strictly and properly **vicarious**, and were not the identical sufferings which the sinner would himself have endured." And commenting on II Corinthians 5:21 concerning Christ being made sin for us he said, "But what is meant by this? What is the exact idea which the apostle intended to convey? I answer--It cannot be that he was literally *sin* in the abstract, or sin as such. No one can pretend this. The expression must be therefore, in some sense, figurative. … Nor can it mean that he was, in any proper sense of the word, *guilty*, for no one is truly guilty who is not personally a transgressor of the Law; and if he was, in any proper sense, *guilty*, then he deserved to die, and his death could have no more merit than that of any other guilty being; and if he was properly guilty, it would make no difference in this respect whether it was by his own fault or by imputation: a guilty being deserves to be punished; and where there is desert of punishment there can be no merit in sufferings." It is obviously true that Christ Himself was not a sinner or guilty of committing any sin or violating the law of God. However, the verse says that Christ was "made sin for us." (The "to be" is in italics showing that it was added by the translators.) If Christ could not be legally constituted "sin for us" then conversely we who are sinners and unrighteous cannot "be made the righteousness of God in him."

Many other quotes could be supplied by commentators who deny the penal

substitution of our Lord Jesus Christ for the sins of those for whom He died but we will not weary you with such. However, I do suggest that one carefully read the comments of authors because they are not often so clear in presenting their true colors regarding the truth of the death of Christ.

The Lord willing we will look at some more passages regarding the righteousness of God imputed to the account of the people of God in our next podcast. However, our time is up for today. Farewell.

Salvation—Justification (4TH)

(Our study for today continues with the subject of justification. In this study we continue discussing the righteousness of God which is the ground of justification.)

In our last podcast we began discussing the righteousness of God which is the ground of justification. We gave some quotes that verified the righteousness that Christ worked out as being this righteousness. We ended by saying that we plan to provide other scriptural passages to support this truth. However, before doing this, I would like to discuss something that occasionally causes confusion. The Scriptures sometimes identify someone as being a "just man" or as being "perfect and upright," and one that fears God, and eschews evil. In other words, I would like to direct our attention briefly concerning the difference between the inherent righteousness that resides in God, the imputed righteousness of Christ, and that righteousness that identifies an individual as being righteous, just, perfect or upright. It should be obvious that the eternal righteousness that resides in God is different from the imputed righteousness of Christ and the righteousness associated with a person that designates him as being just or righteous before men.

Clearly, that righteousness that dwells eternally in God is of such a nature that it is found only in God. Like all of the attributes of God, it is found only in Him and cannot be in any other in like manner. The quote from John Gill as given in the previous podcast properly described it as "the essential righteousness of God, the rectitude of his nature, his righteousness in fulfilling his promises, and his punitive justices." Not only does this righteousness dwell in God, He alone is righteous. Men and angels, good and bad ascribe righteousness to God: Jeremiah (Jeremiah 12:1); angels (Revelation 16:5); even Pharaoh when Egypt was under the judgment of God declared that God is righteous (Exodus 9:27).

As previously mentioned, the Scriptures speaks of some people as being just but this does not mean that they have inherit righteousness that establishes them as being just or declared justified because of their own merits. Genesis 6:9 says that "Noah was a just man *and* perfect in his generations, *and* Noah walked with God." Matthew 1:9 declares, "Then Joseph her husband, being a just *man*, and not willing to make

her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily." Luke 2:25 said of Simeon that he was "*was* just and devout." Acts 10:22 testifies, "Cornelius the centurion, a just man, and one that feareth God, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews …." Job 1:1 writes, "There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name *was* Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil." Even God told Satan that Job was "a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil." (See also Job 1:8; 2:3.) These verses do not teach that such people are accepted as being justified before God and without sin. Ecclesiastes 7:20 says, "For *there is* not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not." Job also testified, "I know *it is* so of a truth: but how should man be just with God?" We know that the Bible does not contradict itself and the just, perfect, upright, and devout descriptions of these men is not the same as that just state imputed to those for whom Christ died. Such righteousness neither is inherent righteousness as with God nor is it imputed righteousness of Christ that justifies a sinner before God, but it may be designated comparative righteousness. In other words, in comparing such people to other human beings, they are morally upright and just in their daily lives. While it is no doubt true that such men like Job, Noah, Joseph, Simeon, and Cornelius were and are just before God in the imputed righteousness of Christ, the context bears out that the passages referred to above regarding these men is speaking of comparative righteous; that is, in comparison to men in general they were just men and portray a life of righteousness in their daily lifestyle. Therefore, we must not confuse inherent righteousness (which is alone in God), comparative righteousness (which is manifested in the general lifestyle of an individual), or imputed righteousness (which that righteousness worked out by Christ in His person and work and charged to the account of the redeemed). Quoting from the previous podcast, Charles Hodge was correct in that the *righteousness of God* whereby we are justified "is not our own," but it is "the perfect righteousness of Christ which completely meets and answers all the demands of" the law.

Now we direct our attention to other scriptural passages that clearly declare that justification depends "on an underlying righteousness as its basis" and that righteousness is designated as "the righteousness of God."

Though we quoted II Corinthians 5:21 in the previous podcast, I would like to present it again because of its clarity and conciseness: "For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." It must be noted that the redeemed are "made the righteousness of God" in Christ being made sin for them. This is no New Testament doctrine; it was promise in the Old Testament. Also, allow me to add that this righteousness is not imputed to us by faith, but we obtain faith by or because of the righteousness of God. Note II Peter 1:1, "Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus

Christ." The inspired Word of God plainly says "precious faith" is "obtained" "through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." We plan to say more about faith and its connection to justification in future studies, but it must be kept in mind that faith is not the cause of justification but the evidence of it. Likewise, the righteousness of God imputed to one produces faith and faith does not produce the righteousness of God. Yes, faith receives it into the conscience and heart of a child of grace, but that underlying righteousness is legally imputed or charged to the account of the sheep prior to faith. Nevertheless, notice the following passages ascribing the righteousness of God to the redeemed.

Notice the words of Jeremiah 23:5-6, "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this *is* his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." It is obvious that the righteous Branch and King that is raised up unto David is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ. Even the Pharisees understood this because when Jesus asked them who Christ was, they said that He was the Son of David, Matthew 22:41-42. Equally, the New Testament opens saying, "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham," Matthew 1:1. Therefore, we see that Jesus Christ is our righteousness. Regarding the passage in Jeremiah, listen to the comments of John Gill:

> "**and this *is* his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS**; because he is the author of righteousness to his people, and is only so; no creature could be the author of it; unrighteous man cannot be the author of righteousness; and the righteousness of an angel is of no advantage to man; and indeed neither of the other divine Persons is the Lord our righteousness; for though they are both Jehovah, the Father and the Spirit, yet not our righteousness: the Father appointed and sent Christ to work it out; he approved and accepted of it, when wrought out; and imputes it to his people; but is not the author of it: so the Spirit convinces of the need of it; reveals it, and brings it near; works faith to receive it; and applies it, and pronounces a person justified by it; but is not the author of it; that the Son of God only is; who is become so by his obedience to the law, and by bearing the penalty of it; and who, having been delivered for our offences, rose again for our justification: and this righteousness, which he has wrought out to the satisfaction of law and justice, becomes "ours"; it being signed for us, and wrought out for us, by a free gift of it is given to us; ours through the imputation of it to us by the Father, and in virtue of our union to Christ, and interest in him; and through the application of it to us by the Spirit of God; who puts it upon us, and clothes us with it, and enables us to lay hold upon it, and claim interest in it; and which may be meant by Christ being "called our

righteousness"; for the meaning is, not that he should commonly go by this name; but only that he should be that unto us which it signifies; and that we should by faith, even every true Israelite, every believer, call him our righteousness; say that we have righteousness in him make mention of that continually, and express our desires to be found alone in it; for so the words may be rendered, "and this is the name whereby he shall call him, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS"; and a sweet name to a sensible sinner it is; to one that has felt the guilt of sin in his conscience; seen his need of a righteousness, and the worth of it. That the Messiah is here meant is acknowledged by the Jews, ancient and modern."

Isaiah 45:24-25 testifies to this same truth. It says, "Surely, shall *one* say, in the LORD have I righteousness and strength: *even* to him shall *men* come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed. In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory." Clearly this passage tells us that our righteousness is in the Lord and that it is in the Lord that we are justified. Again, allow me to impose on your patience by giving some comments on this passage by Gill.

Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength, That is, one and everyone of these that shall be brought to submit to Christ, and to confess him, shall declare it as their faith, that in Christ alone is their "righteousness or righteousnesses"; that they have a full and complete righteousness in him, and which serves for many; consisting of the holiness of his nature, the obedience of his life, and his sufferings of death; by which the law is honoured, justice satisfied, God is well pleased, and they are acquainted and discharged; and which is pure, perfect, and everlasting, is given them of grace, and entitles them to eternal life; and this they have in Christ as their covenant head and representative, and which they come to have by being in him: it is not inherent in them, but is in Christ, by whom it is wrought out, and becomes theirs by the imputation of it to them, and which they receive by faith; and this is an act of faith concerning it here expressed, and which declares the certainty of it, and of interest in it, and excludes all other: for it may be rendered, "only in the Lord", etc.; and seems to be spoken with great joy, in an exulting way, and what may be said at all times; for this righteousness is always in Christ …"

In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified,…All the spiritual Israel of God, whether Jews or Gentiles; all the spiritual seed and offspring of Christ, to whom he stands in the relation of the, everlasting Father and federal Head; these being given to him, and being in him, are justified in him from all things; and these, all and everyone, shall be brought to see their need of his righteousness, and look to him for it, and receive it from him by faith; and be manifestatively justified in their own consciences, as they will be openly at the bar of God, before

angels and men, hereafter.

… **and shall glory**; in Christ, as the Lord their righteousness; not in themselves, in their own righteousness, holiness, wisdom, and strength, but in this, that Christ is made to them wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, I Corinthians 1:30.

Please forgive me for extending this podcast a little longer than normal, but the comments by Gill are so edifying and honoring to the Lord that I thought it good to do so. The Lord willing we will look at other passages regarding the righteousness of God imputed to the account of the people of God in our next podcast. However, our time is up for today. Farewell.

Salvation—Justification (5TH)

(We continue studying the subject of justification in this podcast by concluding with the ground of justification which is the righteousness of God.)

We ended the previous podcast saying that we would study other passages showing that the ground of justification is the righteousness of God. Furthermore, we previously established that the righteousness of God under consideration is neither that inherit righteousness that resides in God nor the comparative righteousness of man that distinguishes him to be of a just and righteous character, but that it is that righteousness secured in the redemptive work of the Lord Jesus Christ. That our justification is apart from anything we do is plainly declared in Romans 3:24. It says, "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." The Greek word translated "freely" is δωρεάν (dōreán) and means "without a cause, freely, for naught, in vain." This is the word used in John 15:25 where it testifies that the enemies of Jesus hated Him "without a cause." Just as our Lord had not done anything to cause any to hate Him, we have not done anything for God to justify us; there is no cause in us for God to justify us. We are justified on the "cause" or ground of the righteousness of God as wrought out by Christ.

Another passage that testifies of this glorious truth is Isaiah 54:17. It reads, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue *that* shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This *is* the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness *is* of me, saith the LORD." While the context is speaking of Israel, the application incorporates both Jew and Gentile. We must ever keep in mind that every spiritual blessing promised to Israel in the Old Testament is inclusive of every Gentile that is a child of grace. This is that mystery spoken about by the Apostle Paul in Ephesians whereby both Jew and Gentile are "fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God," Ephesians 2:19. In fact, in Ephesians

3:4, 9 it is designated as this mystery. All of the children of God are designated as His servants and their righteousness is of the Lord. Again, I direct your attention to the comments of Isaiah 54:17 by John Gill.

… **and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord**; the vindication of their righteousness, of their cause, and of their character; or the reward of their righteous works in a way of grace; even all that righteousness and true holiness that is in them, and that righteousness which is imputed to them, and by which they are justified, are from the Lord; by which they are secured from all the charges of law and justice, and, from all the accusations of men and devils, and which will answer for them in a time to come, and acquit them at the bar of God before men and angels; see **Ro** 8:33. (Romans 8:33 says, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.")

Equally, of this verse the *Preacher's Homiletic Commentary* testifies:

1. The Christian's justification is of God (Philippians 3:9). 2. His sanctification is of God (Philippians 2:13). 3. Boasting is excluded. "What hast thou that thou hast not received?" 4. His security is perfect. If God justify, who can condemn? (Romans 8:34.) And if God sanctify, He will perfect that which concerneth us. This clause thus explains as well as ratifies the promise, and, further, it tells us how we may secure this promise for ourselves. Righteousness we have not by nature; we cannot attain it of ourselves; but we may receive it from God.

Now I would like to direct your attention to Romans 5:18-19: "Therefore as by the offence of one *judgment came* upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one *the free gift came* upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."

Romans 5:18-19 also declares that justification is by the righteousness of another. Many read these verses and think that Christ died for as many as were condemned in Adam. They believe that the *all men* in verse eighteen and the *many* in verse nineteen are the exact same in number. But this is not the case. In order to understand these verses it is necessary to understand the context. From Romans chapter three the theme is justification, and it continues through chapter eight. In chapter five, Paul deals with it by showing the analogy of justification to the fall of man. After discussing Christ's death for the ungodly and being justified by His blood, Paul introduces in verse twelve the fall of man. In verses thirteen through seventeen there is a parenthesis which enlarges on verse twelve. It is on the base

of verses twelve through seventeen that eighteen and nineteen rest.

Romans 5:12 states, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Here it is declared that the human race fell in the sin of one man, Adam. The parenthesis (Romans 5:13-17) enlarges on this by pointing out that Adam prefigured Christ. All who were represented in Adam received the condemnation which fell on him in the transgression. And though Adam was a federal representative as was Christ, yet the analogy was not parallel in every respect. Concerning verses fifteen and sixteen, John Owen stated:

"The apostle proceeds to explain his comparison in those things wherein there is a dissimilitude between the comparates...."

He further explained that the opposition is between the *offence* on the one hand and the *free gift* on the other where he stated:

... between which a dissimilitude is asserted, not as unto their opposite effects of death and life, but only as unto the degrees of their efficacy, with respect unto those effects.

When one views these verses as a unit, it is obvious that the *sin*, the *transgression*, the *fall*, the *offence* was by *the disobedience of one*, (verse nineteen). The first sin of Adam is the fall whereby many fell and many offenses issued forth overwhelmingly. In opposition, there is the *free gift*, the *justification*, the *righteousness* which was by one, Jesus Christ. Concerning verse fifteen, "The grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ," the contrast is seen by the gift or "the free gift" (χάρισμα). Owen stated:

> Wherefore, although this word, in the next verse, doth precisely signify the righteousness of Christ, yet here it comprehends all the causes of our justification, in opposition unto the fall of Adam, and the entrance of sin thereby. (From my book *Justification: The Heart of the Gospel*, pp. 65-67. Time does not allow us to quote at length Owen's explanation of the *comparates* in this podcast. However, I did quote him at length in my book on pages 67-72. For a fuller explanation I refer you to volume 5, pages 327-333, of his works as published by Banner of Truth Trust, or download this work in pdf format online.)

I will close by quoting from pages 69-72 from my book on justification.

With the parenthesis (verses thirteen through seventeen) briefly explained, we now can understand verses eighteen and nineteen. These verses take up the thought and analogy which was presented in verse twelve. That is, just as all who were represented in Adam sinned and fell under the condemnation, even so all who were represented in Christ were made righteous and were justified thereby. The *all men* and the *many* plainly refer to as many as were represented by their head.

It is plain that the *all men* in Adam are not the same in number as the *all men* in Christ. This is due to the fact that the same number in both cases does not receive the same results. In other words, all that sinned in Adam and were condemned do not have the righteousness of Christ unto justification of life. If this were not true, none would be cast into the lake of fire. The Scriptures plainly declare that the non-elect, goats, unbeliever, disobedient, and wicked will be cast into the pit (See Matthew 25:41-46; John 3:36; 10:26; I Peter 2:7-8; II Thessalonians 1:7-9; I John 2:4,22; Revelation 20:11-15).

The truth that the ground or cause of justification is the righteousness of Jesus Christ is clearly set forth in Romans 5:18-19. From first to last, justification is found only in Christ. No wonder the Scriptures declare, "*Not by works of righteousness which we have done*, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, that being *justified by his grace*, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Titus 3:5-7).

Dear reader, study the above carefully and seek to understand this truth in its fullness. If you do understand the thought found in Romans 5:12-19, then your assurance of salvation will not wax and wane with your emotional ups and downs. You can see that salvation, with its peace and joy, rest in the work of Him who became the Surety before the world was. You will believe that all your salvation is in Christ and that in Him you are righteous. Therefore, God says that you are justified in His sight. Oh, the joy to know that salvation is not found in the wicked heart of man! Truly peace floods the soul of him who rests in the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. But if you do not find peace in your soul, dear reader, I beseech you to flee to Christ. To seek the rest and comfort of salvation in any other place but Christ is to despise the truth of God. May both writer and reader daily strive to know the consolation of being found in Christ and His righteousness (Philippians 3:9).

Our time is up for today. Farewell.

Salvation—Justification (6TH)

(We continue studying the subject of justification in this podcast by introducing the topic of imputation.)

Thus far in studying the subject of justification we have defined the term and proved from a few passages of the Scriptures that the ground of our justification is the righteousness of God as worked out in the Person and work of Jesus Christ. In other words, Jesus Christ fulfilled the law in every aspect and made payment for the sins of each elect child of grace. Furthermore, we pointed out that the common conception that justification by faith is more than the act of belief. However, justification by faith is a term that identifies the Person and work of Christ. This was demonstrated by comparing four passages of the Scriptures. They are as follows:

Romans 3:28, "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by ***faith*** without the deeds of the law."
Romans 5:9, "Much more then, being now justified by his ***blood***, we shall be saved from wrath through him."
Galatians 2:17, "But if, while we seek to be justified by ***Christ***, we ourselves also are found sinners, *is* therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid."
Titus 3:7, "That being justified by his ***grace***, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."

These passages declare that we are justified by ***faith, blood, Christ,*** and ***grace***. In other words these terms (faith, blood, Christ, and grace) are testifying of the same thing—the Person and work of Christ. Therefore, the term *justification by faith* does not mean that we are justified by man exercising faith in Christ. The word *faith* is used as the words *blood, Christ,* and *grace* to reflect the Person and work of Christ. Additionally, the word *faith* is used as an evidence of one being justified, but, the Lord willing, we will discuss that in the future. Just as the grace of God or obedience to the law of God revealed in the life of someone is an evidence of a person who is redeemed or justified, even so faith exhibited in the life testifies that he is justified by the imputed righteousness of Christ. It must be kept in mind that regardless of the purpose or use of faith and/or imputation regarding justification and the righteousness of Christ that the payment for sin for the elect being made righteous was accomplished by Christ in His person and work and not based on anything accomplished by man. We remind you again of the truth of II Corinthians 5:21 whereby Christ was made sin for us so that we were made the righteousness of God in Him. I John 3:5 equally affirm that Christ

was “manifested to take away our sins.” Isaiah 53 clearly testifies that we are justified because Christ bore “our grieves,” “carried our sorrows,” was “wounded for our transgressions,” “bruised for our iniquities,” made His “soul an offering for sin,” and “bear our iniquities.” Many other such-like passages could be presented to prove that the justifying righteousness was accomplished and our justification was ratified in the finished work of Christ. This truth, as previously set forth, is also identified as the law or principle of faith as stated in Romans 3:21-27. Verse twenty-seven concludes: “Where *is* boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith.” It is essential that we understand that faith is a principle or law or we will go astray on the meaning of being justified by faith as did Albert Barnes. Barnes said, “Faith is always an act of the mind. It is not a created essence which is placed within the mind. It is not a substance created independently of the soul, and placed within it by almighty power. It is not a *principle*, for the expression *a principle of faith* is as unmeaning as a principle of joy, or a principle of sorrow, or a principle of remorse. God promises; the man believes; and this is the whole of it. While the word faith is sometimes used to denote *religious doctrine*, or the system that is to be believed, (**Ac** 6:7; 15:9; **Ro** 1:5; 10:8; 16:26; **Eph** 3:17; 4:5; **1Ti** 2:7, etc.) yet, when it is used to denote that which is required of men, it always denotes an *acting of the mind* exercised in relation to some object, or some promise, or threatening, or declaration of some other being. Cmt. on Mr 16:16.” (Comments from *Sword Searcher* Bible program on Romans 4:3.)

This brings us to another topic that is often misunderstood—it is the matter of imputation. This is often the case because of a modern concept of the meaning of impute or the subject of imputation. Imputation is considered at times as being the cause of something. According to the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* as found on the internet, the definition for impute is as follows: “1. to lay the responsibility or blame for (something) often falsely or unjustly; 2. to credit or ascribe (something) to a person or a cause.” However when we study the Greek word for impute we find a different idea. Like justification, imputation does not make a person righteous but it declares or reveals one as being under the justification of God. The Greek word for impute is used over forty times in forty verses. The word is λογίζομαι (logízomai*)* and means as follows:

1. (rationes conferre) to reckon, count, compute, calculate, count over; hence **a**. to take into account, to make account of: metaph. to pass to one’s account, to impute: [A. V. lay to one’s charge; a thing is reckoned as or to be something, i.e. as availing for or equivalent to something, as having the like force and weight. **b**. i. q. to number among, reckon with. **c**. to reckon or account, and treat accordingly.

2. to reckon inwardly, count up or weigh the reasons, to deliberate, [A. V. reason]: one addressing himself to another, with myself, in my mind. **3**. by reckoning up all the reasons to gather or infer; i.e. **a**. to consider, take account, weigh, meditate on: a thing, with a view to obtaining it. **b**. to suppose, deem, judge: anything relative to the promotion of the gospel; to think better of one than agrees with what etc. ['account of one above that which' etc.]. **c**. to determine, purpose, decide, [cf. American 'calculate']. (See *Thayers Greek-English Lexicon*.)

You can see from the definitions given above this word does not cause or make something to be what it is. It concludes or thinks something or someone to be either what it already is or supposes it to be somewhat. You will notice that the base meaning is to *count*, *compute*, or *calculate*. If one counts or calculates a column of figures, the sum or answer does not make the column of figures to be the sum total of the column; it only declares the value or worth of the column of figures. For a brief example, the value of two plus two is four. The sum of four only declares the worth of two and two, it does not make the value of two plus two to be something other than what it is. While someone could *reckon*, *count*, or *impute* the wrong value of two plus two, it does not change the true value of two plus two.

You may ask, "What is the purpose for this line of reasoning?" The answer is, "Because it clearly demonstrates that imputation does not cause one to be righteous; imputation simply declares a person to be righteous." Romans 4:3-5 says, "For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." (Remember that the words "counted" and "reckoned" are the same Greek word as translated "imputed.") The average belief regarding this passage is that when Abraham believed he was made righteous by God because of his faith. Notice the words of Albert Barnes on Genesis 15:5-6:

The word "it" here evidently refers to the *act* of believing. It does not refer to the righteousness of another—of God, or of the Messiah; but the discussion is solely of the *strong act* of Abraham's faith, which *in some sense* was counted to him for righteousness. In what sense this was, is explained directly after. All that is material to remark here is, that *the act* of Abraham, the strong confidence of his mind in the promises of God, his unwavering assurance that what God had promised he would perform, was reckoned for righteousness.

This is a contradiction of the passages previously quoted showing that the righteousness accounted to us is that of the Messiah or the Seed as Paul plainly declared in Galatians chapter three. There the Lord inspired Paul to write about this

same issue regarding the law and faith and discusses the issue revolving around Genesis 15:6 as quoted in Galatians 3:6: "Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." In verse sixteen, we are told that the promise was to Abraham and his Seed and that the Seed is Christ. Therefore, the "it" that was accounted (imputed or reckoned) to Abraham as his righteousness was the Seed of Genesis 15:5 which is Christ as testified throughout the Scriptures.

The Lord willing we will have more to say about this in our next podcast, but our time is exhausted for today. Farewell.

Salvation—Justification (7TH)

(In this podcast we continue studying imputation and the relationship of it to the doctrine of justification.)

In the previous podcast we pointed out that justification is generally presented to be something that God imputes, accredits, or assigns to an individual when he exercises faith. The scriptural passage to support this teaching is usually Genesis 15:6 which says, "And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness." This is referring to Abraham believing the promised seed pledged by God in the previous verse. While many theologians, preachers, and Bible teachers set forth that it is the faith of Abraham that is "counted" (imputed) "to him for righteousness," we quoted clear passages from both the Old and New Testament that it is the righteousness of God that is the ground of justification and not the faith of the individual. Furthermore, we identified the righteousness of God as that righteousness that was produced by the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. However, we closed the previous study quoting from Albert Barnes whereby he affirmed that the "it" in Genesis 15:6 "refers to the *act* of believing" and not "to the righteousness of another." Barnes does not stand alone here. Note the language of John Calvin regarding Genesis 15:6.

> *And he believed in the Lord*. None of us would be able to conceive the rich and hidden doctrine which this passage contains, unless Paul had borne his torch before us. (Romans 4:3.) But it is strange, and seems like a prodigy, that when the Spirit of God has kindled so great a light, yet the greater part of interpreters wander with closed eyes, as in the darkness of night. I omit the Jews, whose blindness is well known. But it is (as I have said) monstrous, that they who have had Paul as their luminous expositor; should so foolishly have depraved this place. However it hence appears, that in all ages, Satan has labored at nothing more assiduously than to extinguish, or to smother, the gratuitous justification of faith, which is here expressly asserted. The words of Moses are,

> "He believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for righteousness." In the first place, the faith of Abram is commended, because by it he embraced the promise of God; it is commended, in the second place, because hence Abram obtained righteousness in the sight of God, and that by imputation.

Note that Calvin, after maligned "the greater part of interpreters" that "so foolishly have depraved this place" said, "In the first place, the faith of Abram is commended, because by it he embraced the promise of God; it is commended, in the second place, because hence Abram obtained righteousness in the sight of God, and that by imputation." In clear words, he said that "Abram obtained righteousness in the sight of God, and that by imputation" by his (that is, Abram's) faith. In other words, Calvin affirmed that it is by imputation that Abram obtained righteousness. However, the meaning of imputation is to *count*, *compute*, or *calculate* something and not to make, formulate, or compose something. Calvin's interpretation is no different than the thoughts set forth by the Arminian, Adam Clarke. Note the following comments of Clarke:

> And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness—This I conceive to be one of the most important passages in the whole Old Testament. It properly contains and specifies that doctrine of justification by faith which engrosses so considerable a share of the epistles of … Paul, and at the foundation of which is the atonement made by the Son of God: And he (Abram) believed האמן *heemin*, he put faith) in Jehovah, ויחשבה לו *vaiyachshebeita lo*, and he counted it—the faith he put in Jehovah, to Him for righteousness, צדקה *tsedakah*, or justification; though there was no act in the case but that of the mind and heart, no work of any kind. Hence the doctrine of justification by faith, without any merit of works; for in this case there could be none—no works of Abram which could merit the salvation of the whole human race. It was the promise of God which he credited, and in the blessedness of which he became a partaker through faith.

I emphasize that Clarke said, "This I conceive to be one of the most important passages in the whole Old Testament. It properly contains and specifies that doctrine of justification by faith … It was the promise of God which he credited, and in the blessedness of which he became a partaker through faith." As can be easily seen, these quotes (and many other such-like citations could be supplied) are different from the following comments by John Gill regarding Genesis 15:6. He said as follows:

> **and he counted it to him for righteousness**; not the act of his faith, but the object of it; and not the promise he believed, but what was promised, and his

> faith received, even Christ and his righteousness this was imputed to him without works, and while he was an uncircumcised person, for the proof of which the apostle produces this passage, Romans 4:3; wherefore this is not to be understood of any action of his being esteemed and accounted a righteous one, and he pronounced and acknowledged a righteous person on account of it; for Abram was not justified before God by his own works, but by the righteousness of faith, as all that believe are, that is, by the righteousness of Christ revealed to faith, and received by it: what is imputed is without a man, and the imputation of it depends upon the will of another; such the righteousness of Christ without works imputed by God the Father. This is the first time we read of believing, and as early do we hear of imputed righteousness.

As Gill said, "This is the first time we read of believing, and as early do we hear of imputed righteousness," but this is not the first time historically that faith was exercised. Hebrews 11:8 informs us that it was by faith that Abraham left Ur of the Chaldees. Additionally, prior to Genesis chapter fifteen, we find that Abram (Abraham) was a worshiper of God. In Genesis 12:7, he built "an altar unto the Lord." In the following verse, Abram built an altar at Bethel "and called upon the name of the Lord." After leaving Egypt, he went back to Bethel and worshiped the Lord, Genesis 13:4. Later, while living "in the plain of Mamre, which *is* in Hebron," Abram built another "altar unto the Lord," Genesis 13:18. After rescuing Lot, Melchizedek, "the priest of the most high God," blessed Abram, Genesis 14:19. These passages, along with other references, clearly set forth Abram (Abraham) as a man of faith and worshiper of God and resting in the Person and work of the Messiah; that is, he was justified in the sight of God based on the righteousness of God. How much he understood about the details of this prior to Genesis fifteen we are not told, and it appears that at that time he was given more insight regarding the Seed, which was his righteousness. Nevertheless, the Scriptures clearly reveal that Abram (Abraham) was saved and a worshiper of the Lord prior to leaving Ur. His salvation (nor his regeneration) did not begin at Genesis fifteen. Here is a man who traveled at least one thousand miles over several years, prior to Genesis 15, and worshiped the Lord. Surely this does not convey the idea that Abraham was a lost man. Yet, his believing plainly manifested his salvation and that the "it" that was the ground of his justification was the Seed, which is Christ, mention in Genesis 15:5. Also, it may well be said that Abram's faith clearly manifested that the Seed was already imputed to him and that it did not originate with his faith.

In accordance with this and to emphasize the meaning of imputation, notice the words of Robert Girdlestone from his book entitled *Synonyms of The Old Testament*. He said that the word *imputation* "signifies a mental process whereby some course is

planned or conceived." After giving many passages to support this definition, he further states, "In all these passages a mental process is involved whereby a certain thing or a course of action is subjected to a sort of estimation as to value or position. It is not an artificial proceeding, a mere fancy, but a distinct judgment, founded either upon the nature of things, or upon the mind of him who is passing certain things under review. Sometimes the word is used in our ordinary sense of reckoning—that is to say, to represent the arithmetical process of counting up." Then in summation he declares, "We see therefore that to reckon, to impute, and to account are one and the same thing, and that the word is used in Scripture to indicate what may be called a mental process whereby the love and mercy which exists in the Divine nature, and which was embodied in Christ, is brought to bear upon the case of every individual who believes in (and acts upon) the Word of God." (See my book *Justification: The Heart of the Gospel*, page 87 and Robert Baker Girdlestone, *Synonyms of The Old Testament*, 2d ed., (n.p., 1897; repr., Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, n.d.), pp. 171-174.)

When it is stated, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness" (Genesis 15:6; Romans 4:3), what actually happened? Hear the words of Geoffrey B. Wilson: "... it is obvious that 'faith' is not to be understood as a work which is reckoned *as* righteousness by God. The preposition (*eis*) must rather mean that faith is *unto* righteousness; it is the instrument through which the believer becomes personally interested in the justifying righteousness of Christ." It was not when Abraham was legally constituted righteous before the bar of justice. It was that act of God whereby Abraham received the righteousness of Christ which was the ground of his justification. As Wilson says, it is that act by which the believer comes to know that the righteousness of Christ is his. And this righteousness shall be received by everyone that believes because the Scriptures declare, "Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; Who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification" (Romans 4:23-25). (See my *Justification* book, pp. 87-88 and Geoffrey B. Wilson, *Romans: A Digest of Reformed Comment* (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust, 1977), p. 67.)

Other suchlike quotes could be supplied but these should be sufficient. Hopefully, these few will clarify the subject of imputation regarding justification or the phrase "justification by faith." However, our time is up for today. Farewell.

Salvation—Justification: Faith (8TH)

(In this podcast we begin studying the role of faith regarding the doctrine of justification.)

Now we will study the place of faith in relation to justification. We have alluded to it in previous studies, but the Lord willing, we will begin to discuss it more fully at this time. In doing so, I believe it will be good to repeat some of the things previously mentioned in order, hopefully, to present a more balanced understanding of the subject overall. Repetition is essential to learning and studying any subject. The Lord affirmed this in His instruction to Isaiah regarding Israel of old: "Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? *them that are* weaned from the milk, *and* drawn from the breasts. For precept *must be* upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, *and* there a little," Isaiah 28:9-10. John Milton Gregory wisely referred to this in his book *The Seven Laws of Teaching* when he said, "The law of review rests upon the universal and unchangeable laws of mind. The review may not always be made formally and with clear design, but no successful teaching was ever done in which the review in some form, either by direction of the teacher or by the private impulse of the learner, did not take place—the revisiting and repetition of the lesson learned. The 'line upon line and precept upon precept' (Isaiah 28:10, 13) rule of the Bible is a recognition of this truth." (One should beware reading this book due to humanism being sprinkled throughout, though there are some good things to be gathered, especially the last chapter "The Law of Review and Application.") Additionally, when inquiring how often should something be said in teaching, we find from the internet the following:

> The idea of communicating a message over and over again isn't new and its roots are in advertising and marketing. "Effective frequency" is a term used to define the number of times a person needs to hear an advertising message before responding to it. Different experts have different ideas for what that magic number is. The most agreed-upon is probably the "Rule of 7," which suggests consumers need to hear a message seven times before they will consider taking action.
>
> Applying the "Rule of 7" to the messages you want to have sink in with your students is something to carefully consider, especially if you want them to take certain actions. (https://knslearningsolutions.com/news/how-many-times-do-i-have-to-tell-you/)

It goes without saying that faith has a vital role in justification, but I believe it is one of, if not the most misunderstood function regarding justification. It is commonly presented by Bible teachers, theologians, and ministers alike that when one exercises faith God at that time charges or applies the righteousness of God to an individual and justifies him before the Triune bar of justice. This is not limited to those who promote Arminian theology, but those of the reformed faith as well. Recently, a modern Baptist minister of the "reformed faith" wrote the following: "And while

God's Word reveals great spiritual mysteries, holy laws, fulfilled and yet-to-be fulfilled prophecies, beautiful poetry, instructive letters, doctrinal teaching, apocalyptic visions, and more, its greatest revelation is the salvation of sinners by faith alone in the crucified and resurrected God-man Jesus Christ. That revelation calls us to believe on Christ for the forgiveness of sins and the gift of eternal life. But, dear reader, to reject the Bible's authoritative call is to damn one's soul for eternity. Believe, O believe the revelation of Christ Jesus for your soul's sake!" Notice that he said that "the salvation of sinners" is "by faith alone in the crucified and resurrected God-man Jesus Christ." He further stated, "That revelation calls us to believe on Christ for the forgiveness of sins and the gift of eternal life." In other words, "salvation," "forgiveness of sins," and "the gift of eternal life" is by "faith" and belief. This minister believes the truth of electing love of God before the foundation of the world and that Christ died for only the elect for their salvation, and yet, in my opinion, his love for the souls of men and the presentation of the gospel is of such that it opens questions and misunderstandings regarding the nature and purpose of faith with reference to justification.

Many other suchlike quotes could be presented of this nature. You may remember that in the previous podcast we presented a quote from John Calvin where he said regarding Genesis 15:6, that Abram (Abraham) "obtained righteousness in the sight of God, and that by imputation" by faith. However, to show the complication and (I believe) confusion that is presented regarding this, I will try your patience with following quote from Jonathan Edwards:

> Here, if I may humbly express what seems evident to me, though faith be indeed the condition of justification so as nothing else is, yet this matter is not clearly and sufficiently explained by saying that faith is the condition of justification; and that because the word seems ambiguous, both in common use, and also as used in divinity. In one sense, Christ alone performs the condition of our justification and salvation; in another sense, faith is the condition of justification; in another sense, other qualifications and acts are conditions of salvation and justification too. There seems to be a great deal of ambiguity in such expressions as are commonly used, ... such as condition of salvation, what is required in order to salvation or justification, the terms of the covenant, and the like; and I believe they are understood in very different senses by different persons. And besides, as the word condition is very often understood in the common use of language, faith is not the only thing in us that is the condition of justification; for by the word condition, as it is very often (and perhaps most commonly) used, we mean any thing that may have the place of a condition in a conditional proposition, and as such is truly connected with the consequent, especially if the proposition holds both in the

> affirmative and negative, as the condition is either affirmed or denied. If it be that with which, or which being supposed, a thing shall be, and without which, or it being denied, a thing shall not be, we in such a case call it a condition of that thing. But in this sense faith is not the only condition of salvation or justification; for there are many things that accompany and flow from faith, with which justification shall be, and without which it will not be, and therefore are found to be put in Scripture in conditional propositions with justification and salvation, in multitudes of places; such are love to God, and love to our brethren, forgiving men their trespasses, and many other good qualifications and acts. And there are many other things besides faith, which are directly proposed to us, to be pursued or performed by us, in order to eternal life, which if they are done, or obtained, we shall have eternal life, and if not done, or not obtained, we shall surely perish. And if faith was the only condition of justification in this sense, I do not apprehend that to say faith was the condition of justification, would express the sense of that phrase of Scripture, of being justified by faith. There is a difference between being justified by a thing, and that thing universally, necessarily, and inseparably attending justification; for so do a great many things that we are not said to be justified by. It is not the inseparable connexion with justification that the Holy Ghost would signify (or that is naturally signified) by such a phrase, but some particular influence that faith has in the affair, or some certain dependence that effect has on its influenced. ("Justification By Faith Alone," *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, rev. by Edward Hickman (n.p., 1834; repr., Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust, 1974), vol. 1, p. 623.)

Edwards said many things regarding faith and justification. Nevertheless, I believe a summary may be seen when he wrote "yet this matter is not clearly and sufficiently explained by saying that faith is the condition of justification; and that because the word seems ambiguous, both in common use, and also as used in divinity. In one sense, Christ alone performs the condition of our justification and salvation; in another sense, faith is the condition of justification; in another sense, other qualifications and acts are conditions of salvation and justification too." Which is it? Faith, Christ alone, or something other? Romans 11:6 says, "And if by grace, then *is it* no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if *it be* of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work." It is one or the other: grace or works. You might remember that in a previous podcast we quoted Romans 3:28; 5:9; Galatians 2:17; and Titus 3:7 where justification is by ***faith, blood, Christ,*** and ***grace***, and that these terms testify to the same thing—the Person and work of Christ. May our hearts be filled with the sentiments of *Salvation is of Grace* as found in *A Selection of Hymns for Public Worship* by William Gadsby, No. 206, p. 171.

C.M. Gospel Mag., 1777

Salvation is of Grace. Eph. 2. 8; 1 John 4. 10

1 How sovereign is the love of God
To Israel's favoured race!
Paid is the mighty debt they owed;
Salvation is of grace.

2 His love, without beginning, knew
Each chosen sinner's case;
And sent his equal Son to show
Salvation is of grace.

3 Immanuel had not bled and died,
Nor suffered in our place,
But for this truth (O sound it wide!),
Salvation is of grace.

4 We had not known and loved the Son,
Nor sung his worthy praise,
But that himself the work begun;
Salvation is of grace.

The Lord willing, we will continue examining the connection of faith and justification in our next podcast, but our time is up for today. Farewell.

Salvation—Justification: Faith (9 TH)

(In this podcast we are continuing the study of the role of faith regarding the doctrine of justification.)

Previously we showed that many teach that faith is "the" (or "a") condition of justification. Some who teach this will further affirm that while faith is essential to justification the real ground is the righteousness of God as reflected in the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. I well remember in my early years of being a Christian as I read such writers I became more confused as to exactly what they meant by such language. In our previous study I gave a quote from Jonathan Edwards whereby he said "yet this matter is not clearly and sufficiently explained by saying that faith is the condition of justification; and that because the word seems ambiguous, both in common use, and also as used in divinity. In one sense, Christ alone performs the

condition of our justification and salvation; in another sense, faith is the condition of justification; in another sense, other qualifications and acts are conditions of salvation and justification too." However, the Scriptures plainly teach that our justification is based on nothing other than the finished work of Christ. If anything else is needed then salvation and/or justification is not by Christ alone. Equally, as we have seen in previous podcasts, Christ did not make salvation and/or justification possible for the whole human race; He actually redeemed the elect, the sheep, or the believer. Robert Traill summarized it well as follows:

> Christ did not consecrate and make himself a way to heaven, and send the gospel into the world, that men, according as they incline, and according to the direction of their free-will, might come in and get life and salvation by him. Our Lord Jesus went about his work more knowingly, more fixedly than that; he knew what would come of it. It is done, I say, for particular persons. Consider, with respect to this,
> 1. That all the springs of salvation are towards particular persons.
> 2. That the covenant, the charter of salvation, is with, and for, and to particular persons.
> 3. The possession of it is by, and for particular persons.
> 1. The great springs of salvation are all for particular persons; the three grand springs of salvation, are the election of the Father, the redemption of the Son, and the sanctification of the Holy Ghost. Now, all these are determined towards distinct and particular persons, 1*st*, The election of grace is upon persons; there is no election of qualifications, the election is of persons. Wherever it is spoken in the word, it is spoken of persons: *He has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world. Give diligence to make your calling and election sure. God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.* The election is all of persons.
> 2dly, The grace of redemption by our Lord, with his redeeming love, is of persons: *He laid down his life for his sheep*, and, *I know you are not of my sheep*, says our Lord. …
> 3dly, The sanctification of the Spirit, which is the great spring of salvation, as it is begun in us, is of persons. … But as it is a work on particular persons, this work must pass upon particular men; the springs must work in every man that is called to this salvation. … So that we find, I say, that the springs of salvation are all about particular persons. The springs run in one distinct channel towards particular persons, and always answer the same. Every one that is elected by the grace of the Father, is redeemed by the blood of his Son; every one that is elected and redeemed, is sanctified by the inhabitation of the Holy Ghost: they are not equally visible, but equally certain. (*The Works of Robert Traill*, Vol.

3, pp. 204-206, by The Banner of Truth Trust.)

Traill further enlarged by showing that the "charter of salvation" and the "possession of salvation" are equally limited to "particular persons." The Person and work of Christ regarding justification is limited to "particular persons" and it should never be presented that the ground of justification is the faith of anyone. The Lord willing we will enlarge on the importance of faith and the certainty of faith in the elect in future studies, but it must be clear that faith is not the ground of justification. Though we do not have time to enter into a study of the priesthood of Christ here, it must be pointed out that His priesthood was set up in the eternal counsel of God and He was only a priest to and for the elect sheep of God. He never was a priest for the human race. As with Israel of old, the priesthood was limited to that nation and form of worship and not for any other nation, likewise the priesthood of the new covenant is limited to those chosen and ordained by God in the eternal counsel.

Another reason that faith is sometimes misunderstood is because of the plethora of modern translations set forth to the public today. We have stated from the beginning of these podcasts, and reiterated at various times that our standard is the King James Version of 1611 and that we believe it is the best English translation and that it is based on the best Hebrew and Greek texts. To show how the modern translations have contributed to the confusion of "faith" and its meaning, let us look at Hebrew 11:1. As stated in the King James Version (KJV), "Now faith is the ***substance*** of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." The New International Version (NIV) states, "Now faith is ***confidence*** in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see." The New American Standard Bible (NASB) says, "Now faith is *the* ***certainty*** of *things* hoped for, a proof of things not seen." The New English Translation (NET) declares, "Now faith is ***being sure*** of what we hope for, being convinced of what we do not see." The American Standard Version (ASV): "Now faith is ***assurance*** of *things* hoped for, a conviction of things not seen." The list could be enlarged but this should be enough to show why so many people are confused as to what the Bible teaches. All who believe the Bible agree that salvation is by grace through faith and that it is the gift of God, Ephesians 2:8. Therefore it is essential that we know ***what*** faith is. By looking at the different translations of Hebrew 11:1, we find that they do not agree at least regarding one part of the verse. This is seen in the how the Greek word ὑπόστασις (hypostasis) is translated. The KJV says ***substance***; the NIV states ***confidence***; the NASB gives ***certainty***; the NET says ***being sure***; and, the ASV supplies ***assurance***.

Thayer gives the meaning of this Greek word as follows: … **1**. *a setting or placing under; substructure, foundation*: ... **2**. *that which has foundation, is firm; hence*, **a**. *that which has actual existence; a substance, real being*: ... **b**. *the substantial quality, nature*, of any person or thing. [Joseph Henry Thayer*, Greek-English Lexicon of the*

New Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1967). pp. 644-645.] Richard Soule in his thesaurus give the following synonyms for substance: reality, hypostasis, ... essential nature, real being, real existence, ... essence, ... soul, chief part, essential part, vital part, body, ... stuff, ... (*Theol*.) divine essence, divine being. (Richard Soule, *A Dictionary of English Synonymes*, rev. ed. by George H. Howison (Boston, MA: Little, Brown, and Company, 1891, 1920). p. 413.) "By this we find that *faith* is the real *existence*, the *essence*, the *essential part*, the *vital part*, the *stuff* of things for which we hope. Faith is not a dream. It is not self-persuasion. It is not the product of one's imagination or something which has been conceived in the mind by emotional desires. This would be mysticism and existentialism. However, this is usually the contemporary concept of faith: a leap in the dark. But faith cannot actually be unless that in which faith rests is an actual fact." (*Justification: The Heart of the Gospel* by Jimmy Barber, page 102.) From this we are told that faith is *reality, real existence, essence,* or *stuff* of that which is "hoped for" or of that which one expects to receive, it is not derived by the *confidence* or *assurance* that is conjured by a person's inner thoughts, mental process, or human will.

With all of these different ideas of faith as given by the various translations (and many other examples could be given), the average person is confused as to what faith is. One person thinks one thing and another person believes it to be something else. Multiply this by the many different ideas presented by the different translation and the average person in the pew is perplexed as to what faith really is. However, this is simply a small fraction of the problem. Multiply all the differences of the translations by the various translations and the confusion is so astronomical that hardly can any two people agree on anything that the Bible says. There must be a standard and that standard must be one and not two or three or more different concepts. This is one of the many reasons that the standard that I use is the Masoretic Text of the Old Testament and the Textus Receptus or the Received Text of the New Testament, with the English translation of the King James Bible as given by the providence of God. Regardless of what the higher critics and scholars say, I am persuaded these are the best and safest manuscripts and English translation.

By way of summary of the last two podcasts, William Styles concisely points out this twofold aspect of faith as follows:

> We believe that Faith should be regarded — Firstly as a **principle** or faculty imparted by the Holy Spirit to every Regenerated person (Ephesians 2:8; Philippians 1:29; II Timothy 1:5; II Peter 1:1); and Secondly as an **act** which arises from the existence of this principle and which specially characterises [sic] the true children of God (Mark 4:40; 11:22; Romans 4:19; 10:17; II Corinthians 1:24; Ephesians 3:17; Colossians 1:4; 2:5-7; I John 5:4; Hebrews 6:12). (*A Manual of Faith and Practice: Designed for Young and Enquiring*

Christians by William Jeyes Styles, 1897, pp. 186-187. See also *Justification: The Heart of the Gospel* by Jimmy K. Barber, pp. 105-106.)

The Lord willing we will discuss more fully this second aspect in the future, but our time is up for today. Farewell.

Salvation—Justification: Faith (10TH)

(In this podcast we are enlarging the study of faith as a principle regarding the doctrine of justification.)

Thus far in looking at faith in relation to justification we first showed that the terms "justified by faith" or "justification by faith" are often misunderstood and that in defining the general understanding of the phrases leads to confusion. Then we quoted Romans 3:28; 5:9; Galatians 2:17; and Titus 3:7 to show that the Scriptures declare that we are said to be justified by ***faith, blood, Christ,*** and ***grace*** and that all of these terms in reality are testifying to the same thing—the Person and work of Christ. Next we noted that the death of Christ is limited to the elect, sheep, or believer and these are the only people that are justified. Too often people who profess to believe in "justification by faith" and profess to believe that the death of Christ was only for the elect present a gospel that implies if one will simply exercise their faith they will be justified. In fact, we previously supplied quotes from various well known commentators to show this. Furthermore, we referenced the meaning of "substance" as found in Hebrews 11:1 that says, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." We saw that the translation of this word as found in the King James Version to be better and more definitive than many of the modern translations. The Greek word is ὑπόστασις (hypostasis) and is translated "person" in Hebrews 1:3 when speaking of Christ being "the express image of" of the "person" of God. In other words, Christ is the very foundation and substance of God as faith is the substance of things hoped for in Hebrews 11:1. Substance is more foundational and substantial than such words as "confidence," "certainty," "being sure," or "assurance," as found in some of the modern translations. As stated before in a previous podcast, "*faith* is the real *existence*, the *essence*, the *essential part*, the *vital part*, the *stuff* of things for which we hope. Faith is not a dream. It is not self-persuasion. It is not the product of one's imagination or something which has been conceived in the mind by emotional desires." That faith is something produced within man and is a "leap in the dark" is usually the contemporary concept of faith, but in reality this is mysticism and/or existentialism. In reality, faith cannot actually be unless that in which it rests is an actual fact. Faith cannot create. Faith cannot produce something that does not already exist. Faith is the substance of that which is expected

to exist. Faith does not justify. A person must first be justified by the Person and work of Christ. "Faith is *reality, real existence, essence,* or *stuff* of that which is 'hoped for' or of that which one expects to receive, it is not derived by the *confidence* or *assurance* that is conjured by a person's inner thoughts, mental process, or human will." Modern translations have done more to cloud and obscure the truth and meaning of faith than to simplify the truth.

We ended our previous podcast by supplying a quote from William Jeyes Styles (1842-1914), a Strict and Particular Baptist in England:

> We believe that Faith should be regarded — Firstly as a **principle** or faculty imparted by the Holy Spirit to every Regenerated person (Ephesians 2:8; Philippians 1:29; II Timothy 1:5; II Peter 1:1); and Secondly as an **act** which arises from the existence of this principle and which specially characterises [*sic*] the true children of God (Mark 4:40; 11:22; Romans 4:19; 10:17; II Corinthians 1:24; Ephesians 3:17; Colossians 1:4; 2:5-7; I John 5:4; Hebrews 6:12). (*A Manual of Faith and Practice: Designed for Young and Enquiring Christians* by William Jeyes Styles, 1897, pp. 186-187. See also *Justification: The Heart of the Gospel* by Jimmy K. Barber, pp. 105-106.)

I desire to pick up our discussion today regarding the first consideration of faith: faith as a principle. We have previously addressed this in our studies, but I believe it to be profitable to give attention to this important truth again since there are some (Albert Barnes for one) that deny this. Though quoted in a previous podcast, note again the words of Barnes as follows:

> "Faith is always an act of the mind. It is not a created essence which is placed within the mind. It is not a substance created independently of the soul, and placed within it by almighty power. It is not a *principle*, for the expression *a principle of faith* is as unmeaning as a principle of joy, or a principle of sorrow, or a principle of remorse. God promises; the man believes; and this is the whole of it. While the word faith is sometimes used to denote *religious doctrine*, or the system that is to be believed, (**Ac** 6:7; 15:9; **Ro** 1:5; 10:8; 16:26; **Eph** 3:17; 4:5; **1Ti** 2:7, etc.) yet, when it is used to denote that which is required of men, it always denotes an *acting of the mind* exercised in relation to some object, or some promise, or threatening, or declaration of some other being. Cmt. on Mr 16:16." (Comments from *Sword Searcher* Bible program on Romans 4:3.)

The Scriptures declare that faith is "the gift of God," Ephesians 2:8. Barnes said that faith "is always an act of the mind." He further said that "man believes; and this is the whole of it." Though Barnes denies that faith is a principle, there are others who

differ: see the following:

> Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? – 'On what principle?' Of works? Nay; but by the law (or, on the principle) of faith. (*Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Commentary Unabridged*, from *Sword Searcher* Bible program on Romans 3:27.)

> Commenting on Romans 3:27, William R. Newell wrote:

> Where then is the [Jewish] boasting? It is excluded. By what manner of law? of works? Nay: but by a law of faith. …
> By what manner of law? of works? Not at all! but by a law of faith. "Law" in this instance is rule, or plan. This "law," or principle, of faith, applies not only to our justification, but to every aspect of the believer's life thereafter,--"building up yourselves on your most holy faith." "That life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God." (*Romans: Verse by Verse* by William R. Newell, from *Sword Searcher* Bible program on Romans 3:27.)

> A. T. Robertson commenting on Romans 3:27:

> **It is excluded** (*exekleisthê*). First aorist (effective) passive indicative. "It is completely shut out." Glorying is on man's part. **Nay; but by a law of faith** (*ouchi, alla dia nomou pisteôs*). Strong negative, and note "law of faith," by the principle of faith in harmony with God's love and grace. (*Word Pictures of the New Testament* by A. T. Robertson, from *Sword Searcher* Bible program on Romans 3:27.)

> Also commenting on Romans 3:27, Robert Hawker stated:

> *Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law of works? Nay, but by the law of faith.* Everything is excluded in the creature, while Christ alone is exalted in the infinite greatness, and glories of his Person, and in the infinite merit of his work, in his blood shedding, and righteousness. The, *Jew* and *Gentile* are distinctions but in name, while Christ is all, and in all. For God, as a Covenant God in Christ, is the God of both, in every individual instance of his Church, given by God to Christ, and chosen by God in Christ, before the foundation of the world, **Eph** 1:4. This ancient settlement of eternity took place, not only before the name of Jew or Gentile were known, but before sin had entered into the world to make those distinctions; yea, before the world

itself was called into being. And therefore, as the Church of Christ had being in Christ, from everlasting; the recovery of the Church from the *Adam-fall* by sin, in this time-state of her being, had been all along provided for: and Christ's people, whether Jew or Gentile, were his, and the objects of his love, and grace, and favor, from all eternity. So that He that is the God in Covenant for the Jew, is also for the Gentile; seeing it is His justification of them, whether circumcised or uncircumcised, and not their different claims to favor, which becomes the cause of their acceptance. And so far is all this blessed and approved way, of being wholly justified by Christ, from setting aside the law, that in fact it becomes the only establishment of it. Since it proves, that rather than one jot or tittle of God's holy law should fail; the Son of God shall fulfil [*sic*] all its righteous demands, and give his soul an offering for sin, for the breaches of it by his people. And, it is the joy of all the redeemed, as well in heaven, as earth, that by the obedience and death of Christ, the Son of God in our nature, hath done more to magnify, and make honorable, God's holy law, than could have been done by the unsinning [*sic*] obedience of the whole creation of God, to all eternity, **Da** 9:24. (*Poor Man's Commentary* by Robert Hawker, from *Sword Searcher* Bible program on Romans 3:27.)

Though Hawker did not use the word principle, he clearly stated that our justification is solely by the Person and work of Christ for His elect children given to Him before the world began. This declaration is that justification is not due to our faith, nor is our faith imputed to us for justification, but our justification is based on the principle or law of faith which is simply the Person and work of Jesus Christ.
I desire to supply another quote from the English Baptist Israel Atkinson (1817-1881) showing that the law or principle of faith is simply the Lord Jesus Christ, or in other words the Person and work of Christ, but our time is up for today. The Lord willing we will supply the quote from Atkinson and enlarge somewhat regarding the principle of faith in our next podcast. Farewell.

Salvation—Justification: Faith (11TH)

(In this podcast we are concluding the study of faith as a principle regarding the doctrine of justification.)

In previous podcasts we quoted William Jeyes Styles (1842-1914), a Strict and Particular Baptist in England, wherein he stated, ***first*** faith is to be regarded as a ***principle*** that is imparted by the Holy Spirit to every regenerated person, and

secondly it is an ***act*** which arises from the existence of this principle and which characterizes the true children of God. On the other hand, men like Albert Barnes denied that faith is a principle. In short he said, "Faith is always an act of the mind. It is not a created essence which is placed within the mind. It is not a substance created independently of the soul, and placed within it by almighty power. It is not a *principle*, for the expression *a principle of faith* is as unmeaning as a principle of joy, or a principle of sorrow, or a principle of remorse. God promises; the man believes; and this is the whole of it." Note that he said that faith "is not a created essence … placed within the mind. It is not a substance created … and placed within" the soul "by almighty power." However, Ephesians 2:8 plainly says that faith is "the gift of God"; that is, the gift of the Almighty power of God. Barnes said that faith "is always an act of the mind. … God promises; the man believes; and this is the whole of it." Galatians 5:22 says that faith is a fruit of the Spirit of God. Furthermore, we quoted *Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Commentary,* William R. Newell, A. T. Robertson, and Robert Hawker from their comments on Romans 3:27 whereby they declared that faith is a principle. Many other men could be quoted showing that they too maintained that faith is a principle or law, but as stated in our previous podcast, I will quote from the writings of Israel Atkinson (1817-1881), an English Baptist, concerning the distinction between the law (or principle) of works and the law (or principle) of faith. He wrote rather extensively of this and we can only supply a sample from pages 10-15 of his rich book entitled *Faith* as printed in 1877. I apologize for the length of this quote, but I believe it is essential to aid in better understanding the difference between the two laws or principles and that our justification is a free gift from God without any condition on the part of man and that this free gift is the Person and work of Christ.

> Paul, treating of the justification of a sinner by "the righteousness of God without the law," says, "Where is boasting, then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? Nay, but by the law of faith." Rom. iii. 27. Here two laws are spoken of in direct and precise terms; and it may be observed that, according to one or the other of these laws, every known relation existing between the Creator and the creature, or the Divine Sovereign and the subject, has been established; and that according to one or the other of these, all affairs between a man and his Maker, in every connection between them, are conducted. Between God and man there exists no third law of living. If, then, these laws embrace matters of so high consideration, it will be obvious that to understand their nature, and to know in what provinces they are in force, are sciences of which no man ought to be ignorant, and in which the interpreter of Scripture, and teacher of religion, especially, should be thoroughly instructed.
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> Moreover, it should be observed that these two laws bear their designation in

no figurative sense. Indeed, so far as we know, the term, law of works, has received no figurative interpretation; yet it is very questionable whether, generally, its meaning is correctly understood. But the term, law of faith has presented some difficulty to interpreters, and there is a considerable divergence of opinion about its meaning. Some seem to fix on belief as the sense to be understood, and explain the word "law" as a catachresis [the use of a word in a way that is not correct—JKB] employed in allusion to the law of works. Others prefer the doctrine of the gospel. But faith in this term is to be understood neither as the act of believing nor the doctrine of the gospel, but simply, as it is put, a law. Paul is speaking of boasting being excluded in reference to a doctrine of the gospel by some law. Boasting is not excluded, according to what he here teaches, concerning this doctrine by the whole system, considered as doctrine, of which it forms a part; but by a certain law, the law of faith, which while permeating all the doctrines of the gospel, is distinct from them. Alford, expounding the place, with a rare and refreshing discrimination, says, "By what law (is it excluded? Is it by that) of works? No; but by the law *(norma,* the rule) of faith. The contrast is not between the law and the gospel, as two dispensations, but between the law of works and the law of faith, whether found under the law or gospel, or (if the case admitted) anywhere else."

These two laws are wholly diverse from and irreconcilably antagonistic to each other. Whereinsoever one is in force the other is utterly excluded. One person may be under both these laws in different respects at the same time, but he cannot be under the authority and guidance of both in relation to the same object. Neither of these laws stands for any particular code. Each of them embodies and represents a distinguished principle.

Between God and man the law of works will be the principle, according to which the duty of the creature to the Creator, or of the subject to the Sovereign, is to be discharged. On this matter the minds of men seem much confused. Many appear to have no other notion of the law of works than that it is the law of ten commandments recorded in the twentieth chapter of Exodus. It should be understood, if the repetition may be pardoned, that the law of works is not a commandment, nor a code of commandments which determines a duty, but the principle according to which the precepts and prohibitions enjoined are to be kept. That principle is, that a due is owed by the subject to the Sovereign, that this due is to be rendered by the discharge of a defined duty, and that when this is performed, a work is done by which, economically, a title is acquired to a reward of debt.

The nature of this law is precisely interpreted by the words of the Lord Jesus to the lawyer, "This do, and thou shalt live," Luke x. 27. …

The law of faith, as this is established between the divine Sovereign and his subject, is just the principle according to which absolute favour is extended by the Lord of all, and is received by his servants; and this will be the mode of living in every relation of grace which may ever subsist between them. It simply represents, and embodies in itself, the principle of giving and receiving. In every case of a due from the giver and a duty from the receiver, this order of things cannot obtain; for, so to speak, were the gift a due, it would cease to be a gift, for it would be wanting of the requisite freeness to make it one; and were the receiving a duty, it would, in like manner, no longer be a free receiving. Therefore this law can have no place, and cannot be the mode of living between God and man, about any matter in any economy wherein the Sovereign claims a right, and the subject discharges a duty in obedience to a demand made on him. In every economy in which the law of faith is in force, there will be, indeed, divine claims advanced and enforced, and, consequently, duties to be discharged; but not in respect to the favours given and received according to this law.

Anything about which God claims a right, and man acknowledges a due, and for which man discharges a duty and God accepts an obedience, can never find a place under this order of things. Nothing but absolute favour, freely giving and freely receiving, can be known here. Whatever may be required economically, on the one hand in order to the giving, and on the other in order to the realization and enjoyment of anything given under the law of faith, grace must provide. Nothing can be suspended on any legal condition to be found in, or on any duty to be performed by, the persons to be advantaged by the establishment of this law of living between them and God. Under this law there is no promise of reward for obedience, nor threatening of penalty for disobedience. If a duty were imposed, and a reward were promised to obedience, and a penalty threatened to disobedience, dutifulness must be vindicated and rewarded as a matter of right, and undutifulness must be condemned and punished as a matter of justice; but then, as must be evident, these are conditions that, in their very nature, are wholly opposed to, and utterly inconsistent with, the law of faith. Can any man want the perspicacity [shrewdness—JKB] to see that whereinsoever a legal right is claimed, and a due is acknowledged, and a duty is performed, and an obedience is accepted, in order to the enjoyment of any good [such as faith exercised as a means for justification—JKB], that, not the law of faith, but the law of works is in force? Can any man fail to see that whereinsoever the discharge of a duty is at all a factor of the enjoyment of any blessing, that this is a condition which must, in the very nature of things, wholly exclude grace and faith? Yet, axiomatic as the proposition is, that duty and faith respecting the same object exclude each

other, few persons seem to apprehend this simple truth. Should this truth come to be universally understood, a veritable revolution in theological teaching and ministerial utterance must be the result to an almost equal extent. But the change would be a real reformation. May it come!

In sum, then, the law of works will be the governing principle, or mode of living, in some relation subsisting between God and man. The relation may be a natural one, as between the Creator and the creature; or it may be an economical one, as between the Sovereign and the subject. But whatever the relation may be wherein the law of works obtains, the essential elements of this governing principle will be a right claimed on God's part according to plain precept, and a due acknowledged on man's. In the event of a due obedience being rendered, a title to vindication and acceptance will be acquired; and in case of disobedience, a penalty of condemnation and punishment will be deserved. On the other hand, the law of faith, will be the governing principle established in some connection subsisting between the Sovereign and the subject, that originated and is continued from pure favour. All the advantages arising out of this relation will be free gifts, and everything belonging thereto will bear on it the impress of grace. While on the one hand the law of works knows of no grace; on the other hand, the law of faith knows of nothing else. While under that a claim is made; under this a promise is given. While where that holds sway, a duty is to be done; where this obtains, a gift is to be accepted. While under that, a dutiful subject will be vindicated; under this, a transgressor will be justified. While under the former, disobedience will be punished; under the latter, there is no precept to keep or to break, all being pure promise and grace; and, therefore, no vindication and acceptance is to be looked for on the ground of dutifulness, and no condemnation and punishment to be dreaded for disobedience.

Please allow me to say again that justification by faith is simply being justified by the sovereign grace of God as worked out in the Person and work of Christ. Our time has come to an end for today. Farewell.

Salvation—Justification: Faith (12TH)

(In this podcast we are beginning the study of faith as an *act* regarding the doctrine of justification.)

In previous podcasts we have been studying faith as a *principle* particularly as it relates to being justified by faith. Therefore, justification by faith is not based on the act of any particular person but is simply being justified by the object of faith which

is the Person and work of Jesus Christ. However, we now desire to direct our attention to that second part of faith which is faith as an *act*. As defined by William Styles, faith as an act arises from the existence of faith as a principle graciously infused in the child of grace by the power of God as stated in Ephesians 2:8—*it is* the gift of God. Furthermore, this faith as an act characterizes or identifies "the true children of God."

While the Greek words for faith (πίστις) and belief (πιστεύω) are not the same, we will often use them interchangeably since the essential difference is that faith is a noun and belief or believe is a verb. Naturally, there are other words that are related to these words but, I believe, it is safe to say that these two are the basic words for faith and belief or believe. Both are given by God and do not arise from within man. For the gift of faith, the classic passage is Ephesians 2:8, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God." That belief is equally a gift from the Lord, Philippians 1:29 clearly testifies to this: "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." II Thessalonians 3:2 declares that "all *men* have not faith." Therefore, it is obvious that God does not give some men faith. However, we shall see that the Lord does give faith to all the elect and they will come to Christ. It must also be understood that an unregenerate person cannot produce or exercise faith; one must first be born again by the Holy Spirit of God before he can believe or exercise faith. Time will not allow us to explore all of the passages that teach these truths, but we shall try to set forth some of the basic ones in an orderly fashion to set these things forth.

The general consensus is that man can believe or exercise faith at any given time he so chooses. It likely cannot be expressed any better than what we saw in a previous podcast as stated by Albert Barnes. He said, "Faith is always an act of the mind. It is not a created essence which is placed within the mind. It is not a substance created independently of the soul, and placed within it by almighty power. … God promises; the man believes; and this is the whole of it. … [W]hen it is used to denote that which is required of men, it always denotes an *acting of the mind* exercised in relation to some object, or some promise, or threatening, or declaration of some other being." (Comments from *Sword Searcher* Bible program on Romans 4:3.) Many other quotes could be supplied to show that the general idea is that faith is something that originates in the will or being of man. While it is true that natural faith may be exhibited by everyone, we are talking about biblical or evangelical or saving faith. Natural faith is often nothing more than the law of probability. For example, a person has faith that a certain chair will hold him up simply because he has seen other people sitting in a chair or such a chair of like construction many times before and concluded that the same chair will also support him. Likewise, a person knows the safety statistics of riding in an automobile or even an airplane and concludes that the odds are that he can travel by them without harm. Such confidence is generally acquired

because of the law of probability regarding the security of such modes of transportation. However, when we speak of scriptural or evangelical faith we are not talking about natural things, but we are referring to spiritual things. The Scriptures clearly distinguishes between that which is natural and that which is spiritual. I Corinthians 2:11-14 says, "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned." This passage clearly states that there is a distinction between "the things of a man" and "the things of God," and that "the natural man" does not receive or know "the things of the Spirit of God." Why is this? It is because of the fall of man. Adam sinned in the Garden of Eden and "death passed upon all men," Romans 5:12. Therefore, all mankind come into this world "dead in trespasses and sins," Ephesians 2:1. He is so dead to the spiritual things of God that he neither has the "will" to come to Christ (John 5:40) nor the ability to come (John 6:44). This being the case, it is impossible that saving faith can be produced in or be an "act of the mind." As stated before, faith is an act (i.e., a gift) of God, Ephesians 2:8. It is a product of the Spirit of God (Galatians 5:22) and man is born again (i.e., regenerated) by the Spirit of God in the providential timing of God, John 3:5-8. From this we see that before anyone can believe or exercise faith he must first have spiritual life given to him by God.

Previously we showed that justification is by the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ charged to the account of the elect or sheep of God. Even as Paul wrote to Timothy and said that God "hath saved us, and called *us* with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began," II Timothy 1:9. Equally, II Corinthians 5:21 declare that God made Christ "*to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Many more passages could be set forth saying the same thing but this has been done in previous studies.

We have demonstrated the difference between the *principle* of faith and the *act* of faith, and confirmed that the act of faith is put within man by the almighty power of God. Furthermore, it was established that all men have not faith, II Thessalonians 3:2.

Before discussing the efficacy of saving faith as clearly set forth in the Holy Scriptures allow me to say a brief word about infants and certain special needs people. This is an extremely sensitive subject and one that is near and dear to my own heart since I lost a child at three and a half weeks. Nevertheless, the Scriptures

do not address this subject and there are essentially only two passages that possibly give some insight on this topic. The first is Luke 1:44 where it is recorded that John the Baptist leaped for joy while in the womb of Elisabeth. Since joy is a fruit of the Spirit of God (Galatians 5:22) it is believed by some that John had divine life given to him while in his mother womb and, therefore, it is possible that the Lord continues to give life to some while in the womb today. The other classic passage in support of this is II Samuel 12:23 when the child of David by Bathsheba died. He said, "But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." Some interpret this to mean that the child was with the Lord and David will be with the child when he dies; others say this is only referring to death and that David is simply saying that he would go to be with the child in death. Books have been written about this subject and many have set forth their views as to whether all such persons will be with the Lord or not. I believe we can do no better than follow the wisdom of our forefathers when they addressed this matter in the *London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689*. In Article X, Section 3, they wrote the following: "Elect infants dying in infancy are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit, who worketh when, and where, and how He pleaseth; so also are all elect persons who are incapable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the word." To my knowledge, when Charles Spurgeon published this confession, he initiated the change of this article by omitting the word "elect" before "infants" to teach that all infants are regenerated and saved. This being said, we will now turn our attention to the "act of faith" as clearly presented in the Scriptures.

First, James 2:14-26 make it abundantly clear that true, biblical faith is not dead and inactive. Here it is obvious that if a person is truly born again by the Holy Spirit and given saving faith that faith will be manifested with good works. This passage makes it clear that a mere profession of doctrine without a clear and visible display of scriptural works is not enough. In fact, James tells us that if we believe there is only one God that this is not enough because devils equally believe this. It is a sad commentary on our society today because not only the world at large profess that there are many gods. There are some that profess to be atheists and/or deny the true and living Jehovah of the Bible, but even many of them will ultimately admit there is a supreme originator of the universe. Sadly many professed Christians believe that there are many different ways to heaven, but that is a different topic and we need to limit our thoughts to the issue at hand; that is, true, biblical faith is alive and active. True faith expresses itself in a vital and living way. In other words, as James says, "faith without works is dead."

Here we must also be careful and not seek to identify or define what works or how much works a Christian will do. Obviously, there are some basics, but even with the basics we must leave the evaluation to God. James makes it clear that if a fellow believer is in need and we know about it and do not "give them those things which

are needful to the body" that our faith is dead. Clearly, one can give according to what he has (II Corinthians 8:12) because he cannot give if he does not have it to give. However, our study regarding faith at this time must be limited to the overall subject of justification and/or belief unto life. But our time is up for today, and the Lord willing, we will look at this more specifically in our next podcast. Farewell.

Salvation—Justification: Faith (13TH)

(In this podcast we are continuing the study of faith as an *act* regarding the doctrine of justification.)

In the previous study we began discussing faith as an *act*. We showed that faith is a product of the Spirit of God given to each child of grace in regeneration and that it is not produced by man in any way. Furthermore we found that the Scriptures tell us that faith is always living and producing fruit. Now our desire is to talk about the act of faith in connection with justification.

In previous studies we saw that justification is a legal declaration declaring a person not guilty before the bar of justice. It was demonstrated that man is justified before God by the righteousness of Christ charged to the account of the redeemed. Additionally, it was discovered that this originated in eternity where Christ was ordained as our Surety (cf. Hebrews 7:22) and that God always considered the elect secure in Christ. This righteousness was worked out by our Lord in the redemptive work of Jesus when He came to the earth and fulfilled the law, shed His blood, died, and rose again for His people. This is identified as the Person and work of Christ.

Many people, if not most, believe that a person is justified by God when he believes or exercises faith. Their premise is that when the gospel is preached and a person exercises faith at that time and then God imputes or charges the righteousness of Christ to the account of the individual. If justification is at faith, then how is it that Romans 4:25 plainly says that Christ was "delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification"? Either the work of justification was at the resurrection of Christ or not. In fact the following verse, Roman 5:1, begins with "therefore being justified." (Remember that there were no verse or chapter divisions in the original Greek manuscripts.) Actually, the grammatical construction of the word "justified" would be in our modern English "having been justified." (The Greek conjugation is aorist, passive, participle. It should also be noted that in the Greek text that the first word is δικαιωθέντες and the second word is οὖν reading "having been justified, therefore by faith we have peace with God.") Since faith does not create and can only receive what is, and Christ was resurrected for our justification, it is by faith that we receive experimentally or are made aware of our justification in our counscious.

When we connect Romans 5:2 with verse one, we see that it is by faith that we have

access to the glorious ocean of the grace of God. Having been justified by the life, death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, we are plunged into this ocean of grace. Imagine someone standing in this ocean of grace—justification by the imputed righteousness of Christ—and by faith he bathes and soaks in the refreshing satisfaction of standing before God "holy and without blame," Ephesians 1:4. Not only this, but in verses 8-10 we find that God commended His love to us and Christ died for us while we were sinners. Furthermore, we were justified by the blood of Christ and were reconciled to God when we were enemies. All of this was done prior to faith because a believer is not classified as an enemy of God. Yes, we do not want to minimize the importance and essential of faith because the Scriptures make it clear that the elect of God are brought to faith. Also we are not prepared to quantify or qualify how much one must believe or how much faith one will have. We are individuals and each child of grace does not have the same understanding, teaching, or exercise of obedience in his life. While there are similarities in the growth of each child of grace, we are not identical in our journey under the providential dealings of God. Therefore, we will turn our attention to some passages that teach that the people of God are brought to faith and believe on Christ.

Of the many passages that can be presented, allow me to begin with John chapter 10. Here our Lord made it plain that the sheep of God follow the Shepherd and they will not follow a stranger because they know the voice of the Shepherd and do not know the voice of a stranger. This knowledge is a deep awareness of Who Christ is and our love and trust of Him. In fact, in verse fourteen, our Lord said that He not only knows the sheep but that the sheep know Him. Further in verse twenty-seven He said that the sheep hear His voice and follow Him. Immediately before this He said the reason people do not believe in Him is because they are not His sheep. What a glorious thing that God not only set His love on the elect before the world and Christ was their Surety from all eternity, and that the Son came and fulfilled the righteousness for our justification, but the Holy Spirit works faith in our hearts so that we believe this glorious gospel as we labor in this low ground of sin and sorrow. Our hearing the gospel and believing it is not some chance happening but it is according to the providential workings of our glorious God and Savior. Robert Traill express it beautifully in a sermon on I Peter 1:1-4. Speaking of the elect of God scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, he said, "Wheresoever any of the elect of God are, gospel-grace will reach them; either they shall be brought where the light shines, or the light shall be sent after them to find them out. This is expressed by our Lord in two parables, Luke xv. the man seeking his lost sheep, and the woman looking for her lost piece of silver. Sometimes the elect are brought where the gospel is; and it is remarkable that the pouring out of the Spirit was adapted to the time of Pentecost: when there was the greatest assembly of the Jews from all parts of the world to worship there; then and there Christ and his gospel met them, Acts ii.

1. This is a matter of great consolation; gospel-grace will find out all the elect of God, wheresoever they are scattered; either the gospel shall be sent after them and find them out, or they shall be brought where it is." (*Work of Robert Traill*, Vol. 4, p. 10. The Banner of Truth Trust.) As we said before, faith is not only a gift of God (Ephesians 2:8) but belief is also given by His grace (Philippians 1:29).

This is further verified in II Thessalonians 2:13-14, "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." In no uncertain words, Paul wrote by inspiration that the Thessalonians saints were not only chosen to salvation but that it was "through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." Furthermore, God called the Thessalonians saints by the gospel as preached by Paul. This coincides with the testimony of Paul preaching the gospel at Antioch in Pisidia where it is said that "as many as were ordained to eternal life believed," Acts 13:48. Yes, while it is true that belief does not justify, those who are justified by the righteousness of Christ believe. In fact, Paul began his discourse here at Antioch with these words: "Be it known unto you therefore, men *and* brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses," Acts 13:38-39.

John in his first epistle bears witness to this as well. In verses thirteen through fourteen of the second chapter he addresses little children, young men, and fathers. (It matters not whether you believe these three groups are regarding physical age, spiritual maturity, or a combination of the two, it covers children of God of all ages from youth to maturity.) Notice that the little children know God the Father and if they know God they also know Christ. Remember that Jesus told the scribes and Pharisees that if God were their Father they would love Him, John 8:42. Even I John 2:23 testifies to this same truth when it says that "*he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also*." This corresponds with John 5:23b: "He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him." After little children is the group of young men. There we see that they "overcome the wicked one," "are strong," and "the word of God" abides in them. Regarding the fathers, they "know him *that is* from the beginning." Obviously, since the children and fathers know God from the beginning, the fathers equally possess those characteristics of the young men because they are in the middle of the little children and the fathers. In other words, regardless of one's stage or age of growth in the kingdom of God, he is not only regenerated but he lives in the knowledge of the Father and in obedience to the gospel of God. He is given faith in regeneration and that faith is active in the service of God. No, the act of faith does not justify, but the act of faith does receive into the conscience an awareness of the justify righteousness of Christ and rejoice in the riches of the

finished works of our Savior, Christ Jesus. Many other passages could be supplied to support this truth; however, these should be sufficient for any Bible believer. Yes, our Lord could have elected us and redeemed us by the Person and work of Christ and then let us go about in the world with the possibility that we might or might not know about the salvation for us now or a future life after death. Nevertheless our Heavenly Father is far more loving and gracious than any earthly father. He is sure to give us divine life in regeneration, nourish and feed us with the glorious gospel so that we rejoice in the finished work of Christ, and look forward to living with Him "holy and without blame in love" forever in the glory word. Our time is up for today, farewell.

Salvation—Justification: Faith (14TH)

(We are concluding the study of faith as an *act* regarding the doctrine of justification in this podcast.)

Too often people do not consider that Old Testament saints have the same faith as that of the New Testament. In fact, Galatians 3:7, 9 clearly say, "Know you therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham." "So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." Regardless of how faith is manifested or exhibited in the life of a child of God, it is the same kind of faith. Ephesians 4:4-6 equally testifies to this in that it declares that we all are "called in one hope" of our "calling," "one Lord, one faith," "one God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in you all." The reason that people in the Old Testament did not believe the gospel is the same as why people now do not believe. It is because it is not "mixed with faith." Hebrews 4:2 testifies to this truth: "For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard *it*." Notice that it was the same gospel. There was not a separate gospel in the Old Testament. The gospel that was preached "unto them" is the same gospel preached "unto us"; that is, provided the gospel preached today is the one true gospel as confirmed in Galatians 1:6-7: "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ." (The Lord willing, we will discuss the gospel more in detail in the future.)

Books written, sermons preached, and theologians have lectured endeavoring to ascertain how much gospel one must believe or how accurate a particular theological system conforms to the truth of the gospel. Obviously the Scriptures are silent regarding this question. One thing is certain, each child of grace has faith and that faith is realized before God. Man may not be able to determine or evaluate how much

faith one has but God knows. Even the writer of Hebrews affirmed that many were unnamed that "wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and *in* mountains, and *in* dens and caves of the earth," Hebrews 11:37-38. As we scan our eyes over the entire eleventh chapter of Hebrews, there are some named that we likely would not think they truly had saving faith. Equally, when one would considers the thief on the cross there are questions as to how and why he knew what he knew. Nevertheless, within the short period of three hours he went from one scoffing and ridiculing the Lord (see Matthew 27:38-44) to one professing faith in Christ (see Luke 23:39-44). That faith was manifested in him is seen (1) by rebuking the other thief, (2) admitting that he was getting what was just by being crucified, (3) that Jesus was not guilty, (4) calling Jesus Lord, (5) that Jesus had a kingdom, (6) since Jesus had a kingdom He was a king, and (7) since Jesus would die on the cross He would have to come into His kingdom in the resurrection. Here are at least seven things that confirmed the faith of the thief. Equally, Abraham did not confess some theological system when he was in Er, but years before Genesis 15 we know that left Er by faith and obeyed God leaving that place "not knowing whither he went," Hebrew 11:8. Since the book of Hebrews is devoted to affirming that the new covenant is better and superior to that of the old, it clearly establishes that the faith of the Old Testament is the same in quoting from Habakkuk 2:4, "Behold, his soul *which* is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith," Hebrew 10:38. This is equally confirmed from Romans 1:17 and Galatians 3:11. Likewise, the people that lived by this same faith as listed in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews are from the Old Testament. Yes, the faith that is given by God (Ephesians 2:8; Philippians 1:29) is a living faith that produces works, James 2:17-26. In fact, just as faith is an evidence of justification so are works. This is what James is saying when he wrote that Abraham and Rahab were justified by works. As demonstrated before, the ground of justification is the righteousness of God and not our believing or faith exercised by us. Allow me to emphasize again, that we must distinguish between the principle of faith and the act of faith and know that justification is by the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Some may think that we are making much to do about nothing, but I assure you this is not the case. It is essential that we are clear and accurate regarding the doctrine of justification. It may well be the case that what I am about to say should have been said at the beginning of our study of justification because theologians and scholars for centuries have affirmed the importance of this doctrine. It has been said by many that Martin Luther said that justification is "the article which the church stands or falls." Recently I was listening to a podcast by R. C. Sproul entitled *Justification by Faith Alone* wherein he affirmed that this was the central issue of the reformation. Regarding Luther's statement, Justin Taylor wrote the following:

So what about the phrase attributed to Luther than *justificatio est articulus stantis et cadentis ecclesiae*—"justification is the article by which the church stands and falls."

From what I've been able to find, the first use of this exact phrase was by Lutheran theologian Balthasar Meisner who said that it was a "proverb of Luther" (*Anthropôlogia sacra* disputation 24, [Wittenberg: Johannes Gormannus, 1615]). [Source: Arthur Carl Piepkorn / Jack Preus]

In 1618 Reformed theologian Johann Heinrich Alsted wrote *articulus iustificationis dicitur articulus stantis et cadentis ecclesiae* (in *Theologia scholastica didacta* [Hanover, 1618], p. 711)— "The article of justification is said to be the article by which the church stands or falls." [Source: Alister McGrath]

We don't have record of Luther using the exact phrase, but very close: *quia isto articulo stante stat Ecclesia, ruente ruit Ecclesia*—"Because if this article [of justification] stands, the church stands; if this article collapses, the church collapses." (*WA* 40/3.352.3) [Source: Alister McGrath]

Luther certainly expressed the same thought in numerous ways, but this is the closest I've seen to the famous quote. *https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/justin-taylor/luthers-saying/*

Regardless of the exact words of Luther, this belief has been affirmed by many for centuries. Therefore, if the truth of the doctrine of justification determines whether an ecclesiastical denomination or assembly stands or falls then what is believed about this doctrine is extremely important. The doctrine of justification is not merely a subject of Christian literature; it is pivotal regarding the authenticity of "the house of God … the pillar and ground of the truth," I Timothy 3:15.

In his podcast, Sproul taught that justification by faith means that the word "by" in "by faith" is the instrumental cause of justification. He further used the example of Aristotle's philosophy by saying that if an artist takes a piece of marble or some stone and carves out some object, the stone is the material cause and the hammer and chisel used by the artist is the instrumental cause. Therefore, one is justified only when he exercises faith because the faith that the individual puts forth is the instrumental cause of him being justified. Under such teaching, Christ died and secured justification for any who will believe. This presents the idea that Christ secured justification and or salvation for anyone who will put or exercise his faith in Christ. Such proposal does not follow the teaching of the Bible that Christ died only for the elect and no more. It sets forth the idea that Christ died for someone but not anyone in particular; salvation is for someone who will believe. This leaves the idea that salvation is secured only by the means of faith and not by the righteousness of God. I realize that

some will assert that this is a small thing and hardly worth discussing, but in reality the difference is greater than what is imagined on the surface. Either salvation and/or justification was secured and accomplished in the Person and work of Christ or at faith. Even when it is affirmed that the faith is not produced by man and that it is the gift of God (Ephesians 2:8), the fact of the matter is that justification is either by the means of faith or Christ. It cannot be both. The Scriptures clearly teach that the ground of justification is the righteousness of God and not faith. Yes, we want to be clear. The believer does receive justification experimentally at faith, but one must first be judicially justified before he can receive it into his conscience. Faith does not justify; God justifies or pronounces one not guilty because of the finished work of Christ, Romans 8:33. Equally, God gives faith to each child of grace and when one believes the gospel he receives in his heart and conscious the truth of justification. No. The gospel does not produce the righteousness of God, it reveals the righteousness of God, cf. Romans 1:16-17, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." The gospel brings forth or brings to light faith, Romans 10:17. The gospel does not produce "life and immortality"; it brings "life and immortality to light," II Timothy 1:10. Therefore, let us be clear regarding the truth of justification being by the imputed righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ and the glorious beauty of the gospel of Christ revealing that truth to regenerated children of God by that faith given to them in the new birth. Let us continually remember the parting words of our Lord, "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem," Luke 24:46-47.
Our time is expired for today. Farewell.

Salvation—Sanctification (1ST)

(We are beginning the study of sanctification in the podcast today.)

In previous podcasts we studied the subject of justification. In the podcast for today we are beginning the study of sanctification. In theology this subject is generally presented after justification and so we will follow this pattern as well. Hopefully, in our studies you will be able to see the connection of justification and sanctification as well as how they differ. When studying justification we attempted to show what justification is and the truth of the phrase "justification by faith." In doing so we avoided the difficulty of trying to expose the many different defective views (as I

understand them). I believe too often one is buried in the quagmire of a multitude of positives and negatives in studying certain doctrines. It has been my opinion for many years to simply seek the truth of the Scriptures regarding a subject instead of weighing all the different designs and ideas set forth and becoming so overwhelmed and lost in the sea of uncertainty. I realize that my way of thinking may seem too simplistic and that it may run the risk of being narrow-minded and having tunnel vision and, therefore, miss the truth of the matter. Nevertheless, I believe that if one seeks to channel his thinking with the overall truth of orthodoxy as presented down through the centuries, he will likely avoid sectarian notions and heretical doctrines altogether. More importantly when considering any subject it is essential that we submit our thinking to the clear overall teaching of the Scriptures regarding it. The Lord willing, we will follow this same line of thinking as we not only study all topics but with the doctrine of sanctification, too.

I believe Arthur W. Pink raised several questions to be considered regarding this subject. They are as follows:

> But what is "sanctification": is it a quality or position? Is sanctification a legal thing or an experimental? that is to say, Is it something the believer has in Christ or in himself? Is it absolute or relative? by which we mean, Does it admit of degree or no? is it unchanging or progressive? Are we sanctified at the time we are justified, or is sanctification a later blessing? How is this blessing obtained? by something which is done for us, or by us, or both? How may one be assured he has been sanctified: what are the characteristics, the evidences, the fruits? How are we to distinguish between sanctification by the Father, sanctification by the Son, sanctification by the Spirit, sanctification by faith, sanctification by the Word?
>
> Is there any difference between sanctification and holiness? if so, what? Are sanctification and purification the same thing? Does sanctification relate to the soul, or the body, or both? What position does sanctification occupy in the order of Divine blessings? What is the connection between regeneration and sanctification? What is the relation between justification and sanctification? Wherein does sanctification differ from glorification? Exactly what is the place of sanctification in regard to salvation: does it precede or follow, or is it an integral part of it? Why is there so much diversity of opinion upon these points, scarcely any two writers treating of this subject in the same manner. Our purpose here is not simply to multiply questions but to indicate the many sidedness of our present theme, and to intimate the various avenues of approach to the study of it. *The Doctrine of Sanctification*, pp. 8-9.

I believe that the subject of sanctification is often misunderstood and carries the idea

of sinless perfection. This is not the case because God makes it abundantly clear that we not only have sinned in the past but that we currently have sin. I John 1:10 declares, “If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.” And, I John 1:8 states, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” Therefore, whosoever professes that he has not sinned makes God a liar, and if one affirms that he does not have sin he is deceived and is not of the truth. The apostle Paul also acknowledged his sinfulness. “For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but *how* to perform that which is good I find not.” “I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.” “But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” (Romans 7:18, 21, 23-24.) There is no such thing as sinless perfection with man (other than Jesus Christ) this side of glory. With this being said, it is equally certain that God works sanctification in the lives of His people.

Before we get too far into the subject at hand, it is important that we understand what is meant by sanctification. The two primary words for sanctification are the Hebrew word קָדַשׁ (qâdash, *kaw-dash'*) and the Greek word ἅγιος (hágios, *hag'-ee-os*). There are derivatives of these two words but we will limit our study essentially to these in order to simplify the matter as much as possible. *McClintock and Strong Cyclopedia* said that these two words are “rendered ‘holy,’ ‘hallowed,’ and ‘sanctified.’” The *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* states that the words “holy,” “hallow,” “hallowed,” “holiness,” “consecrate,” “saint,” “sanctify,” and “sanctification” … “are all translations of the same root, and that therefore no one of them can be treated adequately without reference to the others.” The article further says, “By sanctification is ordinarily meant that hallowing of the Christian believer by which he is freed from sin and enabled to realize the will of God in his life. This is not, however, the first or common meaning in the Scriptures.

“To sanctify means commonly to make holy, that is, to separate from the world and consecrate to God.”

When we see the total number of related words that are found in the Scriptures linked to the subject of sanctification we are amazed and made to consider the overwhelming evidence that God would have us to seriously consider this doctrine. Notice in the following chart the number of times the ten words related to sanctification are used in the verses as found in the Scriptures. Including the word sanctification with the other ten words (as seen below) we find a total of 957 times in 877 verses that sanctification and the related words are found in the Holy Scriptures. (Remember that this information is from the King James Version Bible as given in the computer Bible program *SwordSearcher*.)

Words	Times Used	Verses
Holy	611	544
Holiness	43	43
Hallow	15	15
Hallowed	22	21
Concentrate	14	14
Concentrated	14	14
Saint	5	3
Saints	96	95
Sanctify	70	65
Sanctified	62	58
Sanctification	5	5
Total	**957**	**877**

The modern religious world says much about the love of God and the Scriptures say that God is love two times, but the holiness of God is ascribed to Him well over six hundred times. The Scriptures clearly affirm that His people not only are commanded to be holy: "Be ye holy; for I am holy," cf. Leviticus 11:44-45; I Peter 1:16. The Lord equally chastens His sons so that they are "partakers of his holiness," Hebrews 12:5-10. The idea that God will leave true believers to wallow in the mire of sin and live in the ways of the world is contrary to the idea of salvation. People who live accordingly are not delivered from the world, whereas the Scriptures tell us that Jesus Christ "gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father," Galatians 1:4. Notice that it is according to the will of God as well as the result of the Person and work of Christ that the redeemed are delivered from this present evil world. It is to be further noted that the word for "world" is the Greek word αἰών or age showing that it is talking about the system of this world. The Lord willing we will enlarge on this in future studies, but our time is up for today. Farewell.

Salvation—Sanctification (2ND)

(We are continuing our study of the doctrine sanctification in this podcast. Today we are showing that sanctification originated before the foundation of the world.)

Too often when the doctrine of sanctification is being considered a vital part of this doctrine is overlooked. This is likely because salvation is equally presented as

essentially something beneficial in this life with it ending in the world to come or in some form of afterlife. However, sanctification (like salvation and all its parts) originated in eternity before the creation of the universe. In other words, just as the design to create, election, adoption, justification, the death of Christ, and all other aspects of the eternal counsel of God, sanctification also began in the mind and purpose of God before the world was. There is an *eternal* aspect of sanctification as well as a *judicial* and an *experimental* aspect that is worked out for each child of grace.

In the previous podcast it was stated, "To sanctify means commonly to make holy, that is, to separate from the world and consecrate to God." From this it can be safely affirmed that the sanctification of the elect of God began before the creation of the universe. Ephesians 1:4 says that God chose us in Christ "before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." In other words, the elect were separated or set apart from the rest of mankind and chosen in Christ so that they would "be holy and without blame" before God. Therefore, sanctification began in eternity. This truth is often overlooked when studying this subject. In fact, many (if not most) books that address this doctrine omit this altogether and teach that sanctification begins with the new birth or regeneration. However, regarding sanctification prior to regeneration, John Gill wrote the following:

> There is a sanctification which is more peculiarly ascribed to God the Father; and which is no other than his eternal election of men to it: under the law, persons and things separated and devoted to holy uses, are said to be "sanctified"; hence those who are set apart by God for his use and service, and are chosen by him to holiness here and hereafter, are said "to be sanctified by God the Father," Jude 1. There is a sanctification also that is more peculiar to Christ the Son of God; not only as he is the representative of his people, and is "holiness to the Lord" for them; which the high priest had upon his forehead, who was a type of him, and the representative of Israel; and as he has the whole stock of grace and holiness in his hands, which is communicated to the saints as is necessary; and as the holiness of his human nature, is, with his active and passive obedience, imputed to their justification, and so makes a part of that; hence he is said to be made to them "sanctification," 1 Corinthians 1:30 but as the expiation of their sins is made by his blood and sacrifice; this is called a sanctification of them; "Jesus, that he might sanctify the people with his blood, suffered without the gate," Hebrews 13:12. *Body of Divinity*, p. 552.

Since Christ was set up as the Surety for the elect before the world was (Hebrew 7:22), it follows that our sanctification was vitally connected and identified with

Christ in eternity. There are a couple of verses that testifies to this which contain the phrase "called *to be* saints." The verses are Romans 1:7 and I Corinthians 1:2. They are as follows: "To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called *to be* saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ." And, "Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called *to be* saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours." You will notice that "to be" is in italic which means that it is not in the Greek text and it is literally "called saints."

Since the believers in Rome and in Corinth are equally designated as saints, it is obvious that each and every believer had the same degree and measure of holiness. In fact, viewing the congregation at Corinth as a whole, there was much to be desired in many of them. While the believers in both places were equally designated as saints this must include more than personal holiness. Even Peter spoke of those believers being elected "according to the foreknowledge" of God "through sanctification of the Spirit," I Peter 1:2. This is well summarized by John Calvin in his comments on I Corinthians 1:2. He wrote, "What immediately follows — *called to be saints* — I understand to mean: As ye have been called unto holiness. It may, however, be taken in two senses. Either we may understand Paul to say, that the ground of sanctification is the call of God, inasmuch as God has chosen them; meaning, that this depends on his grace, not on the excellence of men; or we may understand him to mean, that, it accords with our profession that we be holy, this being the design of the doctrine of the gospel." While Calvin says that it is of "no great consequence" as to which meaning is given to the text, he does state that the "former interpretation appears to suit better with the context" or "that our holiness flows from the fountain of divine election."

Vitally connected to this is our sanctification in Christ. I Corinthians 1:30 says, "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." While many commentators will admit that the wisdom, and especially the righteousness and redemption, refer to the redemptive work of Christ, all too often they will teach that the sanctification here has to do with our personally sanctifying ourselves. For example, regarding the righteousness, Albert Barnes said, "*And righteousness*. By whom we become righteous in the sight of God. This declaration simply affirms that we become righteous through him, as it is affirmed that we become wise, sanctified, and redeemed through him. But neither of the expressions determine anything as to the *mode* by which it is done." Then concerning redemption he wrote, "Probably the word is used here in a wide sense, as denoting the whole group, or class of influences by which we are brought at last to heaven; so that the apostle refers not only to his atonement, but to the work by which we are *in fact* redeemed from death, and made happy in heaven." However, when speaking of sanctification he stated, "This does not mean, evidently, that his personal

holiness is reckoned to us; but that, by his work applied to our hearts, we become personally sanctified or holy." This is inconsistent with the overall context of the verse. To affirm that the righteousness and the redemption on either side of sanctification to refer to the Person and work of Christ while insisting that sanctification being in the middle of the list to mean that "we become personally sanctified or holy" is, to say the least, begging the question. J. C. Philpot summarized it better saying, "*Wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.* God has made Christ all these to his people. He has set him up as their eternal Head, made him the Bridegroom of their souls, that out of his fullness they may all receive. Then, just in proportion as they learn these two lessons—what *they* are, and what *he* is—they receive him into their hearts actually what he is to them in the purpose of God." However, John Gill gives a fuller interpretation of this in the following:

> Christ is the sanctification of his people, through the constitution of God, the imputation of the holiness of his nature, the merits of his blood, and the efficacy of his grace, he is so "federally" and "representatively"; he is their covenant head, and has all covenant grace in his hands for them, and so the whole stock and fund of holiness, which is communicated to them in all ages, until the perfection of it in every saint: this is sanctification in Christ, which differs from sanctification in them in these things; in him it is as the cause, in them as the effect; in him as its fountain, in them as the stream; in him it is complete, in them it is imperfect for the present: and they have it by virtue of union to him; sanctification in Christ can be of no avail to any, unless it is derived from him to them; so that this sanctification in Christ does not render the sanctification of the Spirit unnecessary, but includes it, and secures it: likewise Christ is the sanctification of his people "by imputation", as the holiness of his human nature is, together with his obedience and sufferings, imputed to them for their justification; Christ assumed an holy human nature, the holiness of it was not merely a qualification for his office as a Saviour, or what made his actions and sufferings in that nature significant and useful, or is exemplary to men; but is a branch of the saints justification before God: the law required an holy nature, theirs is not holy; Christ has assumed one not for, himself, but for them, and so is the end of the law in all respects: and this may be greatly designed in the whole of this passage; "wisdom" may stand in general for the wise scheme of justification, as it is laid in Christ; "sanctification" may intend the holiness of his nature; "righteousness" the obedience of his life; and "redemption" his sufferings and death, by which it is obtained: but then justification and sanctification are not to be confounded; they are two distinct things, and have their proper uses and effects; sanctification in the saints does not justify, or justification sanctify; the one

> respects the power and being of sin, the other the guilt of it. Moreover, Christ is the sanctification of his people "meritoriously"; through the shedding of his blood, whereby he has sanctified them, that is, expiated their sins, and made full atonement for them; see Hebrews 10:10. Once more, he is their sanctification "efficiently"; by his Spirit, as the author, and by his word, as the means; he is the source of all holiness, it all comes from him, and is wrought by his Spirit in the heart; which lies in filling the understanding with spiritual light and knowledge; the mind with a sense of sin, and a detestation of it; the heart with the fear of God; the affections with love to divine objects and things; the will with submission and resignation to the will of God in all respects; and is exercised in living a life of faith on Christ, and in living soberly, righteously, and godly, before God and man: and this, though imperfect now, will be perfected from and by Christ, without which it is impossible to see the Lord. (This and other quotations are copied from the computer Bible program *Sword Searcher*.)

I realize this is a lengthy quote and it goes beyond that part of sanctification which resides in the eternal counsel of God and speaks of the judicial aspect as well as the experimental phase of sanctification, but I believe it was worth quoting all of it.
The Lord willing we will continue this in our next podcast; however, our time is up for today. Farewell.

Salvation—Sanctification (3RD)

(We are continuing our study of the doctrine sanctification and that it began in eternity before the foundation of the world.)

In our previous podcast we confirmed from the Scriptures that sanctification originated with God in eternity by giving some passages from the Scriptures and supplied some comment by various authors. Today we are continuing this with additional information to support this truth that is too often overlooked or neglected. Jude 1 testifies to our sanctification originating in eternity: "Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, *and* called." While John Calvin thinks this refers to the effectual call, he admits that this is "sometimes taken for" eternal election in the following comment: "But as calling is nothing else but the effect of eternal election, it is sometimes taken for it. In this place it makes but little difference in which way you take it; for he, no doubt, commends the grace of God, by which he has been pleased to choose them as his peculiar treasure. And he intimates that men do not anticipate God, and that they never come to him until he draws them." J. C. Philpot

is more definitive in his comments on this verse. He said, "What a mercy it is for God's people that before they have a vital union with Christ, before they are grafted into him experimentally—they have an eternal, immanent union with him before all worlds. It is this eternal union that brings them into time existence. It is by virtue of this eternal union that they come into the world at such a time, at such a place, from such parents, under such circumstances, as God has appointed. It is by virtue of this eternal union that the circumstances of their time-state are ordained. By virtue of this eternal union they are preserved in Christ before they are called; they cannot die until God has brought about a vital union with Christ." Equally, Robert Hawker agrees that this is referring to the election or setting apart the sheep before the foundation of the world. (Hawker is using the English word "church" to refer to the whole election of grace.) He wrote the following:

> In this blessed verse Jude ascribes to God the Father the sanctification of the Church. *To them that are sanctified by God the Father*. And, without all doubt, God the Father hath chosen the Church in Christ before the foundation of the world, that it should be *holy and without blame before him in love*. {Ephesians 1:4} Nevertheless, the word translated in this verse sanctified; might have been rendered, (as is well known to the learned,) beloved in and of God the Father; which, in its meaning, more particularly refers to the electing love of God the Father. Similar to the sense of the same word, in relation to Christ, the glorious Head of the Church. Say ye of Him (said Jesus to the Jews) whom the Father hath sanctified?, {John 10:30} that is, whom the Father hath chosen? And this title of elect and chosen, as applied to Christ, is the greatest and most endeared in all the Bible, if we may judge by the manner of expression, in which God himself useth it. *Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine Elect, in whom my soul delighteth*! {Isaiah 42:1} Hence by the Church, whom Jude here calls sanctified by God the Father, is meant, the chosen by God the Father, whom Peter calls a chosen generation {I Peter 2:9} and whom Moses, under the Holy Ghost, stiles a peculiar treasure to the Lord above all people. {Exodus 19:5}. (This and all the other quotes are copied from the computer Bible program *Sword Searcher*.)

Agreeably, John Gill commented as follows:

> **[T]o them that are sanctified by God the Father**; which is to be understood not of internal sanctification, which is usually ascribed to the Spirit of God, but of the act of eternal election, which is peculiar to God the Father; in which sense Christ is said to be sanctified by the Father, and men ordained and appointed to an office, and vessels are set apart the owner's use; John 10:36;

> Jeremiah 1:5; the language is taken from the ceremonial law, by which persons and things were sanctified, or set apart for sacred use and service; see Exodus 13:2; and so the elect of God are by God the Father sanctified and set apart in the act of election, which is expressed by this word; partly because of its separating nature, men being by it separated from the rest of the world, to the use and service of God, and for his glory, so that they are a distinct and peculiar people; and partly because such are chosen through sanctification of the Spirit, and unto holiness both in this world and that which is to come; so that the doctrine of election is no licentious doctrine; for though holiness is not the cause of it, yet is a means fixed in it, and is certain by it, and an evidence of it; the Alexandrian copy, and some others, and the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions, read, "to them that are loved by God the Father": election is the fruit and effect of love; those that are sanctified or set apart by the Father in election, are loved by him. The Ethiopic version renders it quite otherwise, "to them that love God the Father"; which flows from the Father's love to them.

The comments of A. W. Pink are well worth our consideration at this point. They are as follows:

> Reverting to Jude 1, we would note particularly *the order* of its statements: the "sanctified by God the Father" *comes before* "preserved in Jesus Christ, called." This initial aspect of our sanctification antedates our regeneration or effectual call from darkness to light, and therefore takes us back to the eternal counsels of God. There are three things in our verse: taking them in their inverse order, there is first, our "calling," when we were brought from death unto life; that was preceded by our being "preserved in Jesus Christ," that is, preserved from physical death in the womb, in the days of our infancy, during the recklessness of youth; and that also preceded by our being "sanctified" by the Father, that is, our names being enrolled in the Lamb's book of life, we are given to Christ to be loved by Him with an everlasting love and made joint-heirs with Him forever and ever.
>
> Our sanctification by the Father was *His eternal election of us,* with all that that term connotes and involves. Election was far more than a bare choice of persons. It included our being predestined unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself (Ephesians 1:5). It included our being made "vessels unto honor" and being "afore prepared to glory" (Romans 9:21, 22). It included being "appointed to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thessalonians 5:9). It included our being separated for God's pleasure, God's use, and "that we should be to the praise of His glory" (Ephesians 1:12). It included our being made "holy and without blame before him" (Ephesians

1:4). This eternal sanctification by God the Father is also mentioned in 2 Timothy 1:9, "Who has saved us, and called us with a *holy calling*, not according to our works but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus *before the world began*."

As we pointed out in the last paragraph of the preceding chapter, "Sanctification is, first, *a position of honor* to which God has appointed His people." That position of honor was their being "chosen *in Christ* before the foundation of the world" (Ephesians 1:4), when they were constituted members of His mystical Body by the eternal purpose of God. O what an amazing honor was that! a place in glory higher than that of the angels being granted them. Our poor minds are staggered before such wondrous grace. Here, then, is the link of connection between John 10:36 and Jude 1: Christ was not alone in the mind of the Father when He "sanctified" Him: by the Divine decree, Christ was separated and consecrated as the Head of a sanctified people. In the sanctification of Christ, all who are "called saints" were, in Him, eternally set apart, to be partakers of His own holy standing before the Father! This was an act of pure sovereignty on the Father's part. *The Doctrine of Sanctification*, pp. 100-101.

I realize that this quote is somewhat lengthy, but I believe his comments to be beneficial to the overall concept of the beginning or origin of sanctification. Additionally, because this glorious truth, which Pink identified as *eternal sanctification*, is so often overlooked by theologians, commentators, and preachers, it needs to be addressed at some length. With this in mind, I will close by supplying another selection from Pink.

As we have shown in previous chapters, to "sanctify" signifies to consecrate or set apart for a sacred use, to cleanse or purify, to adorn or beautify. Which of these meanings has the term in Jude 1? We believe the words "sanctified by God the Father" include all three of those definitions. First, in that eternal purpose of His, the elect were *separated* from all other creatures, and predestined unto the adoption of sons. Second, in God's foreviews of His elect falling in Adam, the corrupting of their natures, and the defilement which their personal acts of sin would entail, He ordained that the Mediator should make a full atonement for them, and by His blood *cleanse* them from all sin. Third, by choosing them in Christ, the elect were *united* to Him and so made one with Him that all *His* worthiness and perfection becomes theirs too; and thus they were *adorned*. God never views them apart for Christ. *Ibid*, pp. 101-102.

Our time is up for today. Farewell.

Salvation—Sanctification (4TH)

(As we continue our study of the doctrine sanctification, we will begin considering today judicial sanctification in the redemptive work of Christ.)

In previous podcasts we discussed the origin of sanctification as originating with the Lord before the creation of the world. As noted, many ignore this and teach that sanctification begins during the life of the believer at regeneration. Obviously, experimental sanctification in the life of a child of grace does begin at regeneration, but to ignore that the elect were set apart and consecrated in the eternal counsel of God is, in my opinion, to fall short of a full understanding of the subject. However, by teaching that sanctification begins with regeneration or conversion also disregards a very important and glorious element in the subject. Sanctification of the children of God is included in the Person and work of Christ. In fact, I Corinthians 1:30 plainly declare this: "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." For lack of a better term, I call this *judicial sanctification* because we are made legally holy and righteous in the redemptive work of Christ. I might add that this is vitally connected to sanctification before the world (or as A. W. Pink termed it; *eternal sanctification*). Often when commenting on the various verses relating to either aspect they embrace and complement each other. As quoted in a previous podcast, commenting on I Corinthians 1:30, John Gill said the following:

> There is a sanctification also that is more peculiar to Christ the Son of God; not only as he is the representative of his people, and is "holiness to the Lord" for them; which the high priest had upon his forehead, who was a type of him, and the representative of Israel; and as he has the whole stock of grace and holiness in his hands, which is communicated to the saints as is necessary; and as the holiness of his human nature, is, with his active and passive obedience, imputed to their justification, and so makes a part of that; hence he is said to be made to them "sanctification," 1Corinthians 1:30 but as the expiation of their sins is made by his blood and sacrifice; this is called a sanctification of them; "Jesus, that he might sanctify the people with his blood, suffered without the gate," Hebrews 13:12. *Body of Divinity*, p. 552.

It should be obvious that the redemptive work of Christ does not extend to the entire population of the human race. If so, then the entire human race would be saved, but the Scriptures teach otherwise. "And whosever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire," Revelation 20:15. This lake of fire is the location

of the final destination of the beast, false prophet, the devil, and death and hell (or hades), Revelation 19:20; 20:10, 14-15. Equally, we are told, "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murders, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death," Revelation 21:8. Obviously, such are not sanctified or made righteous and were not represented in the Person and work of Christ. Yet, Hebrews 13:12 (as mentioned in Gill's quote above) clearly states that the blood of Christ sanctified some. Commenting on this, we shall quote from Gill again.

> **[T]hat he might sanctify the people with his own blood**: by "the people" are meant the people who are the objects of divine love and favour; a chosen and covenant people; a distinct and peculiar people; Christ's own special people, by the gift of his Father to him: and the sanctification of them does not design the internal sanctification of them, though this is from Christ, and in consequence of his blood; nor does it so much regard the cleansing of the filth of sin, though Christ's blood sanctifies, in this sense; but rather the expiation of the guilt of sin, which Christ has fully took away; complete pardon being procured, and a perfect righteousness brought in: and this by "his own blood"; the priests sanctified, to the purifying of the flesh, with the blood of others, with the blood of bulls and goats; but Christ with his own blood, which he was, really, a partaker of; and his human nature, being in union with his divine person, as the Son of God, it had a virtue in it, to sanctify and cleanse from all sin, and to make full expiation of it; in shedding of which, and sanctifying with it, he has shown great love to his people: and, that he might do this agreeably to the types of him on the day of atonement.

While many of the commentators commented on Christ suffering "without the gate" and we, too, are to do likewise, few, if any, commented on those represented by Christ being sanctified by the redemptive work of Christ. Though a small reference was made regarding sanctification by the redemptive work of Christ, I thought it was interesting that the Arminian, Adam Clark, admittedly said, "That he might sanctify the people — That he might consecrate them to God, and make an atonement for their sins, he suffered without the gate at Jerusalem, as the sin-offering was consumed without the camp when the tabernacle abode in the wilderness." As stated previous, much honor and glory is robbed from the Lord by ignoring or passing over sanctification before the world (*eternal sanctification*) and sanctification in the redemptive work of Christ (*judicial sanctification*). (A. W. Pink also identified this as "the *objective* side of sanctification." *The Doctrine of Sanctification,* published by Bible Truth Depot, P. 103.) Agreeably, Pink said, "Many Christians who are quite

clear that they must look alone to *Christ* for their justification before God, often fail to view *Him* as their complete sanctification before God. But this ought not to be, for Scripture is just as clear on the one point as on the other; yes, the two are therein inseparably joined together. 'But of Him are you in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption' (I Corinthians 1:30). And here we must dissent from the exposition of this verse given by Chas. Hodge (in his commentary) and others of his school, who interpret 'sanctification' here as Christ's Spirit indwelling His people as the Spirit of holiness, transforming them unto His likeness. But this verse is speaking of that sanctification which *Christ is made unto us,* and not that which we are *made by Christ* — the distinction is real and vital, and to ignore or confound it is inexcusable in a theologian." P. 108. Additionally Pink wrote, "[T]he definition or description of sanctification of the Westminster divines is altogether *inadequate*, for it entirely *omits* the most important aspect and fundamental element in the believer's sanctification: it says nothing about our sanctification *by Christ* (Hebrews 10:10; 13:12), but confines itself to the work of the Spirit, which is founded upon that of the Son. This is truly a serious loss, and affords another illustration that God has not granted light on all His Word to any one man or body of men." P. 114. In fact, our Brother Pink had much more to say regarding this that is worthy of mentioning. It is as follows:

> It is greatly to be regretted that many theologians have confined their views far too exclusively to the *legal* aspect of the atonement, whereas both the Old Testament types and the New Testament testimony, with equal clearness, exhibit its efficacy in *all* our relations to God. Because we are in Christ, *all* that He is for us must be ours. … Not only is the believer "*justified* by His blood" (Rom 5:9), but we are "*sanctified* (set apart, consecrated unto God, fitted and adorned for His presence) through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Hebrews 10:10). It is *this* blessed aspect of sanctification which the denominational creeds and the writings of the Puritans almost totally ignored.
>
> In the Larger Catechism of the Westminster Assembly the question is asked, "What is sanctification?" To which the following answer is returned: "Sanctification is a work of God's grace, whereby, they whom God has before the foundation of the world chosen to be holy, are in time through the powerful operation of His Spirit, applying the death and resurrection of Christ unto them, renewed in their whole man after the image of God; having the seeds of repentance unto life and all other saving graces, put into their hearts, and those graces so stirred up, increased, and strengthened, as that they more and more die unto sin and rise unto newness of life."

> Now far be it from us to sit in judgment upon such an excellent and helpful production as this Catechism, which God has richly blessed to thousands of His people, or that we should make any harsh criticisms against men whose shoes we are certainly not worthy to unloose. Nevertheless, we are assured that were its compilers on earth today, they would be the last of all to lay claim to any infallibility, nor do we believe they would offer any objection against their statements being brought to the bar of Holy Scripture. The best of men are but men at the best, and therefore we must call no man "Father." A deep veneration for servants of God and a high regard for their spiritual learning must not deter us from complying with "*Prove all things*: hold fast that which is good" (1 Thessalonians 5:21). The Bereans were commended for testing the teachings even of the apostle Paul, "And searched the Scriptures daily *whether* those things were so" (Acts 17:11). It is in this spirit that we beg to offer two observations on the above quotation. Pp. 113-114.

Regrettably, we must suspend our lengthy quotation by Pink and conclude it in our next podcast because our time is exhausted for today. I apologize for this interruption but I believe the total of what he said worthy of our consideration. I trust this break in the full quotation will not decrease the effectiveness of the overall subject matter. Farewell.

Salvation—Sanctification (5TH th)

(Today we will continue our study of judicial sanctification in the redemptive work of Christ by concluding a lengthy quote by Arthur W. Pink that began in our previous podcast.)

In the preceding podcast, we interrupted a lengthy quotation by Arthur W. Pink showing that many ignore the *eternal* aspect as well as the *judicial* (or as Pink termed it the *objective* side) of sanctification. He referred to the Westminster Confession and Larger Catechism and their omission of the subject matters addressed in the previous sentence and their focus on the experimental side of sanctification. After quoting from those historic documents and giving his humble defense as reason for differing from such an "excellent and helpful production," he said, "It is in this spirit that we beg to offer two observations on the above quotation." *The Doctrine of Sanctification,* published by Bible Truth Depot, P. 114. Though the first part of the first paragraph below was quoted in the preceding podcast, we will impose on the patience of the audience by supplying it again for the continuity of the entire quoted material. Therefore, we continue quoting Pink as follows:

First, the definition or description of sanctification of the Westminster divines is altogether *inadequate*, for it entirely *omits* the most important aspect and fundamental element in the believer's sanctification: it says nothing about our sanctification *by Christ* (Hebrews 10:10; 13:12), but confines itself to the work of the Spirit, which is founded upon that of the Son. This is truly a serious loss, and affords another illustration that God has not granted light on *all* His Word to any one man or body of men. A fuller and better answer to the question of, "What is sanctification?" would be, "Sanctification is, first, that act of God whereby He set the elect apart in Christ before the foundation of the world that they should be holy. Second, it is that perfect holiness which the Church [Pink is using "Church" to denoted the elect.—JKB] has in Christ and that excellent purity which she has before God by virtue of Christ's cleansing blood. Third, it is that work of God's Spirit which, by His quickening operation, sets them apart from those who are dead in sins, conveying to them a holy life or nature, etc."

Thus we cannot but regard this particular definition of the Larger Catechism as being defective, for it commences at the middle, instead of starting at the beginning. Instead of placing before the believer that complete and perfect sanctification which God has made Christ to be unto him, it occupies him with the incomplete and progressive work of the Spirit. Instead of moving the Christian to look away from himself with all his sinful failures, unto Christ in whom he is "complete" (Colossians 2:10), it encouraged him to look within, where he will often search in vain for the fine gold of the new creation amid all the dross and mire of the old creation. This is to leave him without the joyous assurance of knowing that he has been "perfected forever" by the one offering of Christ (Hebrews 10:14); and if he be destitute of that, then doubts and fears must constantly assail him, and the full assurance of faith elude every striving after it.

Our second observation upon this definition is, that its wording is faulty and misleading. Let the young believer be credibly assured that he will "more and more die unto sin and rise unto newness of life," and what will be the inevitable outcome? As he proceeds on his way, the Devil assaulting him more and more fiercely, the inward conflict between the flesh and the Spirit becoming more and more distressing, increasing light from God's Word more and more exposing his sinful failures, until the cry is forced from him, "I am vile; O wretched man that I am," what conclusion *must* he draw? Why this: if the Catechism-definition be correct then I was sadly mistaken, *I have never been sanctified at all.* So far from the "more and more die unto sin" agreeing with *his* experience, he discovers that sin is more active within and that he is more alive to sin now, than he was ten years ago!

Will any venture to gainsay what we have just pointed out above, then we would ask the most mature and godly reader, Dare you solemnly affirm, as in the presence of God, that *you* have "more and more died unto sin?" If you answer, Yes, the writer for one would not believe you. But we do not believe for a moment that you would utter such an untruth. Rather do we think we can hear you saying, "Such has been my deep *desire*, such has been my sincere *design* in using the means of grace, such is still my daily *prayer*; but alas, alas! I find as truly and as frequently today as I ever did in the past that, "When I would do good, evil is present with me; for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I" (Romans 7). Ah, there is a vast difference between what *ought* to be, and that which actually *obtains* in our experience.

That we may not be charged with partiality, we quote from the "Confession of Faith" adopted by the Baptist Association, which met in Philadelphia 1742, giving the first two sections of their brief chapter on sanctification: 1. "They who are united to Christ, effectually called, and regenerated, having a new heart and a new spirit in them through the virtue of Christ's death and resurrection, are also (a) farther sanctified, really and personally, through the same virtue, (b) by His Word and Spirit dwelling in them; (c) the dominion of the whole body of sin is destroyed, (d) and the several lusts thereof *more and more weakened* and mortified, and they more and more quickened and strengthened in all saving graces, to the practice of all true holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. 2. This sanctification is throughout in the whole man, yet imperfect in this life; there abides still *some remnants* of corruption in every part, whence arises a continual and irreconcilable war."

Like the previous one, this description of sanctification by the Baptists leaves something to be desired, for it makes no clear and direct statement upon the all-important and flawless holiness which every believer has *in Christ*, and that spotless and impeccable purity which is *upon* him by God's imputation of the cleansing efficacy of His Son's sacrifice. Such a serious omission is too vital for us to ignore. In the second place, the words which we have placed in italics not only perpetuate the faulty wording of the Westminster Catechism but also convey a misleading conception of the present condition of the Christian. To speak of "some remnants of corruption" still remaining in the believer, necessarily implies that by far the greater part of his original corruption has been removed, and that only a trifling portion of the same now remains. But something vastly different from *that* is what every true Christian discovers to his daily grief and humiliation. Pp. 114-116.

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Here, then, is a real dilemma. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves; and yet, according to the doctrine of "progressive sanctification," until we can

say it (though it be inarticulately in the moment of death) we are not meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. What an awful thought it is, that Christ may come any hour to those who realize that the process of sanctification within them is *incomplete*. But more: not only are those who have no complete sanctification unfit for eternal glory, but it would be daring presumption for them to boldly enter the Holiest now — the "new and living way" is not yet available for them, they cannot draw near "with a true heart in full assurance of faith." What wonder, then, that those who believe this doctrine are plunged into perplexity, that such a cloud rests over their acceptance with God. But thank God, many triumph over their creed: their hearts are better than their heads, otherwise their communion with God and their approach to the throne of His grace would be impossible.

Now in blessed contrast from this inadequate doctrine of theology, the glorious Gospel of God reveals to us a *perfect* Savior. It exhibits One who has not only made complete satisfaction to the righteous Ruler and Judge, providing for His people a perfect righteousness before Him, but whose sacrifice has also fitted us to worship and serve a holy God acceptably, and to approach the Father with full confidence and filial love. A knowledge of the truth of justification is not sufficient to thus assure the heart: there must be something more than a realization that the curse of the law is removed — if the conscience be still defiled, if the eye of God rests upon us as unpurged and unclean, then confidence before Him is impossible, for we feel utterly unfit for His ineffable presence. But forever blessed be His name, the precious Gospel of God announces that the blood of Christ meets this *exigency* also.

"Now where remission of these (sins) is, there is no more offering for sin. Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus" (Hebrews 10:18, 19). The same sacrifice which has procured the remission of our sins, provides the right for us to draw near unto God as acceptable worshipers. "By His own blood He entered in once into the Holy Place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Hebrews 9:13). Now that which gives the One who took our place *the right* to enter Heaven itself, also gives us the right to take *the same* place. That which entitled Christ to enter Heaven was "His own blood," and that which entitles the feeblest believer to approach the very throne of God "with boldness," is "the blood of Jesus." Our title to enter Heaven *now*, in spirit, is precisely the same as *Christ's* was!

The same precious blood which appeased the wrath of God, covers every stain of sin's guilt and defilement; and not only so, but in the very place of that which it covers and cleanses, it leaves its own excellence; so that because of its finite purity and merit, the Christian is regarded not only as guiltless and unreprovable, but also as *spotless and holy*. Oh to realize by faith that we are

> assured of the same welcome by God *now* as His beloved Son received when He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. God views us *in Christ* His "Holy One," as possessing a holiness as perfect as is the righteousness in which we are accepted, both of them being as perfect as Christ Himself. "In us, as we present ourselves before Him through Christ, God *sees no sin!* He looks on us in the face of His Anointed, and there He sees us purer than the heavens" (Alexander Carson). Pp. 117-119.

I realize this was an extremely lengthy quote from Pink, but I believe it worthy of our consideration. His explanation and insight clearly show the importance and benefit of *judicial* sanctification in the Person and work of Christ. The Lord willing we will comment on other passages that set forth this truth. However, our time is up for today. Farewell.

Salvation—Sanctification (6TH)

(Today we will conclude our study of *judicial* sanctification in the redemptive work of Christ.)

In the previous two podcasts we interrupted looking at various passages of the Scriptures that refer to our sanctification in the redemptive work of Christ to give a lengthy quote from the book entitle *The Doctrine of Sanctification* by Arthur W. Pink. We identified this element of sanctification as *judicial* sanctification (or as Pink termed it the *objective* side of sanctification). That the elect are sanctified through the life, death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, we draw your attention to Hebrews 10:10: "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*." While Calvin's comments on this verse is somewhat lacking, to say the least, the note regarding the word "sanctified" by the editor is refreshing. It is as follows:

> "Sanctified," here, as in Hebrews 2:11, includes the idea of expiation; it is to be sanctified, or cleansed from guilt, rather than from pollution, because it is said to be by the offering of the body of Christ, which was especially an expiation for sins, as it appears from what follows; and the main object of the quotation afterwards made was to show that by his death remission of sins is obtained. "By the which will," or, by which will, is commonly taken to mean, "By the accomplishing of which will;" or ἐν [The Greek for "by."—JKB] may be taken as in Hebrews 4:11, in the sense of κατὰ, "according to which will we are cleansed (that is, from guilt) through the offering of the body of Christ once made." "Will" here does not mean the act of willing, but the object of the will,

> that which God wills, approves and is pleased with, and is set in opposition to the legal sacrifices. And as there is a οἱ [The Greek for "the."—JKB] in many good copies after ἐσμὲν [The Greek for "we are."—JKB], some have rendered the verse thus, "By which will we are cleansed who are cleansed by the offering of the body of Christ once made." Thus "the will," or what pleased God, is first opposed to the sacrifices, and then identified with the offering of Christ's body. — *Ed* (From the computer Bible program *Sword Searcher*.)

Equally, Albert Barnes comments on this verse is very edifying.

> *We are sanctified*. We are made holy. The word here is not confined to the specific work which is commonly called sanctification—or the process of making the soul holy after it is renewed, but it includes *everything* by which we are made holy in the sight of God. It embraces, therefore, justification and regeneration as well as what is commonly known as sanctification.

Matthew Poole testified to this meaning as follows:

> *We are sanctified: sanctified* is to be taken largely, for a communication to us of all the benefits of redemption, as pardon, reconciliation, absolution from punishment, renovation of God's image, and such a discharge of sin at last, as never to be guilty of it more, perfection of grace in glory.

However, we cannot ignore the delightful words of John Gill regarding this statement.

> **By the which will we are sanctified**, That is, by the sacrifice of Christ, which was willingly offered up by himself, and was according to the will of God; it was his will of purpose that Christ should be crucified and slain; and it was his will of command, that he should lay down his life for his people; and it was grateful and well pleasing to him, that his soul should be made an offering for sin; and that for this reason, because hereby the people of God are sanctified, their sins are perfectly expiated, the full pardon of them is procured, their persons are completely justified from sin, and their consciences purged from it.

Additionally, we will add the comments of Gill from Hebrews 10:14:

> **[H]e hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified**; that is, who are sanctified by God the Father, Jude 1:1 or, who are set apart by him in eternal

> election, from the rest of the world, for his own use, service, and glory, to a state of grace and holiness here, and happiness hereafter; for this is not to be understood either of their being sanctified in Christ, though the Syriac version reads, "that are sanctified" in him, or by his Spirit, though both are true of the same persons; these Christ, by his sacrifice, has perfected, and has perfectly fulfilled the law for them; he has perfectly expiated their sins; he has obtained the full pardon of all their sins, and complete redemption; he has perfectly justified them from all things, and that for ever; which shows the continued virtue of Christ's sacrifice, in all generations, to all the elect of God, and the fulness and duration of their salvation; and so Christ by his one sacrifice did what the law, and all its sacrifices, could not do, Hebrews 10:1.

The editor of Calvin, commenting on Hebrews 10:10 stated that "'Sanctified,' here, as in Hebrews 2:11, includes the idea of expiation …." It says, "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified *are* all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." The comments of the editor on this verse are equally enlightening. They are as follows:

> The word to sanctify ἁγιάζω, means — 1. To consecrate, to set apart to a holy use or to an office, Matthew 23:19; Joh 17:19; — 2. To purify from pollution, either ceremonially, Hebrews 9:13, or morally and spiritually, I Thessalonians 5:23; — 3. To purify from the guilt of sin by a free remission, Hebrews 10:10, compared with Hebrews 10:14, 18. Now, which of these meanings are we to take here? Calvin takes the second, that is to purify from pollution, or to make spiritually holy; others, such as Stuart and Bloomfield, take the last meaning, and the latter gives the rendering, "the expiator and the expiated." This is more consistent with the general tenor of the passage. The subject is not sanctification properly so called, but expiation or atonement. See Hebrews 2:9, 17.

John Gill agrees as follows:

> **For both he that sanctifieth**, Not himself, though this is said of him, John 17:19 nor his Father, though this also is true of him, Isaiah 8:13 but his people, the sons brought to glory, whose salvation he is the Captain of; they are sanctified in him, he being made sanctification to them; and they have their sanctification from him, all their grace and holiness; and they are sanctified by him, both by his blood, which expiates their sins, and removes the guilt of them, and by his Spirit, working internal principles of grace and holiness in them, who are by nature, and in their unregenerate state, guilty and unclean:

> **and they who are sanctified**; the sons brought to glory; they are not naturally holy, nor so of themselves, they are made holy; all that are sons are made holy; whom God adopts into his family, he regenerates: sanctification is absolutely necessary to their being brought to glory; and between the sanctifier and the sanctified there is a likeness, as there ought to be.

Agreeably, Jamieson-Fausset-Brown said this referring to the finished work of Christ regarding His expiatory sacrifice:

> **[H]e that sanctifieth**—Christ who once for all consecrates His people to God (Jude 1, bringing them nigh to Him as the consequence) and everlasting glory, by having consecrated Himself for them in His being made "perfect (as their expiatory sacrifice) through sufferings" (Hebrews 2:10; 10:10, 14, 29). God in His electing love, by Christ's finished work, *perfectly* sanctifies them to God's service and to heaven *once for all:*

Even A. T. Robertson said of this that "Jesus is the sanctifier (Hebrews 9:13; 13:12)."

Other passages of Scripture could be presented with comments to support *judicial* sanctification or that the chosen people of God were sanctified in the finished work of Christ. This shows that a rich legacy is robbed from the Lord by omitting this, along with *eternal* sanctification, when studying the doctrine of sanctification. The Lord willing, in our next podcast we will turn our attention to the *experimental* side of sanctification, but our time is up for today. Farewell.

Salvation—Sanctification (7TH)

(Today we will begin study the *experimental* aspect of sanctification in the life of the believer as he lives here on earth. We will begin looking at the new birth in this lesson.)

In our previous studies on the subject of sanctification we presented the aspects of *eternal* and *judicial* sanctification. These characteristics of sanctification are often ignored in discussing this topic. As stated before, "a rich legacy is robbed from the Lord by omitting" these vital issues. Nevertheless, we now turn our attention to the *experimental* or *experiential* phase of sanctification. In the first two features of sanctification the child of grace is totally passive and does not contribute anything to his sanctification, but with this feature he is active and in part passive at the same time. In other words, the regenerated child of grace does not sanctify himself independently from the inward working of the Holy Spirit. Equally, it should be

obvious that the providence of God contributes greatly to the sanctification of the believer. This is because for him to be born again and made alive spiritually his pedigree must be preserved so that he will be born to be the person that he is. Furthermore, he must be kept alive not only until the time of his regeneration but afterwards as well, so that he will fulfill his ministry and/or calling as he lives out his life on the earth. The language of J. C. Philpot is delightful in addressing this matter regarding Jude 1.

> What a mercy it is for God's people that before they have a vital union with Christ, before they are grafted into him experimentally— they have an eternal, immanent union with him before all worlds. It is this eternal union that brings them into time existence. It is by virtue of this eternal union that they come into the world at such a time, at such a place, from such parents, under such circumstances, as God has appointed. It is by virtue of this eternal union that the circumstances of their time-state are ordained. By virtue of this eternal union they are preserved in Christ before they are called; they cannot die until God has brought about a vital union with Christ. Whatever sickness they may pass through, whatever injuries they may be exposed to, whatever perils assault them on sea or land, die they will not, die they cannot, until God's purposes are executed in bringing them into a vital union with the Son of his love. Thus, this eternal union watched over every circumstance of their birth, watched over their childhood, watched over their manhood, watched over them until the appointed time and spot, when "the God of all grace," according to his eternal purpose, was pleased to quicken their souls, and thus bring about an experimental union with the Lord of life and glory. *Through Baca's Vale*, "January 11."

Much could be written regarding this but I will simply leave you to contemplate on the providence of God to this time, as well as the future, regarding your own life for your personal edification knowing that "he which hath begun a good work in you will perform *it* until the day of Jesus Christ," Philippians 1:6. With this being said, we will begin the *experimental* phase of sanctification with the new birth.

It is self-evident from the Scriptures that the new birth produces a change in the life of an individual. I John 5:4-5 says, "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, *even* our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?"

Notice that it did not say that "whatsoever is born of God" *ought* or *should* overcome the world. Too often this is what is preached from such verses, but the Word of God plainly states that he that is born of God overcomes the world. Additionally, it is to be noted that this verse does not teach that the one born of God sometimes overcome

the world, but according to the verb tense he that is born of God habitually overcomes the world. It is "overcometh." While the Greek verb tense is present active indicative, the "th" on the end of the word overcome equally testifies in the English to the fact that overcoming is a way of life or, as stated above, "habitually overcomes the world." This does not mean that the believer always does that which is right, nor does it mean that he does not sin. As recorded in I John 1:8, 10, the believer is not only guilty of committing sin in the past, but he currently has sin. Though a believer, he is a sinner. Romans chapter seven clearly outlines the struggles of a child of grace as he lives in this world. Even Galatians 5:17 testifies to this battle by proclaiming that not only does the "flesh lusteth against the Spirit," but the Spirit lusteth "against the flesh" so that we "cannot do the things that" we "would." In other words, we not only do not live as godly as we would because of our sinful flesh, but we do not go into the depths of sin that we would because of the Spirit of God that dwells and works within us. Here we must be clear. We cannot identify how much one may falter or overcome. We are individuals and the Lord in His providence does not deal identically with each child of grace. Thankfully, the Lord does not allow each of us to be tried as Job was nor live as Manasseh did prior to his conversion. However, after the Lord changed the heart of Manasseh, he "humbled himself greatly before" God, "prayed," "took away the strange gods, and the idol out of the house of the LORD," "repaired the altar of the LORD, and sacrificed thereon peace offerings and thank offerings, and commanded Judah to serve the LORD God of Israel," II Chronicles 33:12-16. In other words, after he was "born of God" he overcame the world. Likewise, every child of grace overcomes the world.

It should be pointed out that the reason one overcomes the world is not because the believer is strong in himself or has more intelligence or spirituality than others. I John does not say that "the victory that overcometh the world" is because the individual is superior to another in some special way. No. It says, "this is the victory that overcometh the world, *even* our faith." In other words, the faith given to us by God (Ephesians 2:8) is not a dead and inactive faith; it is the fruit of the Spirit, Galatians 5:22. Living or godly faith is not dead. It produces works; it overcomes, see James 2:17-26. Additionally, as testified in I John 4:4 it is "because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." Yes, we (the believer; the sheep) overcome the world, but it is because of the Spirit of God working in us. This is what God declared in Philippians 2:12-13: "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure." This is often referred to in theology as the responsibility of man and the sovereignty of God.

Often the question is asked, "How do we know where the sovereignty of God begins or stops and where the responsibility of man begins or stops?" While the Scriptures

declare that both are true, I do not believe man is wise enough to answer this question. Theologians often become entangled in theological controversies discussing the pros and cons of each proposition and, in my opinion, produce more confusion and division than answering the questions. Certainly, wisdom does not stop with me, but I like to try to explain this with the example of making biscuits. Depending on the recipe of the individual, allow me to supply the following ingredients: flour, milk, baking powder, egg, shorting, and salt. Obviously, no one ingredient will produce a biscuit. All of the ingredients are to be mixed together properly and cooked to produce biscuits. After the ingredients are mixed together we are unable to say where the flour stops and the egg begins, or where the milk begins and the baking powder ends; in fact, we are unable to determine where any ingredient begins or ends. Equally, it takes all of the ingredients working together to produce the finished or final product. Likewise, it is with the responsibility of man and the sovereignty of God. Man is to read, study, believe, and obey the Scriptures and as God works in His providential dealings with man, he (the man) overcomes and obtains the victory. When man sins, the fault is his and when man is blessed to overcome it is "because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world," I John 4:4.

Too often one focuses on either the responsibility of man on the one hand or the sovereignty of God on the other. But we must constantly remind ourselves that God is not going to read the Bible for us; neither is He going to shove our nose into obeying His Word. True, He may chasten us so that we realize that we are to keep His commandments and prove our love to the brethren accordingly. See I John 5:2. The truth of the matter is that it is not an either or situation; it is both (that is, the sovereignty of God and the responsibility of man) working together. It is expressed well in John 14:21, 23; 15:4-5: "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye *are* the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing."

Dear child of grace, quit trying to figure out how it is that God works in us the willing and doing "of *his* good pleasure," and be busy working out your "own salvation with fear and trembling." See Philippians 2:12-13. (I hope by substituting the infinitives "to will" and "to do" for the gerunds "willing" and "doing" that it gives you a better understanding and meaning of the text.) Also, I might add that in Romans chapter nine, where Paul discusses the sins of Pharaoh and the sovereignty of God over him, the question was raised, "Why doth he (that is, God—JKB) yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?" Instead of giving some detailed answer to distinguish between

the sovereignty of God and the responsibility of man, the Divine answer is "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed *it*, Why hast thou made me thus?" No, the answer resides in God and not in the wisdom and philosophy of man.
We have completed our allotted time for today. The Lord willing, we will continue this study in our next podcast. Farewell.

Salvation—Sanctification (8TH)

(Today we will continue studying the *experimental* aspect of sanctification in the life of the believer as he lives here on earth. We will continue looking at the new birth in this lesson.)

Today we are continuing our study of *experimental* sanctification. In previous podcasts we examined sanctification by God the Father and by the Lord Jesus Christ. Those topics were classified as *eternal* and *judicial* sanctification. In our first podcast concerning *experimental* sanctification we showed that the Scriptures clearly teach that a child of God overcomes the world because of the faith given to him in regeneration. See I John 5:4-5. It is obvious that one must be born again by God in order to live a holy or separated life in this world because man comes into this world a sinner and classified as a child of wrath by nature. This is clearly stated in Ephesians 2:1-3: "And you *hath he quickened*, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." Though this passage is referring to the state of the children of grace prior to regeneration, it unmistakably affirms our condition was no different than that of unregenerated people. This state of being dead in sin originated in the fall. Romans 5:12 says, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Notice that it says that "all *have* sinned." (Emphasis mine.—JKB) Adam was the representative of the whole human race and, therefore, when he sinned he plunged the whole human race into sin. I Corinthians 15:22 equally affirms that "in Adam all die." Also, since Adam and Eve were sinners, they could only produce sinners. Even Job verified this: "Who can bring a clean *thing* out of an unclean? not one," Job 14:4. David also testified to this truth in his penitential psalm: "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me," Psalm 51:5. Yes, man in his natural state does not receive the things of God as testified in I Corinthians 2:14: "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither

can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned." Even Jesus taught us that apart from the Holy Spirit man is not only unwilling to obey the Lord, but he also is unable to follow Him. Speaking to the Jews who did not believe in Him, Jesus said, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life. I receive not honour from men," John 5:39-40. And again He said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day," John 6:44. Therefore, sinful man apart from the new birth not only will not go to Christ, he cannot go to Him. With this truth before us, how is it that man can obey the injunction to be holy or sanctified? See Leviticus 20:7; I Peter 1:15-16. The answer is, "Ye must be born again," John 3:7.

The idea of the new birth is given to us in the discussion between Jesus and Nicodemus as found in the third chapter of the Gospel of John. Christ introduced the subject by telling Nicodemus "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." The Greek word for "again" is ἄνωθεν (ánōthen) and the basic meaning is *from above, from a higher place*. Thayer, in his Greek lexicon, further stated, "Often (also in Grk. writ.) used of things which come *from heaven*, or from God as dwelling in heaven: John 3:31; 19:11; James 1:17; 3:15, 17." It is also translated as *top* when referring to the veil in the temple being "rent in twain from the top to the bottom" at the crucifixion of Christ (Matthew 27:51; Mark 15:38), and the garment of Christ being "woven from the top throughout," John 19:23. And while it is also translated as *first* (Luke 1:3), *beginning* (Acts 26:5), and one other place as *again* (Galatians 4:9), it seems better to understand the new birth as being born above by God the Holy Spirit. It seems obvious that the Holy Spirit is the immediate Agent in the new birth from the context of the passage as well as the concluding statement: "so is every one that is born of the Spirit," John 3:8.

I will not expound on the phrase "Except a man be born of water and *of* the Spirit," at this time to show why I believe that the water is not referring to baptism and that it is merely using metaphoric language denoting the same thing. Just as water is used to denote the Holy Spirit in other places (cf. John 7:37-39), the same analogy is in John 3:5. In other words, we might say, "Except a man be born of water even the Spirit." Obviously, much discussion could be presented in showing the various ideas and opinions of this phrase, but I believe it would be counter-productive to the overall subject at hand to interject such a study at this time and maintain the obvious truth that a person must be born again or regenerated by the Holy Spirit, and that it is at this point in the life of an individual when *experimental* sanctification begins.

John, by the inspiration of God, previously wrote that prior to belief a person was "born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God," John 1:13. In other words, the new birth is not based on natural relationship or because anyone desires it; that is, it is not because a person desires it for himself or

because a person wants it for another individual. The determining factor as to who is born again or born from above is God. Furthermore, note that the new birth is not at faith (belief) nor after (or because of) one believes. Faith or belief is exercised *after* a person is regenerated. Since faith is "the gift of God" (Ephesians 2:8) and "all *men* have not faith" (II Thessalonians 3:2), it is evident that "Salvation *is* of the LORD," Jonah 2:9. But I digress. The point is sanctification begins in the life of an individual immediately at regeneration by the Holy Spirit.

It is important that we understand what is meant by the new birth because the general consensus regarding the word birth is that it is a process like that of a child being born from the womb of the mother. In some instances the Greek word for "bear" (γεννάω [gennáō, *ghen-nah'-o*]) is used to denote the birth of a child, but in John chapter three it is used with the idea of a child being conceived or brought to life. In Matthew 1:16, the word is used both ways in the same verse: "And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ." In this verse γεννάω is translated "begat" and "born." In the first instance it carries the idea of conception whereas in the second place it depicts the concept of giving birth. Interestingly, in Matthew 1:20, γεννάω is translated "conceived." Just as there is a point in which a child does not exist and then at conception there is life or a human being in its earliest stage of life. Remember that David declared that he was a sinner at conception, cf. Psalms 51:5. Yes, life begins at conception. Likewise, spiritual life begins at the point in time when the Holy Spirit changes a person from being "dead in trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1) to "alive unto God," Romans 6:11.

I will interject at this point that the word "begat" in James 1:18 is a different word. It is ἀποκυέω (apokueō, *ap-ok-oo-eh'o*) and carries the idea of a woman giving birth. While the new birth as mention in John 1:13 and 3:3-8 is the idea of giving life in the womb, James 1:18 is concept of bringing the life forth from the womb. The first is immediately (instantaneously); the second is a process. The first is regeneration; the second is conversion. Both are acts of sanctification, but the first is performed directly by God while the second is generally by the instruments of various means of God. (The Lord willing we will discuss this further in detail in future podcasts.) Since the general idea in Christianity is that the new birth is produced by various means used by man, we desire to enlarge on the subject to demonstrate that regeneration or the birth from above is performed alone by the Holy Spirit.

We saw from John 1:13 and 3:3-8 that this birth is by God the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, we find that prior to regeneration that man is "dead in trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1), does not receive "the things of the Spirit of God" (I Corinthians 2:14), "enmity against God," and "cannot please God," Romans 8:7-8. In other words, there is nothing that man can do (for himself or for another) to cause him to be born from above. It is done immediately by the Holy Spirit of God. It is evident that a person that is dead to spiritual things cannot hear and understand the gospel,

exercise a faith that he does not have, or "please God" under any condition. Even his prayer and sacrifice to God is a disgrace and an abomination to Him, Proverbs 15:8; 21:27; 28:9. Yes, at one moment such a person is dead in sin and the next moment he is alive unto God. Again we distinguish between regeneration and conversion. Regeneration is when a person is made alive unto God; conversion is a process whereby changes are being performed in the life of an individual similar to the germination of a seed or the growth of a child after birth. Regeneration is performed solely by the Holy Spirit; conversion is by various means working effectually in the life of a child of grace by the Holy Spirit. While it may be that with some instances the work of regeneration and the initial stages of conversion may happen simultaneously as with the apostle Paul, it may be that the new birth takes place at one moment in time and conversion will begin at a later date. However, since the new birth is the inward work of the Holy Spirit, it is likely that we are unable to identify the exact moment it takes place. Take the example of Paul. Can we really identify the moment of his regeneration? Was it when the light from heaven shined about him, or when he fell to the earth? Was it when he heard the voice speaking to him the first time or the second or third time? In other words, can we really recognize when Paul was regenerated? We can say that it took place on the road to Damascus (though some people argue that it was at some time prior to this) but beyond this we must remain silent. We know that at one instant Paul was "dead in trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1) and the next moment he was delivered "from the power of darkness, and hath translated ... into the kingdom" of the dear Son of God, Colossians 1:13.

Nevertheless, our time is up for today. Farewell.

Salvation—Sanctification (9TH)

(Today we will continue studying the *experimental* aspect of sanctification in the life of the believer as he lives here on earth. We will briefly discuss *perfectionism* and *progressive sanctification* in this lesson.)

Previous lessons were devoted to the truth that experimental sanctification begins with the new birth or regeneration. It was further demonstrated that this is performed by the power of God immediately by the Holy Spirit. When we use the word immediate we mean that God does this directly to the individual apart from means. If a person is unregenerate he is described as being "dead in trespasses and sins," (Ephesians 2:1) and in this natural state he cannot receive "the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned," I Corinthians 2:14. Since the gospel is a spiritual matter, clearly a person must first be born again before he can hear the gospel or exercise

faith. Remember that faith is a fruit of the Spirit and not a product of a dead sinner. However, after a person is regenerated he can hear the gospel and exercise faith; this is conversion.

Some people combine regeneration and conversion but I believe it is needful to separate the two to prevent confusion and better understand the workings of God. Yes, it may be that the Lord will perform both initially when a person is born from above. Far be it from us to put the Lord in a bottle and say that He must always work in a specific way. I believe our forefathers were wise in saying that the Lord "worketh when, and where, and how He pleaseth." (From the "*1689 London Baptist Confession,*" Chapter 10, Article 3.) Nevertheless, from our side of viewing things we can only determine if a person is regenerated by the work of conversion. This is how Paul described it regarding the Thessalonian saints: "Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God. For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake. And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost: So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia," I Thessalonians 1:4-7. The Lord Jesus affirmed this same principle when speaking of false prophets: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither *can* a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them," Matthew 7:15-20.

Before looking at sanctification more specifically, I will briefly address two subjects: "progressive sanctification" and what is known as "perfectionism." I will speak to the latter subject first. Though there are various forms of perfectionism, the basic idea is that the Christian can live without sinning. Some affirm that the overall way of life of a person is sinless while others may promote that the Christian may at times be sinless while having laps of sin. If you desire to study the history of this belief I would suggest by starting with the classis book entitled *Perfectionism* by Benjamin B. Warfield. Authur W. Pink also addresses this subject somewhat in his book *The Doctrine of Sanctification*. Personally, I have only met one individual that claimed to be sinless. I reminded him of verses eight and ten of the epistle of I John: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." And, "If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." Immediately, he became irritated and irate and was quiet out-of-sorts, to say the least. When I pointed out, what I considered his sinful behavior, he rationalized and justified his behavior by saying that it was "righteousness indignation." Obviously,

it is impossible to reason with such people and the best things is to follow the directions of Christ and "let them alone" (Matthew 15:14), or do not "cast ye your pearls before" them, Matthew 7:6.

Concerning the term "progressive sanctification," it is essential that we are clear as to what is meant. Too often terms or phrases are interjected in sermons, books, or writings that can be misleading. The term "progressive sanctification" is one such term. Why is this? It is because two different ideas or concepts may be intended by the use of this term. One thought is that it is simply a way of speaking the same things that Peter sets forth in his epistle: "But grow in grace, and *in* the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him *be* glory both now and for ever," II Peter 3:18. The other idea is that as the Christian lives out his life, he dies more and more unto sin and as he reaches the end of his life sin is almost eradicated in him. Regarding this view, I concur with Arthur W. Pink:

> Nor does the idea of a progressive sanctification, by which the Christian "more and more dies unto sin," agree with the recorded experience of the most mature saints. The godly John Newton (author of "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds," etc.) when speaking of the expectations which he cherished at the outset of his Christian life, wrote, "But alas! these my golden expectations have been like South Sea dreams. I have lived hitherto a poor sinner, and I believe I shall die one. Have I, then, gained nothing? Yes, I have gained that which I once would rather have been without — such accumulated proof of the deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of my heart as I hope by the Lord's blessing has, in some measure, taught me to know what I mean when I say, 'Behold I am vile!' I was ashamed of myself when I began to serve Him, I am more ashamed of myself now, and I expect to be most ashamed of myself when He comes to receive me to Himself. But oh! I rejoice in Him, that He is not ashamed of me!" Ah, as the Christian grows in grace, he grows more and more *out of love with himself*. P. 124.

When such terms or phrases can present different concepts, I find it best to avoid altogether using them or if doing so to be extremely careful to explain exactly what is meant by the term. Yet, again, to me it is best and less confusing for the listener to simply avoid the term and strive to use the clear and precise language of the Scriptures. It is for this reason I seek to avoid using the English word "church" and use either "congregation" or "assembly" with speaking of the "house of God" (I Timothy 3:15), and use terms such as "the elect," "the sheep," "the believer," "saints," "the family of God," or other such like expressions to refer to the people of God. Often when hearing a sermon or reading some author I am uncertain what he means by using the word "church." This English word is used to refer to a

congregation, a building, the elect, the believers on earth, believers in general, the elect that have died, the congregation of Israel in the wilderness, the form of worship in the Old Testament or New Testament, Christian religion in general, a denomination, a philosophy, a way of life, and many other nebulous ideas or opinions. As a minister of the Lord, I believe we are to "read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and" give "the sense, and caused" the people "to understand the reading," Nehemiah 8:8. What better way for the Christian to know how he is to be holy as God is holy (Leviticus 11:44-45; 19:2; 20:7; I Peter 1:15-16) or to live perfectly as his "Father which is in heaven is perfect," Matthew 5:48?

It is clear that the apostle Paul did not suggest the idea that he or any Christian "more and more died to sin." When writing to the saints at Rome, Paul said of himself "I am carnal, sold under sin," "for I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing," "the good that I would I do not," "the evil which I would not, that I do," "sin that dwelleth in me," "O wretched man that I am," and "with the flesh" he served "the law of sin," Romans 7:14-25. This is true not only of Paul but of every born again child of grace. This is reiterated in Galatians 5:17: "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." In other words, the flesh lusts or wars against the Spirit preventing us from living as holy and righteous as we desire otherwise, and equally the Spirit desires or fights against the flesh to keep us from going into the depth of sin that we would otherwise. There is a constant battle between the flesh and Holy Spirit that resides in the heart and soul of the child of grace. As long as the believer lives in this world he will have the battle of putting off the old man and putting on the new man. (See Ephesians 4:20-24; Colossians 3:5-13.) Equally, I remind you that I John 1:8 plainly says, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." It did not say "if we did not sin in the past," but "if we say that we have" (that is, currently have) "no sin, we deceive ourselves." In other words, there is no time in which we do not have sin as long as we live in these sinful bodies. I have spoken to godly believers as old as one hundred years and their testimony is that of John Newton, the author of "Amazing Grace," at the age of eighty-two: "My memory is nearly gone, but I remember two things: that I am a great sinner — and that Christ is a great Savior!"

The Lord willing in future studies we will look more specifically to sanctification in the life of the believer as he lives in this low ground of sin and sorrow, but our time is up for today. Farewell.

Salvation—Sanctification (10TH)

(Today we continue studying the *experimental* aspect of sanctification in the life of the believer as he lives on earth. Today's podcast discusses somewhat Romans

chapter six and II Thessalonians 2:13-14.)

Many passages can be presented that teach the duty of sanctification of a believer. However, I would like to direct our attention at this time to the sixth chapter of the book of Romans. Obviously, we cannot give a detailed exposition of this chapter in the short space that we strive to limit our podcasts. Chapter five closes with our justification and how it is that "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound," Romans 5:20. Then chapter six opens (though originally there were no verses or chapter divisions): "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" Then it is presented that believers manifest their faith in obedience to the Lord in baptism with the confession that they are striving to walk in obedience to the Lord and "not serve sin," Romans 6:6. Afterwards, verse twelve gives the injunction: "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof." In reality the verb construction is such that in our modern vernacular it might read "stop letting sin reign in your mortal body." In other words, God commands the believer to live a sanctified life or a life of holiness. The idea that God regenerates a child of grace and leaves it up to him as to whether he walks in holiness is foreign to the Scriptures. (In fact, there is no example of a person in the New Testament living a life sin after his regeneration.) If there is no other place in Holy Writ where sanctification is commanded (though there are many such places), it is clear here. God commands us to live a holy life. But the Scriptures do not leave sanctification as a command that is to be done. The Scriptures go beyond and declare that grace is superior to sin effectual in the life of a Christian. Verse fourteen tells us that because we are under grace that sin "shall not have dominion over" us. Yes, we are commanded to not yield our members to sin but to yield them unto God, verse 13. In other words, our eyes are to be used to behold godly things and not allow them to observe that which is ungodly. This practice is to be followed with all of the members of our body: the mind; ears; mouth; hands; feet; and with all of our other faculties. In reality, we are either a servant to righteousness or a slave of sin. Verse sixteen plainly sets this forth: "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" However, because one is under grace and born again by the Holy Spirit, he is "made free from sin" and "became the servants of righteousness," verse 18. Paul, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, compounds the strength of holiness in the child of grace in verse twenty-two: "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life." Yes, grace reigns in the life of one who has been born from above because grace is more effectual than sin. Notice again the divine injunction, "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace," Romans 6:14. It

did not say that sin *may not* have dominion over you, nor that sin *ought not* have dominion over you, but "sin *shall not* have dominion over you." (Emphasis mine—JKB.) If this is not enough, notice again verse twenty-two: "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life." Of this verse, the English Baptist, Robert Haldane wrote the following:

> Having concluded his triumphant reply to the objection, that his doctrine concerning justification leads to indulgence in sin, the Apostle here assures those to whom he wrote of the blessed effects of becoming servants to God. In the eighth chapter these are fully developed. But *now, being made free from sin,* — that is, emancipated from a state of slavery to sin. *Fruit unto holiness.* — Fruit, in this verse, denotes conduct, and holiness its specific character or quality. When conduct or works are called fruit, their nature is not expressed; they are merely considered as the production of the man. Fruit unto holiness is conduct that is holy. *And the end everlasting life.* — Fruit unto holiness, or holy conduct, is the present result of freedom from sin, and of becoming servants to God; eternal life is the final result.

Albert Barnes testified of the same when he affirmed:

> *Being made free from sin*. Being delivered from its dominion, and from bondage; in the same manner as before conversion they were free from righteousness, Romans 6:20.
> *Ye have your fruit unto holiness*. The fruit or result is holiness. This service produces holiness, as the other did sin. It is *implied* here, though not expressly affirmed, that in this service, which leads to holiness, they received important benefits, as in the service of sin they had experienced many evils.

The comments of John Gill are rewarding:

> **fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life**: holiness is a fruit of freedom from the bondage of sin, and of serving God; holiness begun in regeneration, calling, and conversion, is a fruit of the Spirit; a course of living righteously is a fruit of holiness, as a principle implanted; a gradual increase in holiness is carried on by the Spirit of God in a course of righteousness; and a course of righteousness, from a principle of grace, issues in perfect holiness; "without which no man shall see the Lord" Hebrews 12:14: here it seems to design, that holiness is fruit, or that which is gain and profit to persons, in opposition to sin, in which there is no profit: it is not indeed profitable to God in point of

merit; yet holiness, as a principle of grace, is profitable to the saints in point of meetness for glory; and holiness, as it denotes an external course of life, is useful and profitable on many accounts; hereby God is glorified, the doctrine of Christ is adorned, religion is honoured and recommended, our own credit, reputation, and peace, are preserved, and our neighbour's good promoted.
And the end is everlasting life: as sin issues, if grace prevent not, in everlasting death; holiness issues in eternal life, not by way of merit, but of free gift.

Even A. T. Robertson agreeable wrote of this verse, "Freedom from sin and slavery to God bring permanent fruit that leads to sanctification."

II Thessalonians 2:10-12, speaks about those who will "perish," will not receive the "love of the truth, that that they might be saved," will "believe a lie," "be damned," and live a life of "pleasure in unrighteousness." Contrastingly, God tells us in verses thirteen and fourteen that the regenerated child of grace lives a life of sanctification because it is inclusive in salvation that is appointed to the chosen "from the beginning." Note these verses: "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." It cannot be more clearly stated than that "from the beginning" we were "chosen" "to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." In other words, we are sanctified by the Spirit through "belief of the truth." Is not this what the Lord Jesus Christ prayed for the elect: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth"? Many quotes could be supplied to summarize this glorious passage regarding the various subjects contained in it. However, I will simply quote from the *Matthew Henry Commentary* that this refers mainly to the topic of sanctification. It is as follows:

Therefore were they beloved of the Lord, because God had chosen them from the beginning. He had loved them with an everlasting love. Concerning this election of God we may observe, (1.) The eternal date of it—it is from the beginning; not the beginning of the gospel, but the beginning of the world, before the foundation of the world, Ephesians 1:4. Then, (2.) The end to which they were chosen—salvation, complete and eternal salvation from sin and misery, and the full fruition of all good. (3.) The means in order to obtaining this end—*sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth.* The decree of election therefore connects the end and the means, and these must not be separated. We are not the elected of God because we were holy, but that we

might be holy. Being chosen of God, we must not live as we list; but, if we are chosen to salvation as the end, we must be prepared for it by sanctification as the necessary means to obtain that end, which sanctification is by the operation of the Holy Spirit as the author and by faith on our part. There must be the belief of the truth, without which there can be by true sanctification, nor perseverance in grace, nor obtaining of salvation. Faith and holiness must be joined together, as well as holiness and happiness; therefore our Saviour prayed for Peter that his faith might not fail (Luke 22:32), and for his disciples (John 17:17), *Sanctify them by thy truth; thy word is truth.* (From computer Bible program *Sword Searcher*.)

Again we see that sanctification in the life of a believer is no option. The Lord willing, we shall discuss this fuller in following podcasts, but our time is exhausted for today. Farewell.

Salvation—Sanctification (11TH)

(Today we continue studying the *experimental* aspect of sanctification in the life of the believer as he lives on earth. Today's podcast involves studying chastisement unto sanctification.)

As we continue studying the *experimental* aspect of sanctification I would like to direct your attention to the twelfth chapter of Hebrews and particularly to verses five through fourteen. As we will see, this passage is concerned with the subject of chastisement which relates directly to sanctification. In order to have a fuller understanding of the impact of this section of the Scriptures, it is important that it be set within the context of the book of Hebrews as a whole. While it is generally assumed that the author of this epistle was the Apostle Paul, some believe it to be Apollos, Barnabas, Luke, or even Clement of Rome, but regardless of the author, the essential thing to be remembered is that it is the inspired Word of God. Personally, I often grow weary of writers and preachers as they set forth scriptural truths as if they were developed by the authors. Too often it is presented with such language as "Paul developed," "John enlarged," "Peter presented," or "James set forth" as if the various ideas and opinions existing in the Scriptures were derived by the writers. The truth is these men were instruments of God whereby His divine revelation was given to man by the inspired writers. Therefore, in the final analysis it is not important who wrote the epistle to the Hebrews; the important thing is that it is the inspired Holy Scriptures. Concerning this epistle, James M. Grey said, "While Jewish Christians are in mind, yet there is no positive knowledge as to where they were located, whether at Jerusalem, Alexandria, or Rome. … No one can read it carefully without

perceiving a twofold object, viz: to comfort the Christians under persecution, and to restrain them from apostasy on account of it. The persecution must have been severe, judging by the nature of the temptation to which it gave rise." (Computer Bible program *Sword Searcher*.) To encourage the Hebrew Christians from returning to Judaism and to cheer them on in spite of being persecuted for their faith, the writer confirmed to them the superiority of Christian worship to that of Old Testament Judaism. Different writers demonstrated this by various means, but allow me to present this by the following: (1) Christ is superior to the prophets; (2) Christ is superior to angels; (3) Christ is superior to Moses and the law; (4) Christ is superior to the Aaronic or Levitical priesthood; (5) Christ is superior to Joshua; (6) Christ is superior to Melchisedec; and, (7) Christ (the new covenant) is superior to the old covenant. Our text (Hebrews 12:5-14) reminds the suffering Hebrew saints that their persecution was not a product of useless suffering, but in the providence of God it was ordained by God so that they would "be partakers of his holiness," Hebrews 12:10, 14. With this, it is essential that we have a proper understanding of chastisement so that we may better understand the overall providential workings of God in the lives of His people for their sanctification.

Too often when the subject of chastisement is considered it is thought of as a form of punishment for wrong-doing or sin. However, this is not always the case. In fact, the essential point of biblical chastisement is education. The Greek verb is παιδεύω (paideúō, *pahee-dyoo'-o*) and has the basic meaning "to train up a child, i.e. educate, or discipline," and the Greek noun is παιδεία (paideía, *pahee-di'-ah*) and means "tutorage, i.e. education or training; by implication, disciplinary correction." Notice how the verb is used in other places of the Scriptures. "And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds," Acts 7:22 (learned). "I [Paul—JKB] am verily a man *which am* a Jew, born in Tarsus, *a city* in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, *and* taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day," Acts 22:3 (taught). "Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme," I Timothy1:20 (learn). "In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth," II Timothy 2:25 (instructing). "Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world," Titus 2:12 (teaching). The following are examples of the noun. "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," Ephesians 6:4 (nurture). "All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness," II Timothy 3:16 (instruction). Therefore, these verses clearly show that the idea of chastisement is more than punishment for wrong-doing; it is for the purpose of education and

correction so that we are on the right path. This is exactly what the writer of Hebrews had in mind when he writes that their suffering for their faith was also used by the Lord for their sanctification so that they were "partakers of his holiness," (Hebrews 12:10). In other words, in the providence of the Lord their being persecuted for their faith was chastisement "unto children" of God. In fact, Proverbs 3:11-12 was quoted: "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." Furthermore, we are told that the Lord chastens those that He loves, that every son of God is chasten, and if one does not receive chastisement he is a bastard and not a son of God. Then we are instructed that in the providence of God each child of grace is chastened so that we are "partakers" of the "holiness" of God, or for our sanctification. In fact, we are additionally told that without holiness (sanctification) we shall not see the Lord, Hebrews 12:14. Sanctification is not an option; sanctification is inclusive of the providential workings of God in the live of each child of grace. Note the words of John Gill as he summarized this.

> All men are not the objects of God's love, only a special people, whom he has chosen in Christ; for whom he has given his Son, when they were sinners and enemies; whom he quickens and calls by his grace, justifies, pardons, and accepts in Christ; and whom he causes to love him; these he loves with an everlasting and unchangeable love, and in a free and sovereign way, without any regard to any motive or condition in them. Now these are chastened by him, and loved while they are chastened; their chastening is in love, as appears from the nature of God's love to them, which changes not; from the nature of chastening itself; which is that of a father; from the divine supports granted under it; from the ends of it, which are, among others, that they might be more and more partakers of holiness, and not be condemned with the world; and from the issue of it, which is a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

Again, I remind you that the Hebrew saints were not practicing sin whereby the Lord chastened them. No. It was not for wrong-doing whereby they were being chastened. They believed the Christian faith and turned from the Old Testament Judaic worship. They were being persecuted for their faith. In this, the Lord directs their attention to the providential dealings in their lives showing how it is "that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose," Romans 8:28. Yes, beloved; often things come our way and it appears to be of no purpose to us, but thank the Lord that the trial of our faith is "much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ," I Peter 1:7. Yes, we are elected "according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of

the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ," I Peter 1:2. Our sanctification is not something left up to us alone, but is part of our salvation that begins experimentally at our new birth and continues throughout our lives as we live on this earth.

When we say that sanctification is not something left up to us alone, we do not mean that we are inactive and that we are to wait until the Lord zaps us with a sudden impulse to do as He commands. No, we are to live in obedience to the gospel after our regeneration. Colossians 1:13 speaks of our regeneration whereby God "delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son." As stated in previous podcasts, it is only by the power of God that we are delivered out of "the power of darkness" and translated "into the kingdom of his dear Son." Afterwards, the gospel is to open our eyes, *and* to turn us "from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me," Acts 26:18. Note God delivers us "out of the power of darkness" and translates "into the kingdom of his dear Son." The gospel is "to turn" us "from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God." The one is "***out of***" and "***into***"; the other is "***from***" darkness and Satan "***unto***" God. It is by the gospel that we receive experimentally the "forgiveness of sins, and" the "inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith." Again as stated in a previous podcast, our Lord prayed for this in John 17:17: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."

The Lord willing we will look into this further in future studies, but our time is up for today. Farewell.

Salvation—Sanctification (12TH)

(Today we continue studying the *experimental* aspect of sanctification in the life of the believer as he lives on earth. Today's podcast involves additional comments on progressive sanctification in preparation for the Christian's growth in grace.)

I agree with Arthur Pink when he wrote, "Nor does the idea of a progressive sanctification, by which the Christian 'more and more dies unto sin,' agree with the recorded experience of the most mature saints." However, the Scriptures teach that the child of grace is to "grow in grace, and *in* the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," II Peter 3:18. There are many such like passages that encourage us to develop and mature in the salvation of God. Equally, there are many verses that clearly tell us that the believer will increase in his service in the kingdom of God. Nevertheless, allow me to remind you of the doctrine of progressive sanctification that teaches that the sinner "dies more and more unto sin" as he lives out his life on earth. We quoted Arthur Pink in an earlier podcast whereby he denounced this and

quoted John Newton as rejecting the idea of becoming less sinful in his flesh as he grew older. The Strict and Particular Baptist, John Kershaw (1792-1870), in his autobiography, spoke of a godly minister of his denomination, John Hurst, of Bacup, commenting on this view of progressive sanctification. It is as follows:

> [A]s to the doctrine of progressive sanctification. He said the old man of sin, as some affirm, does not get better and better, but will remain the old man of sin as long as we are in the body. "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these two are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would:" "What shall ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the company of two armies," the flesh and the Spirit. The old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, will be the Christian's plague while in this vile body. The new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, will fight against the old man, until grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life. *The Autobiography of an Eminent Lancashire Preacher*, p. 37.

Commenting on II Peter 3:18, in his devotional entitled *Through Baca's Vale*, J. C. Philpot wrote the following for "January 2":

> Growth is the sure mark of life. We see this in vegetation, in the animal creation, in the growth of our own bodies, and of every other thing in which there is life. Where, then, there is the life of God in the soul, there will be a growth in that life. Paul says to the Thessalonian Church—"We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fit, because your faith grows exceedingly" (2 Thess. 1:3); and Peter says, "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." There is "an increasing in the knowledge of God" (Col. 1:10), and "a coming in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13). It was for this increasing knowledge of the Son of God that Paul stretched every desire of his soul when he followed after, if that he might apprehend that for which also he was apprehended of Christ Jesus; and thus reaching forth unto those things which were before, he pressed toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus (Phil. 3:12-14). This is not what is called 'progressive sanctification', as if the flesh got holier and holier, for that is still ever "the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;" but this is a growth of that "new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." After this growth in grace, this closer conformity to the image of Christ, should we ever be striving with all the powers of our soul; not satisfied with a low and

> lean state before God, but with unceasing prayer and supplication, begging of the Lord that we might be "filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, that we might walk worthy of the Lord, unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God" (Colossians 1:9, 10). Pp. 3-4.

Again in his devotional for "March 19," commenting on John 3:6, he gave the following:

> There is no promise made that we shall be set free in this life from the indwelling and the inworking of sin. Many think that they are to become progressively holier and holier, that sin after sin is to be removed gradually out of the heart, until at last they are almost made perfect in the flesh. But this is an idle dream, and one which, sooner or later in the case of God's people, will be rudely and roughly broken to pieces. Nature will ever remain the same; and we shall ever find that the flesh will lust against the spirit. Our Adamic nature is corrupt to the very core. It cannot be mended, it cannot be sanctified, it is at the last what it was at the first, inherently evil, and as such will never cease to be corrupt until we put off mortality, and with it the body of sin and death. All we can hope for, long after, expect and pray for, is, that this evil nature may be subdued, kept down, mortified, crucified, and held in subjection under the power of grace; but as to any such change passing upon it or taking place in it as to make it holy, it is but a pharisaic delusion, which, promising a holiness in the flesh, leaves us still under the power of sin, while it opposes with deadly enmity that true sanctification of the new man of grace, which is wrought by a divine power, and is utterly distinct from any fancied holiness in the flesh, or any vain dream of its progressive sanctification. P. 107.

Though I have supplied two devotions by Philpot concerning the erroneous scheme of progressive sanctification, I believe the following also is helpful to give a fuller explanation of what is involved in the struggles and battles of a child of grace in his life of sanctification. This, too, is from his *Through Baca's Vale*, for "November 25," regarding Job 28:7:

> Growth in grace is not progressive sanctification and fleshly holiness on the one hand, nor a false and delusive establishment on the other. The narrow path lies between these two extremes. On the one side is Pharisaic holiness, on the other Antinomian security; and between these two sharp rocks lies the "path which no fowl knows, and which the vulture's eye has not seen." From dashing on either of these rocks a living man is kept only by the mysterious dealings

> of God with his spirit, and the internal exercises through which he continually passes. A constant acquaintance with his own vileness preserves him from a self-righteous holiness in the flesh; a daily cross and a rankling thorn keep him from careless presumption. His path is indeed a mysterious one, full of harmonious contradictions and heavenly paradoxes. He is never easy when at ease, nor without a burden when he has none. He is never satisfied without doing something, and yet is never satisfied with anything that he does. He is never so strong as when he sits still, never so fruitful as when he does nothing, and never so active as when he makes the least haste. All outstrip him in the race, yet he alone gains the goal, and wins the prize. All are sure of heaven but himself, yet he enters into the kingdom, while they are thrust out. He wins pardon through guilt, hope through despair, deliverance through temptation, comfort through affliction, and a robe of righteousness through filthy rags. Though a worm and no man, he overcomes Omnipotence itself through violence; and though less than vanity and nothing, he takes heaven itself by force. Thus amid the strange contradictions which meet in a believing heart, he is never so prayerful as when he says nothing; never so wise as when he is the greatest fool; never so much alone as when most in company; and never so much under the power of an inward religion as when most separated from an outward one. Pp. 439-440.

With these caveats set before us, the Lord willing, we plan on discussing somewhat that positive element of progressive sanctification that is referring to the growth of the new man in his labors to perfect "holiness in the fear of God," II Corinthians 7:1. Nevertheless, our time is up for today. Farewell.

Salvation—Sanctification (13TH)

(Today we continue studying the *experimental* aspect of sanctification in the life of the believer as he lives on earth. Today's podcast discusses the individual growth of the Christian and that the life of sanctification was included in the salvation ordained before the creation of the world.)

When we speak of sanctification and the growth of the believer in Christ we do not mean that each child of grace will reach the same level of maturity or manifest the same degree of faith in his service unto the Lord. As we are individuals naturally and possess different skills and talents in the physical world, so likewise each Christian has his unique gift and expertise in the kingdom. Too often a believer will look at or compare himself to a fellow-believer and think himself either greatly inferior or even

question his salvation altogether. God warns us against such actions: "For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise," II Corinthians 10:12. The general consensus is that this is condemning those who consider themselves to be superior in their service and think of themselves more highly than others. However, the principle may be applicable to those that think themselves to be nothing and when comparing themselves to others who seemingly are extremely blessed in their service and abound with talents. This is wrong. If there is any evaluation to be done, one should assess his life based on what he used to be in comparison to where he is presently. In other words, we might adopt the sentiments of John Newton, the author of the song "Amazing Grace":

> "I am not what I ought to be, I am not what I want to be, I am not what I hope to be in another world; but still I am not what I once used to be, and by the grace of God I am what I am." (https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/17247-i-am-not-what-i-ought-to-be-i-am)

Yes, the Scriptures exhort us to examine ourselves, especially prior to partaking of the Lord's Supper, so that we do not partake of it "unworthily," cf. I Corinthians 11:28-29. (As a side note, allow me to stress that the passage does not teach that we are to examine ourselves to determine if we should partake of the Lord's Supper or not. No. The text declares that one is to "examine himself, and so let him eat of *that* bread, and drink of *that* cup.") Yes, listen again to the words of John Newton as quoted by Arthur Pink in a previous podcast:

> "But alas! these my golden expectations have been like South Sea dreams. I have lived hitherto a poor sinner, and I believe I shall die one. Have I, then, gained nothing? Yes, I have gained that which I once would rather have been without — such accumulated proof of the deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of my heart as I hope by the Lord's blessing has, in some measure, taught me to know what I mean when I say, 'Behold I am vile!' I was ashamed of myself when I began to serve Him, I am more ashamed of myself now, and I expect to be most ashamed of myself when He comes to receive me to Himself. But oh! I rejoice in Him, that He is not ashamed of me!" Ah, as the Christian grows in grace, he grows more and more *out of love with himself*. (*The Doctrine of Sanctification*, P. 124.)

Yes, John Newton saw himself to be a great sinner, but he also recognized that the Lord made a change in him by the grace of God so that he was not the person he used

to be. Yes, "by the grace of God" he could say "I am what I am," he confessed at the same time that he was not what he "once used to be," and that, too, was by the grace of God. Therefore, dear one, as we study the growth of the believer and the life of sanctification, do not think that we are meaning living a sinless life or that every child of grace is going to appear the same. The life of a believer is a struggle. It has been likened to a person climbing a mountain and on his way to the summit he passes through many valleys and crosses many peaks, but overall from the base to the top of the mountain there is an overall line of upward progression. Yes, the Christian has many struggles and set-backs from the time of his regeneration, but he continues to "grow in grace, and *in* the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" as he lives in this body of sin. As stated in a previous podcast, the Lord adapts each and every experience in life to chastisement so that we "might be partakers of his holiness," cf. Hebrews 12:5-14. With this foundation established, let us look at a few verses that encourage, exhort, or confirm that sanctification is not an after-thought on the part of God, but it is included in His salvation as ordained before the world was. There are so many passages that it is extremely difficult to know where to start and obviously there will be many passages that will come to your mind that I will overlook or simply omit. Nevertheless, please be patient with my inabilities and lack of insight as we endeavor to study a few texts relating to the subject of sanctification. However, if there were no scripture to investigate regarding this matter, the words of John Bunyan are apropos in his essay on practical Christian holiness entitled "A Holy Life the Beauty of Christianity." He wrote as follows:

> They that name the name of Christ should depart from iniquity, because the very profession of that name is holy. The profession is an holy profession. Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord; the vessels, that is, the profession, for by that is, as it were, carried about the name and gospel of Jesus Christ. We must, therefore, lay aside all iniquity, and superfluity of naughtiness, and do as persons professing godliness, as professing a profession, that Christ is the priest of, yea the high-priest of. (1 Tim. ii. 10. Heb. iii. 1.) It is a reproach to any man to be but a bungler at his profession, to be but a sloven in his profession. And it is the honour of a man to be excellent in the managing of his profession. Christians should be excellent in the management of their profession, and should make that which is good in itself, good to the church and to the world, by a sweet and cleanly managing of it. (*Works of John Bunyan*, Vol. 3, p. 313.)

Though it is difficult to know which passage to address at this time, allow me to direct your attention to Ephesians 2:10, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk

in them." This verse clearly states that we are made or fashioned by God and created in Christ Jesus unto good works. Dear believer, you are who you are and what you are because God formed you and shaped you "in Christ Jesus." You were not only chosen in Christ before the world (Ephesians 1:4) but you were chosen for a purpose—to be "holy and without blame before" God. As our text affirms, this includes good works. In other words, when we were elected before the creation of the world we were also ordained by God to walk in good works. You see, beloved, the only reason you are not living like the world is because God determined from the beginning that He would not only regenerate you but He would work in you by the Holy Spirit so that your walk and conduct would not be according to the course of this world. Too often salvation is presented as individual elements or components left to the believer as to whether he will live in them or not. Thankfully, God does not leave it up to us independently to live the Christian life or not. No. God from the beginning, not only chose us for salvation but He equally ordained our lives accordingly so that we reside in His salvation from the beginning to the end. Often the objection is presented that the verse says "that we should walk in them" and not that we will walk in them. However, the "should" has the same intensity as "should" in Ephesians 1:4 and John 3:16. It is the should of certainly rather than the should of uncertainly or unlikely to happen. In fact, the Greek scholar A. T. Robertson, commenting on this said, "Good works by us were included in the eternal foreordination by God." Even the Greek word (προετοιμάζω [proetoimázō, *pro-et-oy-mad'-zo*]) translated "hath before ordained" sets forth the concept that the elect will walk in good works. Albert Barnes said of this, "The word here used—proetoimazw—occurs in the New Testament nowhere else, except in **Ro** 9:23, where it is rendered, 'had afore prepared.' It involves the idea of a previous determination, or an arrangement beforehand for securing a certain result. The previous preparation here referred to was the Divine intention; and the meaning is, that God had predetermined that we should lead holy lives. It accords, therefore, with the declaration in **Eph** 1:4, that he had chosen his people before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy." (Computer Bible program *Sword Searcher*.)
Many other quotes could be supplied to affirm this interpretation of this verse, but I will close with one other from the commentary of John Gill. It is as follows:

> **which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them**, or has "before prepared"; for the preparation of good works to be performed by saints, and the preparation of them for the performance of them; are both from the Lord; God has appointed good works to be done by his people and in his word he has declared what they are he would have done; and it is his will not only that they should do them, but continue to do them; not only that they should do a single act or more, but walk in them; their conversation and course

> of life should be one continued series of good works; but the intention is not that they should be saved by them, but that they should walk in them; and this being the pre-ordination of God, as it shows that predestination is not according to good works, since good works are the fruits and effects of it, so likewise that it is no licentious doctrine; seeing it provides for the performance of good works, as well as secures grace and glory.

This concludes our study for today. Farewell.

Salvation—Sanctification (14TH)

(Today we continue studying the *experimental* aspect of sanctification in the life of the believer as he lives on earth. Today's podcast discusses somewhat the inwards holiness of the heart and spirit.)

As we continue studying sanctification in the life of a believer, we find a plurality of passages that not only teach that we are commanded sanctify ourselves, but we equally discover that the Scriptures make it abundantly clear that the child of grace will be sanctified and live a life of holiness. We have already reviewed some verses that teach both parts of sanctification. Nevertheless, while it is impossible to cover all of the passages regarding the topic at hand, we desire to look at others to stress further the importance of the matter. It is sad (to say the least) that we live in such a time that too many professing Christians live so much like the world that the only reason one might think them to be a believer is only because they identify with a Christian denomination and attend worship on some kind of schedule. The words of John Bunyan are apropos to this self-deception and allow me to try your patience as I provide a lengthy quote from his treaties "A Holy Life The Beauty of Christianity," as found in *The Works of John Bunyan*, Vol. 3, pp. 314-315. It is as follows:

> Those that religiously name the name of Christ should, must, depart from iniquity, because else our profession of him is but a lie. "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie." (1 John i. 6) "And walk in darkness;" that is, and walk in iniquity, and depart not from a life that is according to the course of this world. "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." (1 John ii. 4) The truth that he professes to know, and that he saith he hath experience of, is not in him. Every man that nameth the name of Christ is not therefore a man of God, nor is the word in every man's mouth, truth, though he makes profession of that worthy name. (1 Kings xvii. 24) It is then truth in him, and to others with reference to him, when his mouth and his life shall agree. (Rev. ii. 2, 9;

> iii. 9) Men may say they are apostles, and be liars: they may say they are Jews, that is, Christians, and lie, and be liars, and lie in so saying. Now this is the highest kind of lying, and certainly must therefore work the saddest sort of effects. Thus man's best things are lies. His very saying, I know him, I have fellowship with him, I am a Jew, a Christian, is a lie. His life giveth his mouth the lie: and all knowing men are sure he lies. 1. He lies unto God: he speaks lies in the presence, and to the very face of God. Now this is a daring thing: I know their lies, saith he; and shall he not recompense for this? (See Acts v. :4; Rev. xxi. 8, 27; xxii. 15. and take heed.) I speak to you that religiously name the name of Christ, and yet do not depart from iniquity. 2. He lies unto men; every knowing man; every man that is able to judge of the tree by the fruit, knows that that man is a liar, and that his whole profession as to himself is a lie, if he doth not depart from iniquity. Thus Paul called the slow bellies, the unsound professors among the Cretians, liars. They were so in his eyes, for that their profession of the name of Christ was not seconded with such a life as became a people professing godliness. (Tit. i. 12–16) They did not depart from iniquity. But again, 3. Such a man is a liar to his own soul. Whatever such an one promiseth to himself, his soul will find it a lie. There be many in the world that profess the name of Christ, and consequently promise their soul the enjoyment of that good, that indeed is wrapt up in him, but they will certainly be mistaken hereabout, and with the greatest terror will find it so, when they shall hear that direful sentence, "Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity." (Luke xiii. 27) Christ is resolved that the loose-lived professor shall not stand in the judgment, nor any such sinners in the congregation of the righteous. They have lied to God, to men, and to themselves; but Jesus then will not lie unto them: he will plainly tell them that he hath not known them, and that they shall not abide in his presence.

Remember this is the man that wrote *Pilgrim's Progress* and *The Holy War* and spent twelve years in prison for his refusal to stop preaching at the command of the government. While the quote supplied is somewhat lengthy, the whole article is filled with such exhortations of self examination towards a holy life. I can assure you that John Bunyan was no exception regarding our Baptist forefathers in his dedication to the Lord and in his preaching the gospel. I often wonder what these men would say if they were here today and witness the professing believers of our day. It should be evident that if our lifestyle is inconsistent with the fundamentals of Christian living as commanded by the Holy Scriptures then our testimony and defense of Christianity will be shallow, to say the least, if not ineffectual altogether. The Lord has commanded us to be sanctified in order to witness for the truth of hope within us and to defend the faith. We must seriously consider I Peter 3:15, "But sanctify the Lord

God in your hearts: and *be* ready always to *give* an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." This verse is the classic passage that is used to justify the study of apologetics. For those who may not know what apologetics is, I believe the definition supplied in *Wikipedia* to be a simple, overall, and good description: "**Apologetics** (from Greek ἀπολογία, 'speaking in defense') is the religious discipline of defending religious doctrines through systematic argumentation and discourse." (This Greek word is translated "an answer" in I Peter 3:15.) Obviously, the study of apologetics can be expounded to a larger and more complex system of study, but in the end of the day I think one would hard pressed to discount this clear-cut definition. While we are tempted to dive into the subject of apologetics and explore some of the varied ideas and views involved with the subject, we must force ourselves to stick to our current topic—sanctification. Nevertheless, I believe I would be remiss if I did not point out that the verse says that before we are to give attention to defending the faith and explaining why we believe what we believe, it is essential that we must first "sanctify the Lord God in" our "hearts." No. God did not leave it as a suggestion. He commanded each and every Christian to sanctify the Lord God in his heart. In reality one cannot give a "reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" if the Lord God is not first sanctified in his heart. It is obvious that facts and information are to be acquired through much laborious study to defend the faith; however, we are not commanded to sanctify the Lord in our head; sanctification is to be ***in the heart***. Too often arguments and defenses are set forth "with excellency of speech" and "enticing words of man's wisdom" (I Corinthians 2:1, 4) while the heart is cold, lifeless, "void of understanding." This brings to mind the parallel passage of II Corinthians 7:1, "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." Too often we limit our thinking of sanctification to what is seen by our outward conduct, but these two verses direct our attention to the heart and spirit; that is, the inner man. True, only the Holy Spirit can give spiritual life to a person and we need the Holy Spirit to teach and guide us into all truth, John 3:8; 14:26; 16:13. Nevertheless, the injunction is to us "to sanctify the Lord God in" our "hearts," and to "cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit," and to perfect "holiness in the fear of God." God does not give us the option as to whether such is to be done. And when we call to remembrance our study of Hebrews 12:5-14 from a previous podcast that God chastens each and every child of grace so that he is a partaker of His holiness, what are we to think about such professors who live like the world and are not "perfecting holiness in the fear of God" nor sanctifying "the Lord God in" their "hearts"?

When professing Christians and members of congregations can miss and ignore the worship services for entertainments, sports, recreational function, or simple laziness, how can it be said of them that the Lord is sanctified in their hearts? When people

attend worship in their "casual" attire and conduct themselves in a slovenly and careless way how can it be said that they have a holy reverence for the Lord and His house? I see on social media people who give more attention to their attire and conduct to a wedding than they do in the worship service of the thrice Holy God of heaven and earth. It matters not when or where the congregation meets for worship—on Sunday or a weekday; in a building constructed for worship or a home—the same reverence and respect is to be given to the God of heaven and earth. People (even children) should not be coming and going to the water fountain or from one spot or group of friends to another for personal comfort. (Obviously, there are occasions when disruption is needful for health reasons, but this ought to be the exception rather the rule.) The New Testament worship is more glorious and holy than that of the Old Testament, II Corinthians 3:7-11. Yet, when they were to appear before the Lord He instructed them to be sanctified: "And the LORD said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them to day and to morrow, and let them wash their clothes, And be ready against the third day: for the third day the LORD will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai. And thou shalt set bounds unto the people round about, saying, Take heed to yourselves, *that ye* go *not* up into the mount, or touch the border of it: whosoever toucheth the mount shall be surely put to death: There shall not an hand touch it, but he shall surely be stoned, or shot through; whether *it be* beast or man, it shall not live: when the trumpet soundeth long, they shall come up to the mount. And Moses went down from the mount unto the people, and sanctified the people; and they washed their clothes. And he said unto the people, Be ready against the third day: come not at *your* wives," Exodus 19:10-15. Yes, "shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?" Hebrews 12:9.

We do not mean to infer that dress and décor is encouraged to promote pride and vanity under any circumstance, especially in the house of the Lord. Neither are we advocating that one should purchase or dress himself in clothing above his means. We are saying that we should not give more importance or respect in our dress or décor to any other occasion than we do in the worship service of God.

Our time is up for today; farewell.

Salvation—Sanctification (15TH)

(Today we continue studying the *experimental* aspect of sanctification in the life of the believer as he lives on earth. Today's podcast continues the discussion of the inwards holiness of the heart and spirit together with the superiority of the New Covenant.)

In our previous podcast we were discussing somewhat II Corinthians 7:1 in

connection with I Peter 3:15 with the expressions "to sanctify the Lord God in" our "hearts," and to "cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit," and to perfect "holiness in the fear of God." I would like to direct our attention to the expressions "cleanse ourselves" and "perfecting holiness" as found in II Corinthians 7:1. Though the Greek word for cleanse is not directly related to the Greek word for holiness, it does have much in common. The Greek word for cleanse is καθαρίζω (katharízō, *kath-ar-id'-zo*) and simply means *to cleanse*. This word is used to denote the cleansing of one of leprosy, Luke 4:27; 5:12-13; 7:22; 17:14, 17. It is interesting that at the conference in Jerusalem as recording in Acts chapter fifteen, Peter testified regarding Gentiles who were saved, that they equally were saved as the Jews by saying that God "put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith," Acts 15:9. In other words, whether Jew or Gentile, God, by the Holy Spirit, purifies (cleanses) the heart of those who are saved, and this cleansing is by the faith given to them in regeneration. (See Galatians 5:22; James 2:17-26.) This same word is used in Titus 2:14 which declares that Jesus Christ "gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." (The word is purify.) Likewise, Hebrews 9:14 bears witness to this same sanctifying (cleansing) as a result of the shed blood of Christ: "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (The word here is purge.) Many other such like passages could be supplied to support and maintain that sanctification is worked in the life of the believer in this life as the results of the finished work of Christ and the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit. In these verses alone we see that not only "the flesh" is sanctified but also the "heart," "spirit," and "conscience" are transformed. Yes, we are to not only "cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh" but we are perfect "holiness in the fear of God."

The Greek word for "perfecting" is, too, an interesting word. It is ἐπιτελέω (epiteléō, *ep-ee-tel-eh'-o*) and means basically "to bring to an end, accomplish, perfect, execute, complete." Like the word for cleansing, it is not something done for us or done to us; it is something that the born again child of grace is to do. This particular Greek word is used only eleven times in ten verses: Luke 13:32 (do); Romans 15:28 (performed); II Corinthians 7:1 (perfecting); 8:6 (finish), 11 (perform; performance); Galatians 3:3 (made perfect); Philippians 1:6 (perform); Hebrews 8:5 (make); 9:6 (accomplishing); I Peter 5:9 (accomplished). While studying each of these would be profitable, I will direct our attention to the verse that is in connection with our subject. It is Philippians 1:6 and it is translated *perform*: "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform *it* until the day of Jesus Christ." In other words, God not only begins the work in us by the new birth, but He performs, perfects, finishes, or accomplishes it "until the day of Jesus Christ." In order to attain a more comprehensive understanding of II Corinthians 7:1, allow me to supply a few

quotations from some of the various commentators.

A. T. Robertson wrote regarding cleansing "ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh," "It includes all sorts of filthiness, physical, moral, mental, ceremonial, 'of flesh and spirit.'" And commenting on "perfecting holiness," he said, "Not merely negative goodness (cleansing), but aggressive and progressive (present tense of *epiteleô*) holiness, not a sudden attainment of complete holiness, but a continuous process (I Thessalonians 3:13; Romans 1:4, 6)." Robertson's reference to I Thessalonians 3:13 is apropos to the subject at hand: "To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints." Notice that the heart of the elect of God is established "unblameable in holiness" "at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints." Vitally joined to this passage is I Thessalonians 5:23: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and *I pray God* your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Many other such like scriptures could be supplied to confirm that we are not only commanded to be sanctified outwardly but also inwardly in this life, and that the Lord also works sanctification in the redeemed while living in this world. Again, let us be clear. We do not mean to imply that any child of grace will be perfectly holy and without sin in this life. We have before stated that we are all sinners and that all of the children of God will not reach the same degree or level of holiness. Also we must not become judges by seeking to evaluate just how much one should or should not be sanctified. That is the business of the Lord. Nevertheless, the Scriptures plainly declares that "by their fruits ye shall know them," Matthew 7:20. Equally, the Lord exhorts the congregation to exhort, warn, and, if necessary, discipline the members that laps into sin. (See I Corinthians 5:3-13; I Peter 4:17; et al.) Needless to say, the fear of the Lord is lacking where these things are not found in an individual or a congregation.

Another passage that is vital to the growth of a Christian is II Corinthians 3:18. It says, "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, *even* as by the Spirit of the Lord." This verse is set in the context of the comparison of the Old Covenant to that of the New. The saints at Corinth were reminded that under the New they were described as "the epistle of Christ … written … with the Spirit of the living God … in … the heart," II Corinthians 3:3. Furthermore, in showing that the New Testament economy was more glorious than that of the Old, the Old was identified as "the ministration of condemnation," verse nine. Yes, the Old dispensation, though called "the ministration of condemnation" was glorious, but in comparison to the New Testament it "had no glory … by reason of the glory that excelleth," verse ten. Additionally, we are told that the Old is "abolished," verse thirteen. When we come to our text, God tells us that the born again child of grace not only has an "open face" whereby he knows and understands "the glory of the Lord," but he is "changed into

the same image" of the glory of the Lord "by the Spirit of the Lord." In other words, it is not a matter of "if" the regenerated child of grace is "changed"; it is positively affirmed that the Spirit does "change" him "into the same image" of the Lord. Romans 8:29 plainly tells us that those foreknown (foreloved) by God before the foundation of the world were predestinated "to be conformed to the image of his Son." However, II Corinthians 3:18 declares that we do not have to wait until the resurrection for that to begin but that change begins in this life. It is true that the final transformation is realized at the resurrection and we will be living in the glory world in the new heaven and earth, but we are "changed into the same image" now.

This Greek word translated "changed" is μεταμορφόω (metamorphóō, *met-am-or-fo'-o*) and our English word "metamorphosis" comes from this. A common definition of this word in the science of zoology (for example) for an insect, or amphibian, is the process of transformation from an immature form to an adult form in two or more distinct stages. The metamorphosis of a butterfly is the change from an egg, to a larva, to a cocoon, to an adult. In our verse, from the time of our regeneration we are changed from one glory to another as we live our out lives here below; that is, "from glory to glory." And while this change is by "the Spirit of the Lord," it is not without "beholding as in a glass" or by the truth of the Scriptures. James, in his epistle, refers to the Scriptures ("the perfect law of liberty") as "a glass," James 1:23-24. Equally, Paul speaks of this transformation or change in Romans 12:2: "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." The word "transformed" in this verse is the same Greek word for "change" in II Corinthians 3:18. In other words, it is not an either by the Spirit or by the Word of God; it is both working together by the power of God. As we have previously seen in previous podcasts, thankfully, the Lord does not leave it up to His children to be sanctified or not, but He works in them "to will and to do of *his* good pleasure," Philippians 2:12-13. The reason some are not changed or transformed into the image of the Lord is revealed in the verses following in chapter four, especially in verses three and four: "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them," II Corinthians 4:3-4.

Obviously many good quotes could be supplied by various commentators regarding II Corinthians 3:18, but I will close by selecting a few choice comments by John Gill concerning this verse. They are as follows:

> **beholding as in a glass**; not of the law, but of the Gospel, and the ordinances of it; not with the eyes of their bodies, but with the eyes of their understandings, with the eye of faith; which sight is spiritual, delightful, and very endearing; throws a veil over all other objects, and makes souls long to be with Christ: the

object beheld is
the glory of the Lord; … Though the glory of Christ as Mediator, being full of grace and truth, seems to be chiefly designed; this he has from God, and had it from everlasting; this he gives to his people, and is what makes him so glorious, lovely, and desirable in their eye: and whilst this delightful object is beheld by them, they are
changed into the same image; … now in regeneration … this is the image of Christ; he himself is formed in the soul, his grace is wrought there; so that it is no wonder there is a likeness between them; which lies in righteousness and holiness, and shows itself in acts of grace, and a discharge of duty. The gradual motion of the change into this image is expressed by this phrase,
from glory to glory: … from the glory that is in Christ, to a glory derived in believers from him; or which seems most agreeable, from one degree of grace to another, grace here being signified by glory; or from glory begun here to glory perfect hereafter; when this image will be completed, both in soul and body; and the saints will be as perfectly like to Christ, as they are capable of, and see him as he is: now the efficient cause of all this, "is the Spirit of the Lord". It is he that takes off the veil from the heart, that we may, with open face unveiled, behold all this glory; it is he that regenerates, stamps the image of Christ, and conforms the soul to his likeness; it is he that gradually carries on the work of grace upon the soul, increases faith, enlarges the views of the glory of Christ, and the spiritual light, knowledge, and experience of the saints, and will perfect all that which concerns them; will quicken their mortal bodies, and make them like to Christ; and will for ever rest as a spirit of glory on them, both in soul and body ….

However, our time is exhausted for today. Farewell.

Salvation—Sanctification (16TH)

(Today we continue studying the *experimental* aspect of sanctification in the life of the believer as he lives on earth. Today's podcast deals with the topic of a child of grace being an overcomer as seen in the books of I John and Revelation.)

We have studied several passages of the Scriptures that show that we are not only commanded to be holy but we are also to sanctify ourselves as children of God. Furthermore, we have presented various passages that testifies to the fact that God not only chastens His children unto holiness but that sin does not have dominion over them because they are "under grace," cf. Romans 6:14-22. Also, in a previous podcast it was mentioned that the regenerated child of grace is also identified as an

overcomer. Today, we desire to examine the topic of being an overcomer further.
The Greek word for overcome is νικάω (nikáō, *nik-ah'-o*) and means "to subdue" and is translated "conquer, overcome, prevail, get the victory." Our Lord used this word in His closing remarks prior to His high priestly prayers of John seventeen. He said, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world," John 16:33. However, for our purposes we shall limit our study to the books of I John and Revelation. While this word is used twenty-eight times in twenty-five verses, it is used twenty-three times in twenty verses in these two books.
The epistle of I John is one of, if not the most, challenging books of the Bible. While it sets forth identifying marks of a child of grace that is born of God, it equally categorizes those who are of the devil. Nevertheless, in three of the chapters of this epistle, the Christian is classified as being an overcomer, and throughout the book the believer is described as one who lives a holy and righteous life. Make no mistakes about it; he who is born of God is an overcomer.
In I John 2:12-14, all of the children of God are identified as "little children," "young men," and "fathers." (As a side note, the Greek word for "little children" in verse twelve is τεκνίον [teknίon, *tek-nee'-on*] and is used in I John 2:1, 12, 28; 3:7, 18; 4:4; and 5:21 refers, I believe, to all of the children of God. The Greek word for "little children" in verses thirteen and eighteen is παιδίον [paidίon, *pahee-dee'-on*] and, I believe, refers to either a young individual who is a believer or a young Christian regardless of his age. That the Holy Spirit inspired John to use these different words, I believe, He intended that we make a distinction between the "little children" in these verses.) Regardless, of the age or class in which a regenerated child of God is found (fathers, young men, or little children), he is an overcomer. Note the reading of these verses: "I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake. I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him *that is* from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father. I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him *that is* from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one." Technically, it only identifies the young men as overcoming "the wicked one"; however, the fathers and little children both know the Father that is "from the beginning." Nevertheless, from the overall context it seems that the little children, young men, and fathers not only know God but "are strong," have "the word of God" abiding in them, and "overcome the wicked one." We have a tendency to make excuses for young Christian whereas God does not at this point. True, we would not expect a younger Christian to be as knowledgeable and skilled in the Scriptures as an older saint, but they are not to be excused for living like the world because of their youth.

The overcomer is mentioned next in this epistle in chapter four and verse four. It says, "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." The subject under consideration is false prophets. Here we are told that the children of God that have the Holy Spirit in them by regeneration do not follow false prophets or teachers. Verses five and six say that the world will hear them, but that "we are of God" and "he that knoweth God heareth us," but "he that is not of God heareth not us." This is not because of some superior wisdom or intellect that resides in us that cause us to overcome. No, the only reason that you are blessed to overcome is because "greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." As Philippians 2:13 tells us "it is God which" works in us. Yes, we are to study the Scriptures and know the truth of God and obey the gospel and live "holily and justly and unblameably" (I Thessalonians 2:10) in this world. Equally, each child of grace is to be equipped so that he knows the difference between a true and false prophet, but the only reason that one overcomes is because of the inward working of God in His children. We do not go about each day feeling some pulsating energy electrifying us with a supernatural charge that motivates us in the service of God. We daily see ourselves as the Apostle Paul cried out, "O wretched man that I am! … For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but *how* to perform that which is good I find not." (See Romans 7:14-24) And yet, because of the power of the Holy Spirit living in us we continue day after day, year after year, serving God. Yes, we are not only commanded unto holiness, but the Lord works and perform "until the day of Jesus Christ" that which He has begun in us, Philippians 1:6. May the Lord bless us to say daily with Paul, "Being confident of this very thing."

Next I direct your attention to I John 5:4-5: "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, *even* our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" This passage is too clear and to the point that it hardly needs any comment. Without question God tells us that he that is born of God overcomes the world. Note that it does not say that he *should* overcome the world nor that he *ought* to overcome the world nor that he *may* overcome the world, but it definitely says that he that is born of God overcomes (that is, he does overcome) the world. And while I John 4:4 tells us that we overcome because of "he that is in you" (that is, the Holy Spirit), here we are told that the faith given to us in regeneration is (as James says in his epistle) a living faith that produces good works. (See James 2:17-26.) Furthermore, I John 5:4-5 declare that he that "is born of God" equally believes "that Jesus is the Son of God."

While we must not seek to list various doctrines or develop a list of guidelines as to how much a child of grace is to believe and know, I believe it is safe to say that he will trust in his heart and soul that his salvation is in the finished work of Christ

regardless of what is in his head. While the Scriptures are clear regarding the children of God being overcomers, we must not be guilty of putting each and every individual under our private microscope as to whether he is a genuine believer or Christian or not. No, beloved, that is God's business. We can only teach and preach the Scriptures as given to us and leave the results with the Lord. And, yet, at the same time, as we have seen, there are some things that are obvious and we must not explain them away or ignore them. God closes out I John reminding us that the born again lives a sanctified life: "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not;" (that is, does not practice sin) "but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not," I John 5:18.

In closing please allow me to direct our attention briefly to the overcomer as found in the book of Revelation. The Greek word νικάω translated overcome is used seventeen times in fifteen verses in this book. The majority are found in chapters two and three in the messages given to the seven congregations. Without going into a detailed study we will summarize by listing the promises given to those who overcome. "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God," Revelation 2:7. "He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death," verse 11. "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth *it*," verse 17. "And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father. And I will give him the morning star," verses 26-28. "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels," Revelation 3:5. "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, *which is* new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and *I will write upon him* my new name," verse 12. And finally, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne," verse 21. Then in chapter twelve, we are told that the redeemed "overcame" the "accuser" of the brethren by "the blood of the Lamb," Revelation 12:9-11. Afterwards, chapter fifteen, verse two declares to us of the saints that got the victory (the Greek word for overcome) "over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, *and* over the number of his name." The final chapter (chapter 21) closes out by reminding us "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son" verse 7.

May we be encouraged that our salvation is so ordained by the Lord that we not only are overcomers as we travel in this low ground of sin and sorrow, but that we shall

ultimately be ushered into that glory world where sin, sorrow, and sickness will not trouble us anymore. Our time is up for today. Farewell.

Salvation—Sanctification (17TH)

(Today we continue studying the *experimental* aspect of sanctification in the life of the believer as he lives on earth. Today's podcast deals with the topics of repentance and conversion.)

In our study of salvation, it is likely that the topics of repentance and conversion should have been considered before now; however, it is not our intention in these podcasts to follow a systematic theology or seek to develop some kind of religious system. Since we have been reviewing somewhat the matter of sanctification, it seems proper to include repentance and conversion with it. Often writers and preachers combine these two subjects together and treat them as being the same thing. While there are times when it is difficult (to say the least) to distinguish them, I believe it can safely be affirmed that they are not identical. Also, we do not plan to try to give a thorough study of these subjects but only review them in connection with sanctification as found in the New Testament. Obviously, if we would endeavor to include all of the Scriptures in this study we would find that both the Old and New Testaments would not only agree but that the contents would go beyond the scope of the purposes of these podcasts. Since sanctification is not only a setting apart for special use but also includes holiness, I believe it is safe to say that repentance and conversion fall under this classification. Additionally, it is not our purposes to discuss different aspects of repentance (and or conversion) as to such views as "genuine" vs. "false" repentance, "repentance to salvation" vs. a sorrow or repentance that "worketh death" (II Corinthians 7:10), or other features. Our major concern is that under the category of sanctification God's children are brought to repentance and are converted in this life. It is also admitted that as sometimes it is difficult to determine the distinction of "repentance and faith" it is the same with "repentance and conversion." There are times (I believe) when both may happen at the same time, but still there is a difference to be made as to what takes place. For example, Paul was not only struck down and regenerated on the road to Damascus, he also repented and was converted in his life from a hater of Christ and His people to a believer in Christ and love for the people of God and the gospel.

It cannot be denied that repentance was at the center of the New Testament gospel because John the Baptist and Christ began their ministry preaching repentance (Matthew 3:1-2; 4:17). Christ commissioned the apostles likewise to preach repentance (Mark 6:7-12). When those on the Day of Pentecost cried out, "what shall

we do?" Peter said that they should repent, Acts 2:37-38. Paul began his ministry preaching repentance (Acts 26:20) and when testifying to "certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoics" and to the Areopagus, the highest court in Athens, he told them that God commands "all men every where to repent," Acts 17:17-31. And prior to ascending back to heaven our Lord said "that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem," Luke 24:47. The last messages that the Lord gave to congregations included the command to repent, Revelation 2:5, 16, 21-22; 3:3, 19. In fact, repentance was stressed to five of the seven congregations in Asia. I believe that repentance is an essential part of the gospel, but in today's society we hardly hear any sermon of repentance. Yes, there are sermons about repentance but how many sermons have you heard where the audience was called on to repent? Are we so sanctified that there is no reason to repent? I think not. I am fearful that modern Christianity has become infected with the world system that the idea that anyone needs to repent is foreign to the thinking of the average person. Conversely, when anyone does call on someone to repent of a sin or sins, he is often attacked and ridiculed as being someone who is legalistic, narrow minded, or out of place and has no business interfering with the life of another person.

The Greek words for repent and repentance are the verb μετανοέω (metanoéō, *met-an-o-eh'-o*) and the noun (which is derived from the verb) μετάνοια (metánoia, *met-an'-oy-ah*) and while there may be other words associated with these two, we will limit ourselves to these two. The two Greek words under consideration for convert and conversion are ἐπιστρέφω (epistréphō, *ep-ee-stref'-o*) and ἐπιστροφή (epistrophḗ, *ep-is-trof-ay'*). Though there are synonyms that are spelled differently that mean the same thing, it seems to be obvious that since two distinct words and meanings are used by God in His Holy Scriptures, He expects us to know that He would not have us to believe they are identical and that a distinction is to be understood between the two topics of conversion and repentance. A large study could be given to the use and meaning of these Greeks words as found in the New Testament, but that would expand our purposes of these podcasts. The basic meaning of repentance is *a change based on sorrow, remorse, or regret for sin*, and the basic meaning of conversion is *a change that may or may not be caused by guilt or compunction*. In fact, Strong's definition as supplied by the computer Bible program SwordSearcher defines repent "to think differently or afterwards, i.e. reconsider (morally, feel compunction)," and convert is defined simply as "to revert (literally, figuratively or morally)." While much larger and lengthy definitions may be supplied from a theological perspective, at the risk of being too simplistic, we will consider repentance as being a change of direction based on pain and regret for sin while conversion is simply a change of direction. Either way, from a Christian viewpoint, I believe we will find that both are a result of the inward working of the Holy Spirit

within a born again individual.

Peter and the apostles preaching before the high council at Jerusalem said, "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand *to be* a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are his witnesses of these things; and *so is* also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him" Acts 5:30-32. Obviously, many things can be said concerning these verses, but we will limit our remarks to the phrase "to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." Of this J. C. Philpot, the English Strict Baptist in England, said, "The two go together. Whenever he gives repentance, he gives remission; wherever he grants remission, he bestows repentance. It will not do to let repentance go. Every child of God is brought to repent of his sins, and by repentance to forsake them." (*SwordSearcher*, in loco. Taken from Philpot's sermons.) The comments of John Gill regarding "for to give repentance to Israel" are equally worthy of note: "to the Israel whom God has chosen for himself, and Christ has redeemed by his blood, and whom the Spirit calls by his grace: these being sinners, as well as others, stand in need of repentance; and whereas this is not in any man's power, but is the free gift of God's grace; for though he should give men time and space to repent, and afford them the means of it, yet if he does not give them grace to repent, they never will, such is the hardness of man's heart; Christ is appointed to give this grace to the chosen ones, which he does by sending his Spirit to convince of sin, and to take away the stony heart, and give an heart of flesh." While there are some things wherein I may differ from Calvin regarding his comments on this verse, his overall observations are worth noting. They are as follows:

> Furthermore, we have declared before what the word *repentance* doth signify, to wit, that it is an inward turning of man unto God, which showeth itself afterwards by external works. For Christ giveth us the Spirit of regeneration for this cause, that he may renew us inwardly; to the end that a new life may afterward follow the newness of the mind and heart. And if it belong to Christ to give repentance, then it followeth that it is not a thing which is in man's power. And surely, seeing that it is a certain wonderful reformation, (or fashioning again,) which maketh us new creatures, repaireth in us the image of God, bringeth us out of the bondage of sin unto the obedience of righteousness; it is a thing as impossible for men to convert themselves as to create themselves. Repentance is, I grant, a voluntary conversion, but whence have we this will, save only because God changeth our heart, that it may be made fleshy of a stony heart; flexible, of hard and stubborn; and, finally, righteous of wicked, (Ezekiel 11:19.) And this cometh to pass when Christ regenerateth thus by his Spirit. Neither is this given in a moment, but it must

be increased daily during our whole life, until we be fully joined to God; which shall be then when we have put off our flesh.

Though Calvin referenced Ezekiel 11:19 in his comments, allow me to quote it with verse twenty: "And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh: That they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God."
The comments of the *Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Commentary* regarding Acts 5:31, are also of note. Concerning the phrase "to give" they state, "dispensing as a 'Prince.'" Commenting on the statement "repentance and remission of sins" — "as a 'Saviour'; 'repentance' embracing all that change which issues in the faith which secures 'forgiveness' (compare Acts 2:38; 20:21). How gloriously is Christ here exhibited; not, as in other places, as the *Medium,* but as the *Dispenser* of all spiritual blessings!" Again we see that repentance is not an option left to the will of an individual, but that the regenerated child of grace is brought to repentance by the operation of the Holy Spirit under the preaching of the gospel.
The Lord willing, we will have more to say about this in future podcasts, but our time is up for today. Farewell.

Salvation—Sanctification (18TH)

(Today we continue studying the *experimental* aspect of sanctification in the life of the believer as he lives on earth. Today's podcast continues with the topics of repentance and conversion.)

As we continue our study of sanctification in connection with salvation, we have learned that repentance (and we believe we will find conversion) is a facet or feature of sanctification. Furthermore, it was realized that repentance (like forgiveness) was a gift and work of God and not produced by the power of man. Today we find this supported by Acts 11:18: "When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life." Just as God worked with the Jews as seen in Acts 5:31 ("Him hath God exalted with his right hand *to be* a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins."), now we find that God equally "to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life." It matters not whether one is a Jew or Gentile, salvation in every part is identical for both. Many people quote Ephesians 2:8: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God," and talk about faith and salvation being gifts of God, but few consider that sanctification, repentance, and conversion are equally gifts from God. Too often these are

considered works that man is to do within himself. Yes, the redeemed will be sanctified, repent, and be converted, but it is not apart from the power of God. The comments of John Gill are worthy of consideration regarding Acts 11:18. They are as follows:

> for it is not by repentance that men live spiritually, but by faith in Christ Jesus; nor do they obtain eternal life by it, but by Christ; though true repentance is an evidence of spiritual life, and it begins with it, for as soon as ever God quickens a sinner, he shows him the evil of sin, and gives him repentance for it: "repentance" here designs the grace of evangelical repentance, which is attended with faith in Christ, as it was in these Gentiles, and with views of pardon in Christ, and which springs from the love of God, and this is "unto life"; is a repentance from dead works, and is attended with a life of faith, and issues in eternal life: and it is also a "grant" from God; it is not in the power of man's free will, who though he may have time and means, yet if he has not grace given him to repent, he never will; his heart is hard and obdurate, and no means will do without an almighty power; not the most severe judgments, nor the greatest mercies, nor the most powerful ministry; it is a pure gift of God's free grace, and a blessing of the covenant of grace: and this being given to Gentiles, shows that the covenant of grace belongs to them, as well as to the Jews; and discovers a false opinion of the Jews, that the Gentiles should not be saved; and answers the design of the Gospel being sent among them, whereby the doctrines both of repentance and remission are preached unto them; and opens the glorious mystery of the calling of them, and may encourage sinners of the Gentiles to hope for this grace, and apply to Christ for it, who is exalted to give it.

John Calvin wrote agreeably:

> Luke doth briefly declare in these words what the gospel containeth, and to what end it tendeth, to wit, that God may reconcile men to himself, being renewed by his Spirit. The word *repentance* alone is expressed in this place, but when he addeth *unto life,* it appeareth plainly that it is not separated from faith. Therefore, whosoever will rightly profit in the gospel, let him put off the old man, and think upon newness of life, (Ephesians 4:22;) that done, let him know for a certainty that he is not called in vain unto repentance, but that there is salvation prepared for him in Christ. So shall it come to pass, that the hope and assurance of salvation shall rest upon the free mercy of God alone, and that the forgiveness of sins shall, notwithstanding, be no cause of sluggish security. … For it is a work proper to God alone to fashion and to beget men

again, that they may begin to be new creatures" …

The remarks of the *Matthew Henry Commentary* complement the above sentiments.

> Repentance is God's gift; it is not only his free grace that accepts it, but his mighty grace that works it in us, that *takes away the heart of stone, and gives us a heart of flesh. The sacrifice of God is a broken spirit;* it is he that provides himself this lamb. Wherever God designs to give life he gives repentance; for this is a necessary preparative for the comforts of a sealed pardon and a settled peace in this world, and for the seeing and enjoying of God in the other world. It is a great comfort to us that God has exalted his Son Jesus, not only to *give repentance to Israel, and the remission of sins* (Acts 5:31), but to the Gentiles also.

Many other quotes could be provided to show that repentance, like all the elements of salvation, is a gift of God and that He works it in the life of His children as they live out their life in this world. Again, we want to make it clear that we are not prepared to say to what degree a person will manifest this repentance in their life. It may be that some are like the thief on the cross and come to repentance in their dying hour, but praise be unto God, He will certainly work effectually in each of His children.

Seeing that repentance unto life was granted to the Gentiles in Acts 11:18, a link to conversion is recognized in Acts chapter fifteen. When the congregation at Antioch, in Syria, sent Paul, Barnabas, and "certain other of them" to Jerusalem about the men who came from Judaea teaching, "Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved," they testified in "Phenice and Samaria" concerning the results of their preaching to the Gentiles. In verse three, it says they declared "the conversion of the Gentiles." In Acts 14:27, it is stated that God "had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles." From this it is seen that repentance is not only a gift of God but conversion is equally the work of the Holy Spirit. When we include Acts 20:21 we find that faith is included with repentance. It reads, "Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." Therefore, we see that just as faith is granted to the elect so are repentance and conversion. Though faith is directly given to a child of grace in the new birth (Galatians 5:22), it is manifested experimentally through the preaching of the gospel as repentance and faith. Notice the commission given to Paul by our Lord: "But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; Delivering thee from the people, and *from* the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, To open their eyes, *and* to turn *them* from

darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." Of this Paul said, "Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and *then* to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance." (See Acts 26:15-20.) I think it worthy of note that the Greek word translated "turn to" in the preceding passage is ἐπιστρέφω (epistréphō, *ep-ee-stref'-o*), the word translated "to convert." In fact, from the beginning in the book of Acts it is seen that repentance and conversion is associated with the preaching of the gospel: "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord," Acts 3:19. Obviously, much could be devoted to this verse especially regarding "that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord," but that would extend our study beyond repentance and conversion in connection with sanctification. However, it is without question that our sins are judicially "blotted out" by the Person and work of Christ and, therefore, this is speaking of the being "blotted out" experimentally in our conscious. Truly, receiving such into our soul does provide "times of refreshing" that "shall come from the presence of the Lord."

Though our study of repentance and conversion has gone farther than we thought at first, the Lord willing, we plan to look at least to one other passage regarding repentance and cover conversion a little more in depth. However, our time is up for today. Farewell.

Salvation—Sanctification (19TH)

(Today we continue studying the *experimental* aspect of sanctification in the life of the believer as he lives on earth. Today's podcast continues with the topics of repentance and conversion.)

As previously stated much could be said about repentance and conversion, and we have extended our study of these topics beyond what was originally thought. Nevertheless, I believe thus far it has been profitable especially by showing that these are not only a part of sanctification but that they are not produced without the grace and power of God. There are many other passages concerning repentance that would be profitable to study and it is likely that you have thought about others that I have not mentioned. But at the risk of being remiss I am going to consider only one more passage regarding repentance that is essential, I believe, to be addresses. It is II Peter 3:9: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should

come to repentance." This verse, besides John 3:16, is likely one of the most misunderstood and applied verses in the Holy Scriptures. The common idea that is presented is that God is longsuffering to each and every individual and desires that everyone come to repentance and be saved. While on the surface and taking the text alone and out of context, one might readily come to this conclusion, but there are several things wrong with this interpretation.

From the context we know that Peter was talking about the times in the last days and that they were essentially no different from the times prior to the flood. Furthermore, we are reminded that time with the Lord is viewed differently from His viewpoint than ours. To us a thousand years is a great expanse while with the Lord it is a very short duration. Regardless of when God will destroy the word by fire and usher in the final judgment, it is being kept by Him for the appointed time. In fact, it says in verse seven, "But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." Then we are told that the end of the world will not happen until every child of grace is brought to repentance. That Peter is not including each and every human is seen from the phrase stating that the Lord "is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish."

Who are the "us-ward"? The answer to this question is found in the opening verse of this epistle. It says, "Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ," II Peter 1:1. Clear and simple it states that Peter was writing to people that "obtained" the same kind of faith that he and those with him received. The Greek word for "obtain" is λαγχάνω (lanchánō, *lang-khan'-o*) and is only used four times in the New Testament. The first is in Luke 1:9 where it tells us that the father of John the Baptist, Zacharias, had his ministry appointed to him from the Lord by "lot." The word lot is this same Greek word. The next time we find this word is in John 19:24 where "lots" were cast by the soldiers for the coat of Jesus so that it would not be divided among them. That this was ordained by the Lord is seen in the verse itself: "They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did." Even Proverbs 16:33 says, "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof *is* of the LORD." The third time this Greek word for obtain is Acts 1:17 referring to Judas being chosen by Christ to be an apostle. It reads, "For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry." Here λαγχάνω is translated "had obtained." From seeing how this word is used throughout the Scriptures, it is safe to say that in II Peter 1:1 the word "obtain" equally denotes receving something (in this case faith) by divine appointment. *Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Unabridged Commentary*, simply said of this, "**Obtained** - by grace

[***lachousin***]; applied by Peter to receiving of the apostleship by allotment (Acts 1:17; Luke 1:9). They did not acquire it: Divine election is as independent of man's control, as the lot which is cast forth." (From *SwordSearcher* computer Bible program.) This is in complete harmony with the well-known Ephesians 2:8, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God." And Peter was addressing people who were given "precious faith … through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." In other words, Peter was not addressing individuals who were unbelievers; he was writing to believers and this is the context of the "us-ward" of chapter three, verse nine. In essence, Peter was writing to believers and comforting them by telling them that not one child of grace will be left out and that all will not only be born into this world but each will be brought to repentance before "the day of the Lord" comes, I Peter 3:9-10. In other words, repentance is not left to the feeble likelihood of man; it is part of the sanctifying grace of God that works godly sorrow (II Corinthians 7:10) in the heart of an individual turning him "from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God." (See Acts 26:15-20.)

Regarding, *But that all should come to repentance*, John Gill wrote the following:

> not legal, but evangelical, without which all must perish; and which all God's elect stand in need of, as well as others, being equally sinners; and which they cannot come to of themselves, and therefore he not only calls them to it, in his word, and by his spirit and grace, but bestows it upon them; he has exalted Christ at his own right hand, to give it to them; and repentance is a grant from him, a free gift of his grace; and the Spirit is sent down into their hearts to work it in them, to take away the stony heart, and give an heart of flesh; without which, whatever time and space may be given, or means afforded, even the most awful judgments, the greatest mercies, and the most powerful ministry, will be of no avail.

Though we do not have much time to devote to conversion directly today, we will try to set the stage for the subject, the Lord willing, to be opened up to some degree. We have touched on it in basically dealing with repentance and stating that it too is a work of grace in the life of the people of God.

As pointed out in a previous podcast, the basic Greek word for "convert" is ἐπιστρέφω (epistréphō, *ep-ee-stref'-o*) and simply means "to revert." It is first used in the New Testament is in Matthew 9:22 regarding the woman who had the issue of blood for twelve years. The verse reads, "But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour." Here the word is translated "turned him about." In fact, of the forty-eight times this word is found in the New Testament,

twenty-one times is it translated “turn” or “turned”; therefore, we can safely say that the basic idea of “convert” is to turn. However, we must evaluate this word in light of its use in connection of conversion with regard to salvation and or sanctification. Obviously, a lot may not be found beyond what has been already mentioned in connection with repentance.

Christ made it clear that scriptural conversion is only possible to those whom God has open their understanding of spiritual things. Listen to His words, “For this people’s heart is waxed gross, and *their* ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with *their* eyes, and hear with *their* ears, and should understand with *their* heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. But blessed *are* your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear,” Matthew 13:15-16. For a fuller understanding of this incident, I believe it is essential that we compare this passage with John 12:37-41: “But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with *their* eyes, nor understand with *their* heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.” Though we did not cover such passages as Matthew 11:21 and Luke 10:13 whereby our Lord condemned Chorazin and Bethsaida for not repenting upon seeing the “mighty works” performed by Him in their cities whereas if those works were done in Tyre and Sidon they would have repented; however, we see that conversion, like repentance, is only by the sovereign working of God. In other words, because of the general idea that conversion, like repentance, is commanded it is assumed that it is left up to the individual as to whether he will be converted or not. However, I believe it cannot be emphasized too much that conversion and repentance are a work of grace and not a work of man.

Our time is up for today and, the Lord willing, we will continue our study of conversion in the next podcast. Farewell.

Salvation—Sanctification (20TH)

(Today we continue studying the *experimental* aspect of sanctification in the life of the believer as he lives on earth. Today’s podcast continues with the topics of repentance and conversion but focusing on conversion.)

Today we will continue with the topics of repentance and conversion. We have devoted much time to repentance in previous studies and included conversion somewhat with them, but we shall devote the majority of our comments today to the

subject of conversion. It has been established from previous podcast that conversion, like repentance, is a work of grace and not a work of man, and that unless the Lord opens the heart first man will never be converted. While it is the work of the Lord, it, too, like repentance, is a product of the preaching of the gospel. When the angel Gabriel appeared to Zacharias to announce that he and Elisabeth were going to have a son and that the child was to be named John, Gabriel said that part of the ministry of John's was as follows: "And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord," Luke 1:16-17. Interestingly, the word "turn" in both verses is the Greek word ἐπιστρέφω (epistréphō, *ep-ee-stref'-o*) that is translated "to convert." I believe the words of John Gill on verse sixteen are worthy of note. They are as follows:

> Conversion, which is meant by turning to God, is not man's work, but God's; and is effected by his mighty power, which is only equal to it; but John was to be, and was, an instrument of the conversion of many among the Jews, by preaching the doctrine of repentance towards God, and faith in the Messiah, that was just ready to come: he was the means in the hand of God, of turning many from sin, of bringing them to a true sense of it, and to an hearty and ingenuous confession and acknowledgment of it; and from trusting to, and depending upon, their birth privileges, legal duties, and self-righteousness; and from their gross notions of a temporal Messiah; and of leading them to believe in Christ as a spiritual Saviour, as the Lamb of God, that should take away the sin of the world.

While we might say some things differently than John Calvin's comments on this verse, I believe the overall sentiments are worth mentioning, especially in how he gives all the glory to God for not only repentance and faith, but for conversion as well. Of this verse he said:

> That the glory of conversion and faith, on the other hand, may remain undivided with God alone, Scripture frequently reminds us that ministers are nothing in themselves; but in such cases he compares them with *God,* that no one may wickedly steal the honor from God and convey it to them. In short, those whom God, by the aid of the minister, converts to himself, are said to be converted by the minister, because he is nothing more than the hand of God; and both are expressly asserted in this passage. Of the efficacy of the doctrine we have now said enough. That it lies not in the will and power of the minister to bring men back to God, we conclude from this that John did not

> indiscriminately bring all back, (which he would unquestionably have done, if every thing had yielded to his wish,) but only brought those back whom it pleased the Lord effectually to call. In a word, what is here taught by the angel is laid down by Paul in his Epistle to the Romans, that faith cometh by hearing, (Romans 10:17,) but that those only to whom the Lord inwardly reveals his arm (Isaiah 53:1; John 12:38) are so enlightened as to believe.

It would not be complete to study the subject of conversion unless we consider Luke 22:31-32. It reads, "And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired *to have* you, that he may sift *you* as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren."

I desire to relay a comment that I heard years ago (sadly I do not remember who it was that said it) regarding this verse. The speaker noted that the Lord prayed for Simon's faith not to fail, but if He had prayed for Peter's courage not to fail he would not have denied him. I like to think that there is some, if not much, truth to this. Oh beloved! I wonder how often the Lord may have prayed likewise for us? (See John 17:20.)

Clearly, many things could be said about this verse, but since Peter was already a believer and an apostle of the Lord, this conversion is not referring to some initial conversion. This informs us that conversion, like repentance, is not a one-time thing and that a person may be converted many times about many things during his lifetime.

Next I direct our attention to Acts 3:19: "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord." Without going to great details to prove it, needless to say that it is by the Person and work of Christ that our sins are judicially "blotted out"; therefore, "blotted out" upon repentance and/or conversion is experimentally in our conscience. The indent of this verse in our study is to demonstrate that while repentance and conversion may take place at the same time, I believe it may be affirmed that sequence-wise repentance is first since a change of mind and heart is included in its definition. Additionally, since it is translated "be converted" some might get the idea that conversion is passive, but the verb tense in the Greek will not allow such because both repentance and conversion are in the active voice with the idea of a command. A clearer translation might be "Repent ye therefore, and turn," etc. However, one thing is clear from this verse, like repentance, conversion is not an option; it is a command from the Lord.

In a previous podcast we considered Acts 11:18 showing that repentance was by the power of God and not a product of the works of man. When reviewing Acts 11:21 with this verse in context it is seen that conversion is equally by "the hand of the Lord." Is says, "And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number

believed, and turned unto the Lord." The word "turned" is our Greek word for conversion. In other words, the Gentiles are brought to Christ the same way as the Jews.

As Paul preached repentance to the Athenians on Mar's Hill, so likewise did Paul and Barnabas to the Lycaonians when they endeavored to worship them. They said, "Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein: Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness," Acts 14:15-17. Here again the word "turn" is the Greek word for conversion. For other passages showing that conversion was at the core of the gospel see Acts 15:19 (turned); II Corinthians 3:16 (shall turn). From these and other passages we see that conversion is no small doctrine of the Holy Scriptures.

While we covered Acts 26:20 briefly in a previous podcast when reviewing repentance (Podcast 157), I believe it beneficial that we look at Acts 26:18, 20 regarding conversion. To set the context, we will quote Acts 26:15-21: "And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; Delivering thee from the people, and *from* the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, To open their eyes, *and* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me. Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and *then* to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance. For these causes the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill *me*." In verses eighteen and twenty, the word "turn" is the Greek word for conversion, and when we see that verse twenty says "that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance," it is seen that not only are repentance and conversion joined together but are also a vital part of the preaching of the gospel as commanded by our Lord Jesus Christ. Notice again that in verse twenty that repentance is prior to conversion like Acts 3:19 and gives credence to the idea that sequence-wise repentance also is before conversion. It should be also pointed out that because Paul preached repentance and conversion that the Jews "went about to kill" him. This leads us to ask, is it possible that the reason that we do not preach accordingly is because we recoil at the idea of being hated with life-threatening actions?

Nevertheless, our time is up for today. The Lord willing, we will conclude our review of conversion in the next podcast. Farewell.

Salvation—Sanctification (21ST)

(Today we continue studying the *experimental* aspect of sanctification in the life of the believer as he lives on earth. Today's podcast concludes with the topics of repentance and conversion but focusing on conversion.)

In bringing to a close our study of conversion, there are three other passages that we will consider. The first is I Thessalonians 1:9: "For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God." Obviously, the word "turned" is our Greek word that is also translated for conversion. It is interesting that these pagan idol worshipers upon hearing the gospel "turned to God from idols." However, they did not simply turn to God from idols, but they turned "to serve the living and true God." In our civil society the public normally do not worship and serve what is considered images of wood, stone, marble, or other such objects. What about other idols? Colossians 3:5 informs us that covetousness is idolatry: "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry." It is interesting that we hardly hear a sermon of conversion but a sermon on covetousness is equally a rare commodity. Yes, you may have heard a sermon about conversion, or a sermon about covetousness, but I am bold to suggest that a sermon calling on individuals to be converted or to repent of being covetous is foreign to the average Christian. I agree that identifying a person as being covetous is no easy task. Yet, when the congregation at Corinth was instructed to exercise discipline on the man that had his father's wife, Paul give further instructions regarding ecclesiastical discipline. He wrote, "But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat," I Corinthians 5:11. It is worthy of note that covetousness is in the same class with fornicators, drunkards, and idolaters. (Obviously, this coincides with Colossians 3:5 where we were told that covetousness is idolatry.) While it is extremely difficult to identify a person as being covetous and such actions must be done with extreme care and spiritual wisdom, God commands that this be done. And we cannot expect one to be converted (turned to God from idols) unless the people are taught to do so. Likewise, when the truth of the gospel is believed and obeyed according to the Scriptures, it produces the fruits of scriptural conversion. In fact, the reason that Paul knew that the believing Thessalonians were the elect of God was because they not only heard the gospel but their lives were

changed accordingly. (See I Thessalonians 1:4-10.) We have seen throughout the Scriptures that not only repentance, but conversion as well, followed when the gospel was preached and believed. Sadly, modern Christianity considers conversion and repentance as an option that may or may not be found in one who professes to be a follower of Christ, but this is not the pattern of New Testament believers. From the commands of John the Baptist to bring forth fruits meet for repentance, to the thief on the cross, to the believers throughout the book of Acts, and through the epistles, conversion (as well as repentance) was manifested in the life of the disciples of Christ. Those converted under the preaching of John turned from fifteen hundred years of the religion of their ancestors and embraced Jesus as their Messiah. The thief on the cross turned from a blaspheming thief to a subject of the King of the kingdom of God. Like the Thessalonians, the pagan worshiping Gentiles "turned to God from idols."

Now I draw your attention to James 5:19-20: "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." It is essential that this passage be interpreted in light of the truth of the redemptive work of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is sad that we live in a day when many, if not most, people think that theology is not important, but this is not true. Evidently, much could be written here, but I hope I can be brief with clarity in explaining what I believe. Before the world was, God the Father elected some and placed them in Christ as their Surety, Ephesians 1:4; Hebrews 7:22. Jesus testified to this when He said that He came to do the will of the Father and that was to redeem those that the Father had given Him, John 6:37-40. One of the last things our Lord said during His dying hour was "It is finished," John 19:30. In other words, Christ redeemed the elect. He did not try to redeem someone; He did not make redemption possible; He redeemed. Tragically, most do not believe this. They believe that Christ made it possible for anyone and everyone to be saved provided they will believe, repent, and/or be converted. Furthermore, many maintain that if someone can exercise enough influence on someone he can be redeemed from his sins and be saved from going to hell. Sadly, many who profess to believe in election and the sovereign grace of God practice this philosophy. Obviously, if Christ truly paid the debt for the sins of an individual he will not experience eternal death. Therefore, with this in mind, I submit that the death under consideration in James 5:19-20 is not eternal death. While the word for death has different connotations, the main and obvious meaning is simply physical or natural death. There are times when it obviously refers to eternal death but the phrase "eternal death" is not mentioned in the Scriptures, though the "second death" is as stated in Revelation 2:11; 20:6, 24; 21:8.

Death also is found to describe the idea of separation. Listen to the father of the prodigal son when he came home: "For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he

was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry. … It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found," Luke 15:24, 32.

I am not prepared to say which of these two definitions James means, but I am willing to believe the possibility of either or both. If someone needs to be converted from "the error of his way" he is clearly separated from the fellowship of God and needs to be in communion with Him. Additionally, when considering those at Corinth who where chastened of the Lord for partaking of the Lord's Supper unworthily and were killed (I Corinthians 11:27-32), is it not possible that (humanly speaking) if someone had converted them they would have been spared natural death? Needless to say, the essential thing regarding James 5:19-20 is not what death is under consideration; if a sinner (brother) is in error we should do everything we know to do to convert him from "the error of his way." In other words, though conversion is only by the power and grace of God, it is a product of the gospel and work of fellow-believers. This is the normal means of conversion, as well as repentance.

Lastly, we shall consider I Peter 2:25: "For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls." The word for conversion here is the word "returned." I believe the comments of John Gill display a rich and blessed treatment of this passage. They are as follows:

> **For ye were as sheep going astray**, This is a proof of their being healed, namely, their conversion; in which an application of the blood of Christ, and pardon, and so healing by it, was made to their souls. The apostle has still in view the prophecy of Isaiah 53:6. God's elect are sheep before conversion; not that they have the agreeable properties of sheep, as to be meek, harmless, innocent, clean, and profitable, for they are the reverse of all this; nor can some things be said of them before conversion, as may be after, as that they hear Christ's voice, and follow him; nor are they so called, because unprejudiced against, and predisposed unto the Gospel, for the contrary is true of them; but they are so in electing grace, and were so considered in the Father's gift of them to Christ, and when made his care and charge, and hence they are called the sheep of his hand; and when Christ laid down his life, and rose again, which he did for the sheep, and as the great Shepherd of them; and when called by grace, for their being sheep, and Christ's own sheep by the Father's gift, and his own purpose, is the reason why he looks them up, calls them by name, and returns them: but then they are not yet of his fold; they are lost sheep, lost in Adam, and by his fall, and by their own actual transgressions; they are as sheep going astray from the shepherd, and from the flock, going out of the right way, and in their own ways; and are, like sheep, stupid and insensible of their danger; and as they never return of themselves, until they are sought for, and

brought back: hence it follows,
but are now returned; not returned themselves, but were returned by powerful and efficacious grace: saints are passive, and not active in first conversion; they are turned, not by the power of their own free will, but by the power of God's free grace; they are returned under the illuminations and quickenings of the blessed Spirit, and through the efficacious drawings of the Father's love, unto Christ.

This concludes our time for today. Farewell.

Salvation—Sanctification (22ND)

(Today we continue studying the *experimental* aspect of sanctification in the life of the believer as he lives on earth and his final and complete sanctification in glory.)

There are, I believe, two other topics regarding sanctification that have not been considered and they are (1) our worship in the sanctuary of God, the assembly of the saints, and (2) our final state in glory whereby our whole body, soul, and spirit are fully sanctified. Yes, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is," I John 3:2. Nevertheless, we wish to experience with all the benefits of a glorified being that level of sanctification for which we have longed so many years struggling in this sinful world and sinful condition. May the Lord bless us to pause for a few minutes and consider these topics.

Before looking into the worship in the sanctuary of God, I want to say that my intentions are not to present myself like a Puritan usher moving among the congregation with a long pole endeavoring to bump someone on the head for some infraction of public worship. No, my desire is to encourage, support, and exhort each of us to strive for a more perfect form of worship. Please know that I am equally guilty (maybe more-so) of many of the things mentioned here. I believe there are many who desire to give God the proper honor and respect due unto Him that are so numbed by the world and society around us that we have grown too casual in our worship. I certainly do not pretend to have all the answers but I do desire to encourage all of us to a more sanctified attitude and approach to our worship services.

Since the tabernacle and temple in the Old Testament was the sanctified place of worship and the house of God in the New Testament is the congregation of the Lord (I Timothy 3:15), I believe we can profit by gleaning from the Old Testament worship service. While doing so, please keep in mind that as we see the glorious beauty and demeanor of the tabernacle/temple, the priesthood, the congregation, and worship in the Old Testament that in comparison to the worship of the New Testament the Old

is described as weak and unprofitable, Hebrews 7:18. Therefore, the New Testament worship should be more glorious, more beautiful, more honorable, more sobering, and more intentional than that of the Old Testament.

Some may think it strange to associate beauty with sanctified and godly worship. When David brought the ark of God into Jerusalem and addressed Israel regarding the worship of the Lord, he said, "Give unto the LORD the glory *due* unto his name: bring an offering, and come before him: worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness," I Chronicle 16:29. Later, on one occasion when Jehoshaphat addressed Judah he stated, "And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed singers unto the LORD, and that should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army, and to say, Praise the LORD; for his mercy *endureth* for ever," II Chronicle 20:21. Additionally, the phrase "the beauty of holiness" is found in the book of Psalms: "Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness," Psalm 29:2. Again in Psalm 96:9, "O worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth." This teaches us that our worship is to be beautiful. Yes, it is holiness that is to be central in our worship, but I believe there is emphasis to be placed on our attire as well. To further strengthen this I believe this can be seen when the Lord instituted the priesthood in the tabernacle/temple worship. The garments of the priests were to be for "beauty and glory." Notice Exodus 28: 2, 40: "And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother for glory and for beauty." Then, "And for Aaron's sons thou shalt make coats, and thou shalt make for them girdles, and bonnets shalt thou make for them, for glory and for beauty." Not only were the garments of the high priest to be for glory and beauty, but the garments for the other priests were equally for beauty and glory. I Peter makes it plain that true believers under the new covenant are identified as priest. "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." And again, "But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light," I Peter 2:5, 9. Therefore, since the Old Testament priesthood was for glory and beauty, and it was weak and unprofitable in comparison to the New Testament economy, it stands to reason that our worship ought to more glorious and beautiful in "the beauty of holiness." Furthermore, I believe an argument can be made that we ought to give our best attention in our dress when we appear before the trice Holy God of Heaven and earth in our worship services, and that we ought not present ourselves in a casual way spiritually or physically. People generally dress according to the occasion and present themselves in the most positive way for special events, but there is no other event (in my opinion) more important than worshiping in the house of the Lord. It matters not whether it is Sunday morning or evening, Wednesday evening, or any other day; the congregation is still the same and it is the

same God that is to be honored and respected. It goes without saying that the minister is to set the example because if the minister presents himself in a casual and indifferent fashion the people are likely to act accordingly. Psalm 50:2 says, "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." And Psalm 96:6 declares, "Honour and majesty *are* before him: strength and beauty *are* in his sanctuary." Then the classic passage of Psalm 27:4 testifies, "One *thing* have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in his temple." Even the Lord admonished Job accordingly: "Deck thyself now *with* majesty and excellency; and array thyself with glory and beauty, Job 40:10."

Obviously, to dress-up and to adorn one's self for vain glory and attention is exceedingly sinful and must be avoided at all cost. Fancy showmanship and an haughty conduct must be excluded not only for all occasions but is not to be found once in the assembly of the saints, and if needful this should be addressed by fellow believers or from the pulpit. Also, that no one should be expected to purchase expensive attire beyond their means; however, one should desire to don himself in his finest in presenting himself before the Creator of heaven and earth.

Hebrews 10:19-22 says, "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And *having* an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." Without addressing the different ideas that may be considered with this passage, I believe it is obvious that New Testament worship is under consideration, whether it is public or private worship. If no other passage were supplied, this should be enough to teach us that we are to engage in sanctified worship in the house of the Lord. When people are walking in after worship is started, walking about and talking, greeting others, and looking about to see what others are doing or who is coming in, this can hardly be classified as sanctified worship. It appears to be no different than any other public function. In fact, many public functions have more respect for the demeanor of the audience than many professed worship services.

Allow me to digress and address another caveat; modern technology. Cell phones, iPods, and notebooks containing the Scriptures, commentaries, dictionaries, and other wonderful aids in studying the Word of God are a tremendous blessing. They can be used to record and or broadcast the services and perform other useful tasks. This being said, I suggest that to use them in the audience (especially the cell phones) to replace the Scriptures in the form of a book is often more of a detriment than a benefit. For example, if I am using my cell phone and (assuming that the phone is on silent) it begins to vibrate indicating that a message of some kind is being received, it is going to (1) break my concentration in worship, (2) cause me to wonder what is

the content, (3) who sent it, and (4) what is the message, to say the least. Though someone may submit the argument that they can ignore it, I believe the majority are like me. It is difficult enough to maintain a sanctified worship because of our sinful nature alone besides having to deal with additional distractions. We should do as much as lies in us to not only avoid being distracted but also strive not to distract others.

Additionally, when people go to the theater, sports functions, parades, or some other activity of interest, they normally arrive early so that they will not to miss anything. Equally, they generally remain seated throughout the event lest they miss some vital point.

Beloved, we are not simply attending a public function; we are entering into "the holiest." We are entering into the presence of God. Yes, God is everywhere, but like the tabernacle and temple of old, the congregation of the Lord is His special place. God meets with His saints in the assembly of the saints in a way that He does not show Himself in any other place.

Let me be clear. I am well aware that there are situations when it is essential that certain duties and function are needful to be carried out, especially with infants and aged saints. Nevertheless, we are to enhance sanctified worship; not hinder it.

I regret that our time is up for today. I verily thought I would cover both topics in this one podcast, but that is not the case. The Lord willing, I will conclude the topic of sanctified worship in the assembly in our next session, as well as consider our final and total sanctification in glory. Farewell.

Salvation—Sanctification (23RD)

(Today we conclude studying the *experimental* aspect of sanctification in the life of the believer as he lives on earth and his final and complete sanctification in glory.)

In the previous podcast we saw that sanctification includes worshiping in the house of the Lord in "the beauty of holiness." What better way to edify one another and to fortify the congregation than by conducting ourselves in a godly, soberly, and an orderly way while manifesting by our demeanor that there is no other place in this world that is more important than by rendering our best in service to God? Today I desire to direct our attention to a more positive side of the equation. What better way to enhance sanctified worship than instead of people indifferently straggling in in a casual manner, shuffling about greeting each other, and attending to toiletries and other accessories all the while others are trying to devote undivided attention to honoring and glorifying the Lord than everyone already seated with a "holy hush" and with joyful expressions anxiously waiting to burst into praise with one mind and heart "endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace?" (Ephesians

4:3.) Dearly beloved, how much we rob ourselves of genuine fellowship with the Lord and each other by improper preparation for worship! Furthermore, how much we rob God of the honor, devotion, and praise to the Lord by our casual behavior? It is difficult enough because of the warfare going on with each of us because of our sinful nature, but I wonder how much we yield ourselves to this nature and our enemy, the devil, by our lack of giving full attention to sanctified worship?
Psalm 65:1 says, "Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Sion: and unto thee shall the vow be performed." Note the words of John Gill concerning the first part of this verse as follows:

> Who dwells in Sion, … whose Shechinah, or glorious Majesty, is in Sion; see **Ps** 76:2 ["In Salem also is his tabernacle, and his dwelling place in Zion."]; or else Sion, which designs no other than the church of God, and which is so called under the Gospel dispensation, **Heb** 12:22 ["But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels."]; is the place where "praise" waits for God, that being the city of our solemnities, as well as the city of the great King; and not only a house of prayer, but of praise, where the sacrifices, both of prayer and praise, are offered to God through Christ with acceptance: and praise may be said to "wait" for him here, because it is "due" to him here, as some render it, on account of many blessings and privileges of grace here enjoyed, through the word and ordinances; and because the people of God wait upon him here with their tribute of praise, which is comely in them to bring, and is "agreeable" and acceptable to him; and because it "remains", abides, and continues here; or, in other words, the saints are continually praising the Lord here, giving thanks to him always for all things, **Ps** 84:4 ["Blessed *are* they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee. Selah."].

Some render this instead of "praise waiteth for thee," that it may read "silence waiteth for thee." Commenting on this John Trapp in his *Commentary on the Old and New Testaments* gave the following:

> There is first a deep silence in Sion, and then due praise; a silence of admiration, a silence of religious awe and devotion, such as was afterwards that in the Christian Church, **Rev** 8:1, or a silence of expectation to receive mercies; and a praise, by way of retribution, for mercies received. Or, silence in all other places (not sensible of God's favours), but praise in the Church, where God is magnified: first, for blessings proper and peculiar to his own people; secondly, for preserving commonwealths, and thereby providing graciously for human society; and, thirdly, for giving men all things richly to

enjoy, as in the end of this psalm.

It is without question that numerous other quotes could be supplied to emphasize the beauty of holiness in sanctified worship; however, in order to devote some time to our final stage of sanctification we need to close the curtain on this phase.

As supplied in the previous podcast, our final stage of sanctification is in glory whereby our whole body, soul, and spirit are fully sanctified. It is often considered that the final state is at death. The general consensus (whether Christian or otherwise) is that at death the departed person is in a glorious place enjoying a semblance of life similar to one's delightful occupation or hobby while in this life; for instance, the golfer is golfing, the boater is boating, the farmer is farming, etc. You get the picture. Someone once said that the only qualification for going to heaven is dying. It is generally assumed that everyone who dies automatically goes to heaven. We know that this is not the case. The Scriptures tell us that some will be "cast into the lake of fire" with "the beast," "the false prophet," and with "death and hell," Revelation 19:20; 20:13-15; 21:8. However, our subject-matter is not the judgment; it is the ultimate sanctification of the redeemed. As previously intimated, this is not at death. Please do not misunderstand me. Without question we go to a place that is extremely superior to anything that is found in this life. The Scriptures make it plain that "to depart, and to be with Christ … is far better," Philippians 1:23. See also II Corinthians 5:8.) The question might be raised, "If one is with Christ in glory, how can anything be superior to that?" When one dies, it is only the spirit or soul of man that is with Christ, Ecclesiastes 12:7, "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." Yes, indeed this state of life far surpasses anything experienced in this world. But we must remember that Christ did not simply redeem the soul; He redeemed the body, too. It is the body that is to be equally sanctified in glory and that takes place at the resurrection. Because of the fall we not only sinned in the past, but we have sin in our lives while we live in this flesh, Romans 7:18; I John 1:8, 10. Likewise, because of sin, at death the body returns to the earth. However, the Bible tells us that the corruptible body is to be raised incorruptible, the dishonorable body is to be raised in glory, the weak body is to be raised in power, the natural body is to be raised a spiritual body, and the "mortal *must* put on immortality," I Corinthians 15:42-53. Yes, beloved, the body is undergoing a change. That body of flesh that is a constant drag and hinders me from living the sanctified life that I desire is going to be sanctified and made holy and pure so that my entire being will be totally free to devote every particle of existence to a sinless sacrifice to the praise and honor of God. Think of it, dear child of grace. Nothing is going to encumber your devotion to the trice Holy God, the Creator of heaven and earth. No, it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we shall be like Him; that is, like Jesus, I John 5:2. And yet, we know that what is put in the grave and disintegrate

to dust will come forth pure and holy and with no sin. Like a grain planted in the ground; like distinction between the flesh of men, beasts, birds, and fishes; like distinction between the glory of the sun, moon, and stars; "so also is the resurrection of the dead," I Corinthians 15:35-42. We shall see our Redeemer with our eyes in our sanctified and glorified flesh for ourselves, Job 19:25-27. Our dead bodies shall live, Isaiah 26:19. We who "sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake," Daniel 12:2. Glory "shall be revealed in us," Romans 8:18. If this were not so Christ would have told us, John 14:2. Again, I say unto you, think about it. Though you have departed out of this world and are with Christ in spirit (Philippians 1:23), in the realm of angels and all the host of heaven, you are not complete. You do not have your house, your body, II Corinthians 5:1-8. But you will. And it will not be any hindrance to your service. It will be totally sanctified forever. There will not be any danger of losing it. You will be "holy and without blame" in every aspect (Ephesians 1:4), not only positionally and judicially, but in reality. And if for some reason you happen to be alive when the Lord returns to the earth (Job 19:25) you will be changed; changed from a sinful individual to a sinless and sanctified being. It will happen faster than you can blink. Scripture says "in the twinkling of an eye," I Corinthians 15:52. "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory?" (I Corinthians 15:54-55.) Dear child of grace, this is what God set you apart for in eternity past; this is what He ordained when He set Christ to be your Surety; this is the purpose of Christ perfecting forever you who are sanctified (Hebrews 10:14); this is the purpose of bringing you into the world, watching over and preserving you until your new birth; this is the purpose of giving you saving faith; this is the purpose of sending the gospel to you so that you might repent and be converted and live the life of an overcomer; this is the purpose of eradicating your unholy existence and causing you to "be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, *and* prepared unto every good work," (cf. II Timothy 2:21); this is the purpose of changing your "vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto" the "glorious body" of Christ; this is the purpose of your sanctification from the beginning to the end.

May this truth light a fire in us that will cause our worship services to be a peon of praise to match that of Psalm 29:2, "Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness."

That's the message; farewell.

Salvation—Perseverance (1ST)

(Today we begin studying the doctrine of perseverance. Too often this is set in opposition to preservation when in reality both are the two sides of the same coin.)

Some might wonder why we would consider the subject of perseverance when we devoted so much time to the subject of sanctification. While the two subjects do have much in common, there are aspects of each that differ somewhat and view the life of a Christian from different facets. In reality there are other topics that view similar phases of salvation under various subject matters. Examples of this can be seen regarding the Person and work of Christ under related themes as redemption, propitiation, justification, reconciliation, adoption, and other suchlike subjects. In studying all of the different aspects of an overall subject-matter one can obtain a more complete understanding of the overall area under discussion. With this in mind we will take up the doctrine of perseverance.

Some have an aversion to the doctrine of perseverance and prefer the doctrine of preservation. This is often because many are unaware of the meaning and intent of the terms and believe perseverance and preservation are opposites when in reality both are two sides of the same coin. Yes, God preserves His people and none shall be lost. However, those that He effectually calls by His irresistible power are obedient and follow Him and live a life of holiness. The Bible teaches that God keeps His children, and the Bible teaches that God's children shall endure until the end. It is a gross perversion of the Scriptures to teach preservation and not teach perseverance; likewise, it is equally wrong to teach perseverance and not teach preservation. ***Both*** are true! While the Scriptures teach that the Lord keeps His children from falling, that He might present them "faultless before the presence of His glory," they also teach that the people of God are to "work out" their "own salvation with fear and trembling," Jude 24; Philippians 2:12.

Several years ago, the author wrote a pamphlet on this subject and entitled it "The Perseverance of God's Preserving Grace." The intent was to show that the born again child of God is not only preserved in grace but he equally perseveres in grace by the in-working of the Holy Spirit in his life. Another reason for studying this under the title of perseverance is because our orthodox Baptist confessions address this topic under this title. This is seen from the London Baptist Confessions of 1646 and 1689; in the Philadelphia Confession of 1742; and the Fulton Confession of 1900 and reprint in 1981. While there were notes added to the confession of 1900 and kept with the reprint of 1981, it is worthy of note that no notes were added to the chapter on perseverance. Though these documents are readily available with scriptural references, I will take the opportunity to quote the entire chapter (without the

scriptural references) entitled “Of The Perseverance of the Saints.”

> Article 1: Those whom God hath accepted in the beloved, effectually called and sanctified by His Spirit, and given the precious faith of His elect unto, can neither totally nor finally fall from the state of grace, but shall certainly persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved, seeing the gifts and callings of God are without repentance, whence He still begets and nourisheth in them faith, repentance, love, joy, hope, and all the graces of the Spirit unto immortality; and tough many storms and floods arise and beat against them, yet they shall never be able to take them off that foundation and rock which by faith they are fastened upon; notwithstanding, through unbelief and the temptations of Satan, the sensible sight of the light and love of God may for a time be clouded and obscured from them, yet He is still the same, and they shall be sure to be kept by the power of God unto salvation, where they shall enjoy their purchased possession, they being engraven upon the palm of His hands, and their names having been written in the book of life from all eternity.
> Article 2: This perseverance of the saints depends not upon their own free will, but upon the immutability of the decree of election, flowing from the free and unchangeable love of God the Father, upon the efficacy of the merit and intercession of Jesus Christ and union with Him, the oath of God, the abiding of His Spirit, and the seed of God within them, and the nature of the covenant of grace; from all which ariseth also the certainty and infallibility thereof.
> Article 3: And though they may, through the temptation of Satan and of the world, the prevalency of corruption remaining in them, and the neglect of means of their preservation, fall into grievous sins, and for a time continue therein, whereby they incur God’s displeasure and grieve His Holy Spirit, come to have their graces and comforts impaired, have their hearts hardened, and their consciences wounded, hurt and scandalize others, and bring temporal judgments upon themselves, yet shall they renew their repentance and be preserved through faith in Christ Jesus to the end.

It goes without question that the above articles do not support or agree with the modern idea of the expression “once saved; always saved.” The “once saved; always saved” concept is that because a person at one time made a “profession of faith” of some sort then he will be in heaven after death regardless of how he lives afterward. It is true that if a person is “once saved” he will “always be saved,” but the Scriptures are plain that he who is saved overcomes the world “because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world,” I John 4:4. Sadly, the modern idea is that the only requirement for heaven is death. What I mean by this, today essentially everyone believes that when a person dies he is automatically “better off” and he is “up there”

fulfilling his dreams or hobby that he enjoyed while here on earth. In other words, the golfer is enjoying golf in heaven; the race car driver is enjoying his victories; the family is together enjoying the reunion. You get the picture. The problem with this is the Scriptures teach otherwise. I John 3:10 says, "In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother." Equally, the book of Revelation makes it plain that there are those that will eventually be cast into the lake of fire with the beast, false prophet, and the devil. See Revelation 19:20; 20:10-15; 21:8.

I believe it worthy of note that in the first article quoted above that perseverance includes all of the elect of God and that the Lord "begets and nourisheth in them faith, repentance, love, joy, hope, and all the graces of the Spirit unto immortality." This is far from the idea that a person may make a profession of faith and live a life reflecting that of the world. Not only are "faith, repentance, love, joy, and hope" listed as being evident in the life of the regenerated elect, but so are "all the graces of the Spirit" nourished in them. Perseverance is not a person manifesting one or two, or maybe three of the graces of the Spirit, but "all the graces of the Spirit." This is not to say that a person may *equally* show forth all of the graces. He may excel in some over others, but in some capacity all the graces of the Spirit of God will reside in the regenerated child of grace. Is this not what Ephesians 2:10 says: "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." While someone may object and say that the verse says "that we should walk in them" and not that we "will" walk in them, but the strength and intensity of "should walk" is the same as that of "should not perish" of John 3:16. It is not the sense of possibility, but the force or strength of certainty. Even the Greek word for "before ordained" (προετοιμάζω [proetoimázō, *pro-et-oy-mad'-zo*]) means "to fit up in advance" and is translated "ordain before" or "prepare afore." It is only used here and in Romans 9:23: "And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory." In this verse it is translated "afore prepared," and obviously it is referencing the "vessels of mercy" (i.e., the elect) that God ordained or fore-ordained or predestinated (see Romans 8:29-30; Ephesians 1:4-5, 11-12) before the world was.

I believe it should be emphasized that perseverance is only possible because of the working of the Holy Spirit in the life of the regenerated child of grace. Yes, man is active in perseverance, but perseverance is not because of the work of the flesh. Philippians 2:12-13 aptly summaries both side of coin: "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure." Too often someone will try to decipher between what we are to "work out" and that which God works in us which is "to will and to do." I believe this is futile. There are many things stated in

the Scriptures that we are to believe that can only be explained by God. The Lord willing we will enlarge on this in the next podcast; however, our time is up for today. Farewell.

Salvation—Perseverance (2ND)

(Today we continue our study concerning the doctrine of perseverance.)

We ended our previous podcast by saying that "it should be emphasized that perseverance is only possible because of the working of the Holy Spirit in the life of the regenerated child of grace." To support this we quoted Philippians 2:12-13: "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure." Furthermore we said that "often someone will try to decipher between what we are to 'work out' and that which God works in us which is 'to will and to do,'" and that I believe it is futile to try to distinguish between the two. There are many things stated in the Scriptures that we are unable to understand or comprehend but we are to believe them as explained to us by God. A good example of this is found in the beginning of the Bible: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," Genesis 1:1. This is basic and is stated many times in different forms throughout the whole Word of God. It is foundational to all of creation and the origin of life. However, no one can explain it. That is, how is it that God made visible and material things out of nothing? He did not take from His own being and make the "heaven and the earth." If so, He would cease to be all of what He was before and, therefore, not be the same as He was before. The Scriptures plainly affirm that He is unchangeable: "For I *am* the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed," Malachi 3:6. Therefore, just as we believe Genesis 1:1 though we cannot explain it, likewise we believe Philippians 2:12-13. When, where, how, and why God works in the believer resides in Him and Him alone. Yes, there may be times when in the providence of the Lord we may get a glimpse of Him working in us, but for the most part that resides in Him. The responsibility exists in us to "work out" our "own salvation with fear and trembling." To give a parallel situation, I direct your attention to Jeremiah 29:10-14: "For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place. For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find *me*, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith the LORD: and I will turn away your captivity, and

I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the LORD; and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive." Some years later note the words of Daniel 9:1-3: "In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans; In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem. And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes …." Daniel, upon reading and studying the book of Jeremiah did not come to the conclusion that the seventy years were up and do nothing and wait for God to restore Israel to their homeland. No. He prayed and confessed the sins of Israel. Equally, he did not wait for God to move him and make him pray and fast; he sought the Lord; that is, Daniel worked out his own salvation with fear and trembling. Too often we either read in the Scriptures or are told what we are to do from the preaching of the word or by reading the writings of men, but we do not obey. We simply wait for the Lord to work in our mind or emotions before we do anything. Daniel did not do this; when he understood his responsibility he obeyed. Yes, we often pray, but we pray for the Lord to stir us up to pray and fast. We are never told to do this. We are told to obey; we are told to pray and fast. Likewise we are to persevere.

Dear child of grace, please know that I am as guilty as anyone here. Too often my head understands the commands of the Lord but I linger in prayer and fasting and do not devote quality time with the Lord while squandering away valuable time on frivolous things that are entertaining to the flesh. Yes, it is true that we still live in this body of sin and the flesh lusts against the Spirit and the Spirit lusts against the flesh (Galatians 5:17) and the warfare of Romans 7 is real with every genuine believer. However, I fear too often we use such passages to justify our lukewarm and cold conditions. No, I cannot discern where the line of demarcation is concerning our working out our salvation and God working in to will and to do. Both are true and both are essential. May the Lord in His sovereign mercy bless us accordingly so that we are active and vital in His service and get up and exercise ourselves unto godliness doing that which is right as we ought and not sit idly by waiting for some "spiritual moving" or some "Divine intervention" to knock us off our seat of indifference. Yes, Paul cried out "O wretched man that I am!" (Romans 7:24a), but he also confessed "I laboured more abundantly than they all," I Corinthians 15:10. True, he followed this last statement with "yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." Nevertheless, he labored and it was the grace that was in him that provoked him to labor. Listen to Paul's testimony as found in Colossians 1:29: "Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily." Five different Greek words are found in this verse expressing his endeavors to fulfill his

ministry. They are translated as follows: labor, striving, working as a noun, worketh as a verb, and mighty. Brethren! Do we have the same grace, or are we merely professors. No. My intentions are not to cause you to question your salvation. My desires are to exhort us and to encourage us as Hosea did Israel: "Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for *it is* time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you."

As stated at the beginning of our study on perseverance, we believe that perseverance and preservation are two sides of the same coin; that is, when properly understood it is not either perseverance or preservation; it is both. No man can persevere unless he is preserved by God. Allow me to share with you an illustration that I heard years ago that, I believe, helps to explain this. When preserving a jar of jelly or jam, it cannot be said to be preserved unless it is kept from spoiling. In other words, a jar of jam is only preserved so long as it perseveres from spoilage. If the jar goes bad it cannot be said to be preserved. This is the same with an individual. If he is living in sin and walking according to the course of the world he cannot be said to be "kept by the power of God" as recorded in I Peter 1:1-5: "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied. Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." Notice that the elect are not simply kept by the power of God, but it is "through faith." From previous studies we discovered that faith is a gift of God given to us by the Holy Spirit at regeneration, Ephesians 2:8; Galatians 5:22. Furthermore, we saw that true faith is not dead, but it is active and produces fruit, James 2:17-26. Therefore, the passage in I Peter teaches us that we are kept (preserved) by the power of God, but that it is equally through faith (perseverance), too. It is not either/or; it is both.

When considering the phrase "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation" in connection with other passages, I believe it can safely be affirmed that perseverance is vitally united to the gospel. Yes, the Lord, as we noted in a previous podcast, works "when, and where, and how He pleaseth." (From the "*1689 London Baptist Confession,*" Chapter 10, Article 3.) However, it is without question that Christ Jesus instituted the congregation of the Lord (Matthew 16:18), set the gifts in the assembly (I Corinthians 12:28), and ordained the preaching of the gospel (Matthew 28:19-20) for the edification of the people of God (Ephesians 4:11-12). It is not a matter of what the Lord can do; it is a matter of what the Scriptures tell us. I suppose it is possible that the Lord may work in a person and cause him to live a life

of holiness apart from the gospel, but there is no scriptural example of this. All Christians confess that the Scriptures are to be the rule and faith of practice for the people of God and to affirm a belief that is not verified by the Bible is sheer ignorance or rationalism to say the least and blasphemous to say the most. Therefore, instead of spending time arguing to prove what is not stated or taught in the Scriptures, may we simply devote our energy to proclaiming the gospel with the purpose of exhorting, encouraging, strengthening, and edifying the saints of God to persevere in the paths of righteousness for His name sake. Obviously, an abundance of scriptures could be presented to support this but I will supply one of the more classic and often quoted verses to maintain this truth: "But grow in grace, and *in* the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." II Peter 3:18a.

The Lord willing, we will examine a few verses that connect the phrase "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation" to the gospel. However, our time is up for today. Farewell.

Salvation—Perseverance (3RD)

(Today we continue our study concerning the doctrine of perseverance. We shall review Colossians 1:11; Job 17:9; and Philippians 1:6.)

In the previous podcast we began to look at I Peter 1:1-5 in connection with the subject of perseverance. It says, "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied. Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." It was noted that the elect are not simply kept by the power of God, but it is "through faith." Furthermore, it was pointed out that faith is a gift of God given to us by the Holy Spirit at regeneration and that true faith is not dead; it is active and produces fruit according to James 2:17-26. In summary, the passage in I Peter teaches us that we are kept (i.e., preserved) by the power of God, but that it is equally through faith (i.e., perseverance), as well. It is not either/or; it is both. Equally, when considering the phrase "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation" in connection with other passages, I believe it can safely be affirmed that perseverance is vitally united to the gospel. Today we will endeavor to examine a few verses that connect the phrase "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation" to the gospel.

The English word perseverance (the Greek word is προσκαρτέρησις [proskarterēsis, *pros-kar-ter'-ay-sis*]) is used only one time in the Scriptures and it is found in Ephesians 6:18. However, this Greek word comes from a Greek word (προσκαρτερέω [proskartereō, *pros-kar-ter-eh'-o*]) that is found ten times in the New Testament. According to Thayer it means "1) to adhere to one, be his adherent, to be devoted or constant to one; 2) to be steadfastly attentive unto, to give unremitting care to a thing; 3) to continue all the time in a place; 4) to persevere and not to faint; 5) to show one's self courageous for; 6) to be in constant readiness for one, wait on constantly." Note that one of the definitions is "to persevere and not to faint." Therefore, the truth of perseverance is not only affirmed in the use of this word in some verses, but perseverance is equally taught in other passages in the Scriptures. In fact, where Paul exhorted the saints at Ephesus by saying "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints," the other Greek word (προσκαρτερέω) is used in Colossians 4:2: "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving." The word "continue" is this Greek word meaning "to persevere and not to faint." This Greek word is also translated to continue in places with the idea of the saints persevering in the faith. Acts 1:14, "These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren." Acts 2:42, "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." The word in this verse is "stedfastly." Acts 2:46, "And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart."

Two other Greeks words (ὑπομονή and μακροθυμία) translated "patience and longsuffering" as found in Colossians 1:11 equally suggest the concept of "to persevere and not to faint." Kenneth S. Wuest, (*Word Studies in the Greek New Testament*, Vol. 1, "Ephesians and Colossians: In the Greek New Testament," p. 178) commenting on these two words quoted Richard Chenevix Trench as follows:

> "*Makrothumia* [longsuffering] will be found to express patience in respect of persons, *hupomonē* [patience], in respect of things. The man *makrothumia* [longsuffering], who having to do with injurious persons, does not suffer himself easily to be provoked by them, or to blaze up in anger (II Tim. 4:2). The man *hupomonē* [patience], who under a great siege of trials, bears up, and does not lose heart or courage (Rom. 5:3; II Cor. 1:6)." Wuest further said, In another place, commenting on the word *makrothumia* [longsuffering], the same authority defines it as "a long holding out of the mind before it gives room to action or passion—generally to passion. 'Forbearing one another in love,' (Eph. 4:2) beautifully expounds the meaning which attaches to the word.

> Anger usually, but not universally is the passion thus held aloof … Still, it is not necessarily anger which is excluded or set at a distance, for when the historian of the Maccabees describes how the Romans had won the world 'by their policy and their patience,' *makrothumia* [longsuffering] expresses there that Roman persistency which would never make peace under defeat." Commenting upon *hupomonē* [patience], Trench says; "It does not mark merely *endurance*, or even *patience*, but the perseverance, the *brave*, patience with which the Christian contends against the various hindrances, persecutions, and temptations that befall him in his conflict with the inward and outward world." In brief, *makrothumia* [longsuffering] is patience exhibited under ill-treatment by persons, *hupomonē* [patience], patience shown under trials, difficulties, hardships. P. 178.

Lenski (R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of Paul's Epistles to the Colossians, to the Thessalonians, to Timothy, to Titus and to Philemon*, p. 37) commenting on Colossians 1:11 shows how the knowledge of the gospel from verse ten produces perseverance by translating the word for patience as such. His words are: "The next participle shows *how* this knowledge is able to do *what* Paul has just said: 'being made powerful in all power according to the might of his glory for all perseverance and longsuffering with joy.' By means of this knowledge God ever keeps filling us with dynamic power. Gospel knowledge is power." Obviously, a rich study regarding perseverance can be discovered by examining these two Greek words translated as "patience and longsuffering" in our Authorized Version. Nevertheless, we shall move on to other passages that teach not only that the saints are preserved in Christ Jesus but also persevere in righteousness as they live in this life. The difficulty is that there are so many passages that it is hard to know which to use; therefore, please forgive me if I fail to mention a verse (or verses) that seems most obvious to you.

Job 17:9 testified, "The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger." Unless one is seeking to deny perseverance, this verse is so simple and clear that anyone who can comprehend reading understands that he that is born again and found in the justifying righteousness will not only "hold on his way" but "shall be stronger and stronger." Notice that the text did not say that the righteous "ought" to hold on his way or that the righteous "may" hold on his way or that the righteous "should" hold on his way, nor does it say that "some" of the righteous shall hold on their way. No. It definitely says that "the righteous … ***shall*** hold on his way"; that is, all of the righteous. (Emphasis mine—JKB.) Additionally, the meaning of the Hebrew word for hold (אָחַז) is "to seize (often with the accessory idea of holding in possession.)" Inspired by this verse, Henry Fowler (1779-1838) wrote the following:

1 Ye pilgrims of Zion, and chosen of God,
Whose spirits are filled with dismay,
Since ye have eternal redemption thro' blood,
Ye cannot but hold on your way.

2 As Jesus in covenant love did engage
A fulness of grace to display,
The powers of darkness in malice may rage,
The righteous shall hold on his way.

3 This truth, like its Author, eternal shall stand,
Though all things in nature decay;
Upheld by Jehovah's omnipotent hand,
The righteous shall hold on his way.

4 They may on the main of temptation be tossed,
Their sorrows may swell as the sea,
But none of the ransomed shall ever be lost,
The righteous shall hold on his way.

5 Surrounded with sorrows, temptations, and cares,
This truth with delight we survey,
And sing, as we pass through this valley of tears,
The righteous shall hold on his way.

Gadsby's Hymns, #350

Next I direct our attention briefly to Philippians 1:6: "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform *it* until the day of Jesus Christ." This work begins in us at the new birth, John 3:8. This is described in various way throughout the New Testament: translated out of darkness into the kingdom of God (Colossians 1:13); blessed to see (εἴδω) and enter the kingdom (John 3:3, 5); taught of God and comes to Christ (John 6:45); has the law of God written in the heart and know the Lord (Hebrews 8:10-12); gift of faith/belief (Ephesians 2:8; Philippians 1:29); will not follow anyone but the Shepherd (John 10:4-5, 14, 27); kept by the power of God (I Peter 1:5); overcomes the world (I John 4:4; 5:4); and many other identical characteristics. Not only are we kept by the power of God from being cast into the lake of fire on the day of judgment, but the faith given to us in regeneration is a living faith that produces works as ordained by God, James 2:17-26; Ephesians 2:10.

This truth could be enlarged upon, but our time is exhausted for today. Farewell.

Salvation—Perseverance (4TH)

(Today we conclude our study concerning the doctrine of perseverance. We shall see that the elect are preserved by the triune power of the Trinity.)

While it is true that believers are overcomers and persevere in faith (I John 4:4; 5:4-5), we must not ignore the fact that God keeps and preserves His sheep by His grace and power. If perseverance were left entirely to the believer to work out his own salvation (Philippians 2:12) he would fail miserably. Though we are regenerated by the Holy Spirit we are still sinners and in need of the power of God to strengthen and encourage us to "live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world," (Titus 2:12). Not only are we preserved by God, but we will see that the whole of the Trinity are involved in perseverance.

That *the elect are kept by the power of God* may be seen by several passages of Scripture, but I will direct our attention only to three.

First, notice I Peter 1:1-5. "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied. Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." Those to whom Peter was writing were elected according to the eternal purpose of God before the world began. Peter says that they were given a living hope and consolation of an eternal inheritance in the heavens through the operation of God. Peter also says that they need not have any fear of losing this heritage as they had lost their earthly possessions due to persecution because they were being "kept by the power of God." Some object and say that the keeping was by their faith. While faith is active in preservation, it is active because God is working "to will and to do" in the believer (Philippians 2:12-13). The whole process, from beginning to end, is of God. What a great consolation it is to know that faith is the everlasting product of God and not a fickle work of man.

Romans 8:33-39 is another place from which the child of God receives great strength in knowing that once he is in the love of God, he is always in the love of God. This passage reads as follows: "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? *It is* God that justifieth. Who *is* he that condemneth? *It is* Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for

us. 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 thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Obviously, many wondrous truths could be presented from this passage; however, we will limit them to fit our time allotted for this podcast.

In verse 33, the Word of God asks the question, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?" Notice it is *God's* elect! The answer to the question is, "It is God that justifieth." In other words, the only One who has a right to lay a charge against the elect is God Himself. Since it is God who justifies His own elect, no accusation can be brought against any of His people? No, not one charge or claim! In the following verse, the same argument is presented with regard to Christ, and it is shown that *nothing* will separate the sheep of God from Him. Oh, what joy! It is the love of God that keeps us, not our love for God. What peace would there be in believing that our love for God is what keeps us? Oh, the hard heart of man; that heart which is so deceitful and desperately wicked; that dull and often cold heart cannot be the source of any security of salvation. But the eternal and omnipotent love of God; that holy, pure, and immutable love which flows freely from the Heavenly Father is a source of perfect security.

The third passage is Jude 24-25: "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present *you* faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, *be* glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen." Again we find that it is the power of God that keeps His sheep from falling. Yes, we stumble, trip, and walk astray from time to time, but we never fall away from the faith and grace of God and be destroyed. No, the children of God are kept by Him Who is able. Furthermore, the believer is not only kept by the eternal power of God, he will also be presented faultless before the presence of the glory of the Majesty on high. No wonder Jude closed his letter with such a doxology.

Now I will direct our attention to a few passages that show that *the Lord Jesus Christ also keeps the elect*. I will try to be as brief as possible and consider the passages together instead of discussing each one separately. The passages for consideration are John 6:38-39: "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." John 10:27-30: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave *them* me, is greater than all;

and no *man* is able to pluck *them* out of my Father's hand." And, Hebrews 2:13-17: "And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me. Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on *him the nature of* angels; but he took on *him* the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto *his* brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people."

These passages teach that Jesus Christ came from heaven, passed by the nature of angels and became a human being, and made reconciliation for sin. However, Jesus did not just die for sin, He died for people. The sacrifice and work of Christ do more than simply remove sin; they preserve those for whom He died. Jesus stated that He would not lose those whom the Father had given Him. He also testified that they would never perish.

Think of it, Jesus Christ, the Divine Son of God, Who is equal to the Father, not only gave His word that the sheep will be kept, but it is He that keeps them. He, to Whom all power in heaven and earth was given; He, Who is the faithful High Priest; He, Who is the effectual Savior, is the One Who keeps the elect and sees that none is lost. How wonderful it is to know that we have a Savior Who saves and eternally keeps that treasure which He bought. What a glorious Rock of ages! What a wonderful great Shepherd! If Christ only paid the sin debt and left the rest for us to do, we would go to the place where the worm dies not and the fire is never quenched. But thanks be unto God Who gives us the victory *in* Christ Jesus, our salvation is in the strength and power of the Holy One of Israel and not in the hand of wicked man.

Thirdly, *the Holy Spirit preserves the elect*. Again, in order not to make this podcast too lengthy, I will group the passages under this head as I did above under the work of Christ. The passages are Ephesians 1:13-14 and 4:30: "In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." "And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." And John 14:16-17: "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; *Even* the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."

These passages teach that the Holy Spirit is equally active in keeping the elect in the salvation of God. It is the Spirit of God that comes and abides in and with the child of God for the purpose of preserving him. The Scriptures speak of the elect being

preserved by the sealing ministry of the Holy Spirit. Christ stated that the Spirit would abide with His sheep forever.

The Word of God teaches that a threefold cord is not easily broken, and that every word is established out of the mouth of two or three witnesses. Therefore, the threefold cord of the blessed Trinity, the Triune witness of God, gives the divine consolations that secure perfect peace. If the elect of God fall and are not kept by the power and work of God, then, none shall be saved. Salvation from beginning to end is the work of God; it is not the work of man.

Much more could be said about perseverance but with the lengthy study of sanctification presented before, I believe it would be superfluous to extend this study at this time. Therefore, for now, we will conclude our lessons regarding perseverance. Farewell.

A Lesson For Baptists

(This podcast is an attempt to encourage the Baptist of our day to understand and know their rich heritage and that they are neither Catholic nor Protestant.)

As stated in our initial podcast, our overall purpose of these studies is to show the teaching of the Holy Scriptures from a Baptist perspective. This does not mean that we desire run down or belittle other denominations or religious ideologies but simply to show that there is a distinction and that as an orthodox Baptist one should be aware of the differences. It appears to me that in this age many people who profess to be Baptistic are unaware or ignorant of their heritage. Essentially everyone who professes to be a Baptist (as well as the general public) believes that Baptists are Protestants. This is not the case. There were Baptists long before the Protestant Reformation. This is not some private belief of a few obscure Baptists. Note what the government of the United States of America had to say about Baptists in 1926.

> "It is a distinct principle with Baptists that they acknowledge no human founder, recognize no human authority, and subscribe to no human creed. For all these things, Baptists of every name and order go back to the New Testament. And while no competent Baptist historian assumes to be able to trace a succession of Baptist churches through the ages, most of them are of one accord in believing that, if we could secure the records, there would be found heroic groups of believers in every age who upheld with their testimonies and, in many cases, with their lives, the great outstanding and distinctive principles of the Baptist churches of today."

From the Bureau of Census for 1926
United States Department of Commerce

Why is it that Baptists as a whole, as well as the general population, do not know this information? I believe it is because the ministers as a whole are ignorant of this truth and because those who may be aware of this fact do not teach it to their congregations. In reality, too often the average sermon or lecture in the pulpit today is designed for entertaining the audience or to increase the size of the congregation for economic purposes. Furthermore, a common defect is that when a minister presents a particular subject matter to a congregation he will fall into the trap of thinking that he cannot speak on that topic again or, if so, it must be years down the road. May the Lord deliver minister from the mindset of the "Athenians and strangers which spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing," Acts 17:21. I well remember that in my early day of the ministry of falling into this trap. I thought if I preached on a subject I assumed that the congregation did not need me to speak on that subject again. Little did I know that repetition is essential to learning and studying any subject. The Lord affirmed this in His instruction to Isaiah regarding Israel of old: "Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? *them that are* weaned from the milk, *and* drawn from the breasts. For precept *must be* upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, *and* there a little," Isaiah 28:9-10. John Milton Gregory wisely referred to this in his book *The Seven Laws of Teaching* when he said, "The law of review rests upon the universal and unchangeable laws of mind. The review may not always be made formally and with clear design, but no successful teaching was ever done in which the review in some form, either by direction of the teacher or by the private impulse of the learner, did not take place—the revisiting and repetition of the lesson learned. The 'line upon line and precept upon precept' (Isaiah 28:10, 13) rule of the Bible is a recognition of this truth." (While some good things can be attained from this book, especially the last chapter entitled "The Law of Review and Application," one huge caveat is that humanism is sprinkled throughout.) Additionally, when inquiring how often something should be said in teaching a new concept, we find from the internet the following:

> The idea of communicating a message over and over again isn't new and its roots are in advertising and marketing. "Effective frequency" is a term used to define the number of times a person needs to hear an advertising message before responding to it. Different experts have different ideas for what that magic number is. The most agreed-upon is probably the "Rule of 7," which suggests consumers need to hear a message seven times before they will consider taking action.
>
> Applying the "Rule of 7" to the messages you want to have sink in with your students is something to carefully consider, especially if you want them to take

certain actions. (https://knslearningsolutions.com/news/how-many-times-do-i-have-to-tell-you/)

With this in mind, it is imperative that we teach over and over the truths of the Scriptures, but it is equally essential that we teach the history of how the Lord preserved His people. This principle was established in the history of Israel from the beginning of the nation. When the Lord instituted the Passover and the beginning of the calendar for Israel He reminded them not to forget to teach their history to the children. The Lord said, "And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? That ye shall say, It *is* the sacrifice of the LORD'S passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses," Exodus 12:26-27, cf. Exodus 10:2; 13:8. Notice other passages where this truth reiterated. "And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up," Deuteronomy 11:19. "Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell *it* to the generation following," Psalm 48:13. "We will not hide *them* from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done," Psalm 78:4. "Tell ye your children of it, and *let* your children *tell* their children, and their children another generation," Joel 1:3. I believe a case can be made for the exhortation the Lord gave to the fathers in Ephesians 6:4: "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

In this area, I believe the Baptists could learn a great deal from the Protestants. As one listens to many of the teachers of the Protestants he will find that they often speak of the history of the reformers and refer to many of them by name. It is a sad commentary today when many Baptist ministers know more Protestant ministers and the history of the reformers than they do of their Baptist forefathers. As previously stated, in 1926, the Bureau of Census for the United States of American understood that it was fundamentally understood that the Baptists affirmed their heritage back to the New Testament. The Protestants derived their origin during the Protestant Reformation as generally identified when Martin Luther nailed his Ninety-five Theses on the door of the "church" building at Wittenburg in 1517. In fact, the website Britannica.com, under the article for the Ninety-five Theses says, "This event came to be considered the beginning of the Protestant Reformation." (https://www.britannica.com/event/Ninety-five-Theses)

While the Protestants often speak of Augustine, Luther, Calvin, etc. the Baptists should be acquainting themselves with such people as the Ana-Baptists or antipaedobaptists in general, with specific identifications during various ages as Montanists, Novations, Donatists, Paulicians, Albigenses and Ancient Waldenses

and others as described by orthodox Baptist historians. Too often Catholic and Protestant writers will select doctrines or practices of fringe groups identified as being aligned with some or all of these names when in reality they were rejected by the majority. Equally, it is generally presented that the Christian religion is either Catholic or Protestant, when in reality there was always a line of believers going back to the time of Christ that did not identify themselves as Catholic or Protestant and were generally persecuted by both. It should be further pointed out that the Reformers did not intend to create a new religious order or denomination; their aim was to reform the Catholic religion. Even today essentially all Protestants teachers and preachers will often refer to ancients beliefs as being orthodox which are doctrines that were (or still are) beliefs of the Catholic religion; most often it is the Roman Catholics that are under consideration. And, again I want to say that they have done a good job in educating their audience. They have done this so well that even the world in general has adopted their views. Sadly, Baptists in general (and their ministers in particular) do not know their heritage. The Baptists have a rich heritage. Of the many things that could be pointed out, I will set forth one profound accomplishment in the United States; it is that of religious freedom that this country has been blessed to have that was never established in any other nation. (This was verified in previous podcasts under the topic of "The Christian and Civil Government.") Sad to say, it appears that this freedom is fast eroding in our society today. Allow me to share another incident that took place several years ago. I was in the home of a well-educated Baptist Doctor of Divinity and he showed me his book that was a compendium of Christian history. I asked him why he would insert the invention of mechanical reaper by Cyrus McCormick in 1831 and omit the famous "Black Rock Address" in 1832 that was a significant document that identified the division of the Old School and the New School Baptists in America. His reply was one of silence; he made no acknowledgement that he even heard me. Today, most professing Baptists have never heard of the "Black Rock Address" and many that know about it have never read it.

Sadly, too many Baptists know more of the Protestant heritage than their own Baptist heritage. The Protestants have done a good job in teaching their legacy and the Baptists could learn a great deal from them in the education of the Baptist heritage.

Our time is up for today. Farewell.

A Vital Lesson From Abraham (1ST)

(An important part in the life of Abraham is often overlooked or ignored regarding justification and faith.)

Much, if not all, of the material in this podcast was covered in previous studies, but

I believe it is essential that this material be presented again to better solidify the truth. It is without question that the life of Abraham is vital to the doctrine of justification, and essentially all branches of Christianity affirm that justification is fundamental to orthodox theology. Martin Luther declared that justification was the doctrine by which "the church either stands or falls." R.C. Sproul's mentor John Gerstner goes further in reminding us that it's not only the church that stands or falls by this doctrine, "but the individual also." https://www.ligonier.org/posts/justification-heart-gospel. Additionally, Joel Beeke & Steven Lawson writing about justification said, "this doctrine not only lies at the heart of the gospel, it *is* the gospel." *Root & Fruit: Harmonizing Paul and James on Justification*, p. 11. Therefore, according to these statements, where one is in error on the doctrine of justification he is erroneous regarding the gospel and his whole religious organization not only including his denomination but also his congregational worship is in error.

When the doctrine of justification and imputation is discussed passages from Romans 4, Genesis 12, and/or Genesis 15 are presented. In fact, the classic passage set forth is Genesis 15:6. This is understandable because of the association of it in the life of Abraham and the importance of the passage in the life of Abraham. Furthermore, Abraham is declared to be the father of the faithful. Notice the following passages: Romans 4:16, "Therefore *it is* of faith, that *it might be* by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all;" then, Galatians 3:7, 29, "Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham." … "And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." However, when Genesis 15:6 is discussed regarding justification, it is generally construed to mean that Abraham believed God and God imputed his faith unto him for righteousness and he is justified. One source said it this way, "Justification is the legal imputation of God's righteousness to Abraham's account, and it was done exclusively on the basis of saving faith." *Root & Fruit*, p. 31. If this is the case, what about Abraham's faith in Ur?

Hebrews 11:8 says, "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went." It is without question that Abraham had scriptural faith years before Genesis chapter fifteen. Even Stephen testified to this in his sermon by saying that God appeared to Abraham in "Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran," Acts 7:2. Genesis 15:6 is not when Abraham initially exercised faith as it is usually presented.

It is generally believed that prior to Abraham having faith that he worshiped other gods. See Joshua 24:15; Isaiah 51:1-2. We are not told how long he lived in idolatry or what his age was when he left Ur. We know that he was seventy-five years old when he left Haran, Genesis 12:4. Furthermore, we know that God promised him that He would make of him

"a great nation," Genesis 12:2. It must not be overlooked that God made this promise to Abraham before he left Ur because of the important word "had" in Genesis 12:1, "Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee." It is important to know that many modern translations, along with the Roman Catholic Douay-Rheims Bible, omit the word "had" from this verse because it does not fit their theology. The promise of the Seed was given to Abraham in Ur prior to his living in Haran. Again, we do not know how long Abraham lived in Haran but, he left there at the age of seventy-five upon the death of his father. After going into Canaan and Egypt and back to Canaan, due to the increase of the wealth of servants and herds, he and Lot (his nephew) separated. See Genesis 13. Upon this separation, God again spoke of the promised Seed to Abraham, Genesis 13:14-17. Afterwards, we are told of the capture of Lot and Abraham leaving Hebron (in the plains of Mamre) with three hundred and eighteen "trained" servants, "born in his own house," and rescued Lot. It was at this time that Melchizedek, "king of Salem," and "priest of the most high God," blessed Abraham, Genesis 14:18-20. This brief resume of the life of Abraham prior to Genesis fifteen clearly reveals that Abraham had faith and the promise of the Seed prior to this time.

Though it is extremely important to know that Abraham had faith and some understanding regarding the promised Seed prior to Genesis fifteen, it must equally be known that Genesis fifteen is a pivotal point in the life of Abraham and the imputed righteousness of Christ as payment for our sins in the redemptive work of God for His people. This point in history is brought to our attention especially in the books of Romans and Galatians regarding justification by the imputed righteousness of Christ.

As stated earlier, we do not know how old Abraham was at this time, but we do know that it was ten years from the time he left Haran and the conception of Ishmael, Genesis 16:3-4. He would be eighty-five at this time and eighty-six at the birth of Ishmael (Genesis 16:16), and I believe it could safely be said that he was close to this age when the Lord appeared to him as recorded in Genesis fifteen.

Some may be wondering why we should go to great lengths to show this history of Abraham? It is because all too often the general consensus is that at Genesis fifteen is when Abraham "first believed and was saved and/or justified." But upon close investigation of the Holy Scriptures this is not the case. Equally, how one interprets these passages will reveal his theology of salvation. Our belief is that salvation is totally (one hundred percent) of grace and not by works or by any combination of grace and works. Too often people will claim that salvation is solely by grace and yet proclaim that there is some means of man or some energy put forth by man to achieve it. However, the Scriptures clearly reveal that the pattern of faith—Abraham—was a worshiper of idols in Ur and God immediately regenerated or changed his heart and instilled faith in him. Since Abraham is the example and father of the faithful (or of faith, Romans 4:11), it is important that we understand that faith was not initially exercised and eternal life given to Abraham in Genesis fifteen.

Obviously, life precedes faith, and the history of Abraham as recorded in the Scriptures clearly demonstrates this blessed truth. No, it is not our intentions to minimize the importance of Genesis fifteen, but we must be careful not to ascribe more to this passage than what is taught in the Word of God. As we said before, Genesis fifteen (especially Genesis 15:6) is clearly a pivotal point regarding the truth of Jesus Christ being the Seed whereby the redemptive work of God is accomplished. It is also important to study about the justifying righteousness whereby the sinner is accepted by God. Therefore, it is essential that we have a solid and clear foundation upon which to establish the truth of justification. Nevertheless, we have seen from our study so far that Abraham had faith and some inclination about the promised Seed at least ten years before (and likely longer) Genesis fifteen. And since this vital truth is generally overlooked in the study of salvation and/or justification, it is imperative that we know these facts.

Additionally to this it is often presented that before a person has faith and is saved he must see himself as lost or that he seeks to be justified by the law or have some other religious occurrence. This is not found in the history of Abraham or even suggested by the Scriptures. As previously pointed out, he lived in pagan idolatry in Ur until faith was exhibited in him. Furthermore, the only thing we see in the life of Rahab is that she had heard how the Lord led and protected the Israelites and, therefore, believed (indicating that she had faith to believe) in the Lord. (See Joshua 2:9-13; Hebrews 11:31.) In fact, I believe with A. W. Pink, that Rahab had faith prior to the spies arriving at her house. Note the following:

> Repentance necessarily leads to a change of *conduct,* for a change of mind must produce a change of action: repentance and reformation of life are inseparable. It must have been thus with Rahab: she who had been a harlot, would become chaste, and a life of wanton pleasure would give place to one of honest work. Some may deem our conclusion a 'farfetched' one, but personally we consider that we are given a plain intimation of her changed manner of life. In Joshua 2:6 we are told that she brought them up to the roof of the house and hid them with the stalks of *flax*, which she *had* laid in order upon the roof". As there is not a superfluous nor meaningless word in the Scriptures, why then has the Holy Spirit specified the particular kind of straw which Rahab used to cover and conceal the two spies? Now "flax" was laboriously gathered by the industrious women, laid out on the flat roofs of the houses to dry, and was then used for spinning and weaving. The presence of a quantity of it "laid out" on Rahab's roof was an evidence she was now living a useful life.
>
> But that is not all the presence of the "flax" tells us. If we go to the trouble of searching our concordance and comparing Scripture with Scripture, we discover something yet more praiseworthy. In the last chapter of the book of Proverbs we are supplied with a full-length portrait of "*a virtuous* woman", and one of her features is that "she seeketh wool and *flax*, and worketh willingly with her hands"!

> Such we are assured was now the character and occupation of this outstanding monument of mercy. Another mark of repentance is a changed esteem of and attitude toward the people of God: formerly their presence irritated, for their piety condemned us; but when the heart be changed by the operations of Divine grace, their company and communion is desired and valued. It was thus with Rahab and the two Israelites: she "received the spies with peace" (Heb. 11:31) is the Divine testimony. It was not with reluctance and complaint that she accepted them into her abode, but with a spirit of good will, welcoming and giving them shelter. Admire then the blessed transformation which the operations of the Spirit had wrought in her character.
>
> Let us now consider more particularly her faith. First, the *ground* of it. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" (Rom. 10:17). This does not mean that faith is *originated* by hearing the Word of God, any more than that the shining of the sun imparts sight to the eye. No, faith is bestowed by a sovereign act of the Spirit, and then it is instructed and nourished by the Word. … My acceptance of the Truth does not create faith, but makes manifest that I *have* faith, and it becomes the sure ground on which my faith rests. *Gleanings from Joshua*, p. 64.

Obviously, Rahab did not flee to "Sinai's fiery mount" seeking a hiding place from the Lord or the law of God. While this may be the experience of some, it is not the pattern of Abraham or Rahab regarding salvation. However, our time is up for today. Farewell.

A Vital Lesson From Abraham (2ND)

(This is a continuation of studying that part of the life of Abraham that is often overlooked or ignored regarding justification and faith.)

In the previous podcast we saw that Hebrews 11:8 definitely stated that Abraham had faith when he left Ur. Furthermore, we saw that it was likely at least ten years (if not more) from the time he left Ur until Genesis 15:6. During this period of time, Abraham exercised faith in leaving Ur, built altars unto the Lord, the Lord appeared unto him and gave promises and other instructions, and he was guided, directed, and protected by the providence of the Lord prior to Genesis 15:6. With all of this evidence in the life of Abraham that he was a man of faith, still many affirm that he first exercised faith at Genesis fifteen and that he was not justified prior to this time. John Calvin stated the following in his comments on Genesis 15:6.

> "We must now notice the circumstance of *time*. Abram was justified by faith

> many years after he had been called by God; after he had left his country a voluntary exile, rendering himself a remarkable example of patience and of continence; after he had entirely dedicated himself to sanctity and after he had, by exercising himself in the spiritual and external service of God, aspired to a life almost angelical.

Additionally, Calvin remarked:

> The words of Moses are, "He believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for righteousness." In the first place, the faith of Abram is commended, because by it he embraced the promise of God; it is commended, in the second place, because hence Abram obtained righteousness in the sight of God, and that by imputation. … [W]hen this faith is said to have been imputed to him for righteousness, to mingle with it some other meaning, than that the faith of Abram was accepted in the place of righteousness with God.

If "the faith of Abram was accepted in the place of the righteousness with God" at Genesis 15:6, what was the state of Abraham when he left Ur until this time? Was he a lost man? Was he a saved man but not justified? Or, what other status could be applied to Abraham?

Martin Luther agrees with the sentiments of Calvin. His comments on Genesis 15:6, as found in his commentary on Galatians 3:6 are revealing. They are as follows:

> **VERSE 6.** *Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.*
>
> The Apostle next adduces the example of Abraham and reviews the testimony of the Scriptures concerning faith. The first passage is taken from Genesis 16:6 [sic]: "And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness." The Apostle makes the most of this passage. Abraham may have enjoyed a good standing with men for his upright life, but not with God. In the sight of God, Abraham was a condemned sinner. That he was justified before God was not due to his own exertions, but due to his faith. The Scriptures expressly state: "Abraham believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness."
>
> Paul places the emphasis upon the two words: Abraham believed. Faith in God constitutes the highest worship, the prime duty, the first obedience, and the foremost sacrifice. Without faith God forfeits His glory, wisdom, truth, and mercy in us. The first duty of man is to believe in God and to honor Him with his faith. Faith is truly the height of wisdom, the right kind of righteousness,

the only real religion. This will give us an idea of the excellence of faith.
….
Faith truly honors God. And because faith honors God, God counts faith for righteousness.
Christian righteousness is the confidence of the heart in God through Christ Jesus. Such confidence is accounted righteousness for Christ's sake. Two things make for Christian righteousness: Faith in Christ, which is a gift of God; and God's acceptance of this imperfect faith of ours for perfect righteousness. Because of my faith in Christ, God overlooks my distrust, the unwillingness of my spirit, my many other sins. Because the shadow of Christ's wing covers me I have no fear that God will cover all my sins and take my imperfections for perfect righteousness.
God "winks" at my sins and covers them up. God says: "Because you believe in My Son I will forgive your sins until death shall deliver you from the body of sin."
… Believe in Christ and your sins will be pardoned. His righteousness will become your righteousness, and your sins will become His sins.
Do you now see how faith justifies without works? Sin lingers in us, and God hates sin. A transfusion of righteousness therefore becomes vitally necessary. This transfusion of righteousness we obtain from Christ because we believe in Him.
Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians by Martin Luther, *Translated by Theodore Graebner (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1949),* Pp. 84-86. PDF format.

Many such like quotes could be multiplied showing that the general consensus is that it was several years after Abraham left Ur that he was justified by his faith and that at that time the righteousness of God was imputed unto him. Again, allow me to be clear, that we are in no way minimizing the importance and significance of Genesis 15:6. This is central to the life and faith of Abraham. However, we must not overlook or ignore the fact that Abraham had saving and justifying faith when he left Ur. While Genesis 15 was a pivotal point in the life and experience of Abraham, we must bear in mind that justification is not an experimental act on the part of man. All theologians affirm that justification is a judicial or legal act performed by God. Justification does not change the nature of a man; justification establishes the relationship of an individual to that of the law or justice of God. (For a fuller understanding of the subject of justification one can see previous podcasts on this matter.) If, however, one means "being justified by faith" is when the individual receives experimentally justification then we agree. Nevertheless, before anyone can receive this justification by faith, judicial justification must first exist for that

individual. Faith cannot receive what does not exist; a person must be legally (or judicially) justified before justification can be received in the heart and soul. Therefore, knowing that Abraham had true saving faith when he left Ur it is clear that Genesis 15:6 was not the time he initially believed and became legally justified. Evidentially, Genesis 15:6 may have been when Abraham received justification experimentally which seems to align with the overall process of the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the elect (or sheep) of God.

It is not unusual to meet someone who for sometime (maybe even years) worship God and believe the truth of the gospel and then have an experience whereby these truths seem to come alive in the soul and are viewed in a fresh and novel way. Sometimes people take this to be that prior to that time they were not really saved. It may be that they were serving God like Abraham when he left Ur, but the truths of God were revealed to him and a fresh and vital way at Genesis 15:6. Please allow me to be clear here. We are not prepared to say *when* one is born again. Nor are we questioning everyone's belief regarding their regeneration. The new birth is on a deeper level than that of the individual experience, though it appears that some cases one's regeneration is quiet an emotional experience like that of the apostle Paul. Additionally, we are not examining regeneration; we are endeavoring to clarify the distinction between justification legally or judicially and the reception of justification experimentally. I am persuaded that in some cases when the subjection of justification is presented either the author does not make this distinction clear to the audience, or the author himself does not understand the difference. In either case, it appears that in many cases people do not clearly understand the difference. It is certain that it must be clearly understood that justification does not change the *nature* of a man; justification establishes the relationship of an individual to that of the law or justice of God. When a sinner is justified before the justice of God only his relationship is changed *legally* but his *nature* is not changed until he is born again. Even after his new birth, man is still a sinner in himself. Even the apostle Paul confessed that "I am carnal, sold under sin," "sin that dwelleth in me," "in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing," "the evil which I would not, that I do," "O wretched man that I am!" (Romans 7:14, 17, 18, 20, 24.) Equally, John wrote in his first epistle, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." And, "If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." (I John 1:8, 10). And yet, the believer in Christ can rejoice knowing that he stands justified before the Lord in the finished work of Christ because the righteousness of God is charged to his account. Isaiah testified of this truth: "In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory," Isaiah 45:25. And again, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue *that* shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This *is* the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness *is* of me, saith the LORD," Isaiah 54:17. (See

also Jeremiah 23:6; 33:16.) What a wondrous blessing that our legal standing before God is in Jesus Christ and not in ourselves!
However, we regret to say that our time is up for today. Farewell.

A Vital Lesson From Abraham (3RD)

(This is a continuation of studying that part of the life of Abraham that is often overlooked or ignored regarding justification and faith. The general consensus today is that the faith of Abraham was imputed to him for the righteousness of God.)

In the previous podcast it was established that justification is a legal or judicial act that determines the state of a person before the law of God. Justification does not change the nature of a person; it only establishes him just or not guilty before God. This is not question by orthodox theologians, Bible scholars, or ministers. Furthermore, for a person to be just there must be an underlying righteousness associated with him. Though many quotes could be supplied to support this, we will simply give a couple. First, Charles Hodge stated, "Hence this righteousness is not our own. It is nothing that we have either wrought ourselves, or that inheres in us. Hence Christ is said to be our righteousness; and we are said to be justified by his blood, his death, his obedience; we are righteous in him, and are justified by him or in his name, or for his sake. The righteousness of God, therefore, which the gospel reveals, and by which we are constituted righteous, is the perfect righteousness of Christ which completely meets and answers all the demands of that law to which all men are subject, and which all have broken." (*Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (n.p., 1886; repr., Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1968), p. 31.) Second, John Gill commenting on Romans 1:17 said, "... the essential righteousness of God, the rectitude of his nature, his righteousness in fulfilling his promises, and his punitive justices which though revealed in the gospel, yet not peculiar to it; nor the righteousness by which Christ himself is righteous either as God, or as Mediator; but that righteousness which he wrought out by obeying the precepts and bearing the penalty of the law in the room of his people, and by which they are justified in the sight of God .... (*An Exposition of the New Testament* (London: William Hill Collingridge, 1852; repr. Atlanta, GA: Turner Lassetter, 1954), vol. 2, p. 6.) Therefore, we see that the righteousness found in the Person and work of Christ is what is imputed unto us and that is the reason, source, or ground of our justification.
Too often theologians, Bible scholars, and commentators either plainly say or infer that it is the faith of the individual believer that is imputed for righteousness. Note this comment regarding Abraham and Genesis 15:6, "Genesis 15:6 is when Abraham exercised saving faith in God and was justified. Genesis 15 is when God transferred

His own perfect righteousness into the morally bankrupt account of Abraham." (*Root & Fruit* by Joel R. Beeke & Steven J. Lawson, p. 56.) This totally ignores Hebrews 11:8 which plainly declare that Abraham had faith in Ur of the Chaldees. Are the authors willing to say that the faith that Abraham had in Ur was not saving faith? In this same books the authors go to great lengths to say that justification is not by works and yet it appears that they are only swapping the faith of the individual for works. In showing that Luther taught that this righteousness that justifies is an "alien righteousness" that is outside of the individual and does not originate within the believer, they said that "it comes down from above, freely bestowed on that sinner who believes in Jesus Christ alone for salvation. (Page 23.) They further wrote, "Whether Jew or Gentile, this righteousness is for all who believe. The words *faith* and *believe* are from the same root in the Greek language (*pistis, pisteuo*), which doubly affirms that justification is by faith alone." In other words, justification is by the believer's faith and not by the Person and work of Christ. It is one thing to say that a believer receives the blessings of justification into his heart and soul at faith, but it is entirely different to affirm that a person is not justified or that justification of the individual is at faith. How can a person receive something by faith if that something does not already exist? Faith does not create; faith can only receive what already exists. Additionally, a person cannot exercise faith unless he is already given divine life in regeneration. But the authors, as well as many others, do not make this clear. The overall gist of their presentations is that if anyone will simply believe they will be justified. This is in reality no different from Arminian theology, but that is another study entirely.

In the previous podcast, we quoted Calvin and Luther showing that they equally affirmed that justification is by the faith of the individual. And we can multiply such quotes showing that many believe and emphasize that justification is by faith alone and not by the Person and work of Christ and that with Abraham it took place at Genesis 15:6. Listen to a few commenting on Genesis 15:6 as taken from the computer Bible program *Sword Searcher*.

> Albert Barnes: "That in him which is counted for righteousness is faith in Yahweh promising mercy. In the absence of righteousness, this is the only thing in the sinner that can be counted for righteousness."
>
> C. H. Mackintosh: "The imputation of righteousness to Abraham is, here, founded upon his believing in the Lord as the Quickener of the dead."
>
> Adam Clarke: "This I conceive to be one of the most important passages in the whole Old Testament. It properly contains and specifies that doctrine of justification by faith which engrosses so considerable a share of the epistles of … Paul, and at the foundation of which is the atonement made by the Son of God: And he (Abram) believed האמן *heemin*, he put faith) in Jehovah, ויחשבה

לו *vaiyachshebeita lo*, and he counted it — the faith he put in Jehovah, to Him for righteousness, צדקה *tsedakah*, or justification; though there was no act in the case but that of the mind and heart, no work of any kind."
Matthew Henry: "He *believed in him,* that is, received and embraced the divine revelation concerning him, and *rejoiced to see his day,* though at so great a distance, **Joh** 8:56. … *God counted it to him for righteousness;* that is, upon the score of this he was accepted of God, and, as the rest of the patriarchs, by faith he *obtained witness that he was righteous,* **Heb** 11:4."

Notice that in all of the sources quoted, not only in this study but in the previous studies, the "it" that was "counted" to Abraham for righteousness is the "faith" of the believer. And it is presented that this is the first time Abraham had saving or justifying faith. Why is it that all of these essentially ignore the faith of Abraham in Ur as clearly stated in Hebrews 11:8? Is it because it does not align with their preconceived theology or merely due to their lack of fully studying the entire context of faith as set forth in the Scriptures? Obviously, only the Lord knows the answer to this question. Needless to say, all of us are ignorant of some things as taught in the Scriptures. May the Lord have patience and mercy on each and every one of us as we endeavor to "search the Scriptures." Furthermore, it is not our purpose to humiliate or put down anyone, especially those previously quoted. Our desire is to set forth the truth of the Scriptures to the honor and glory of the Lord while recognizing that wisdom certainly does not reside or stop with me. May the Lord continue to be merciful to all of us as we seek to defend and proclaim the Divine authority—the Holy Scriptures. Oh, how we long for the day when all of the saints of God are assembled together in our glorified bodies, seeing eye to eye of the things of God, while being lost in the beauty of the holiness of the Lord Jesus Christ! Until then, may the Lord grace each of us with a mantle of charity as we attempt to sharpen the swords of each other in our journey in our unperfected state this side of glory.
As we said, the previous quotes clearly affirm that the faith of Abraham was what was imputed to him as the righteousness of God. However, I will supply a sample from a couple to refresh our memories somewhat. John Calvin said, "…that the faith of Abram was accepted in the place of righteousness with God." Joel Beeke & Steven Lawson said, "Genesis 15:6 is when Abraham exercised saving faith in God and was justified. Genesis 15 is when God transferred His own perfect righteousness into the morally bankrupt account of Abraham." Statements like this infer or plainly declare that the "it" of Genesis 15:6 is the faith of Abraham. This makes the faith of Abraham to be the ground of justification. However, as previously quoted, theologians and Bible scholars say again and again say that the ground of justification is the righteousness of God. Furthermore, the Scriptures clearly set forth that we are justified on the grounds of the righteousness of God and not our faith. Allow me to

close with the closing paragraph of the previous podcast for the purpose of setting the stage for the following study where we desire to show that the "it" in Genesis 15:6 refers to the "seed" (which is Christ) of Genesis 15:5.
The believer in Christ can rejoice knowing that he stands justified before the Lord in the finished work of Christ because the righteousness of God is charged to his account. Isaiah testified of this truth: "In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory," Isaiah 45:25. And again, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue *that* shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This *is* the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness *is* of me, saith the LORD," Isaiah 54:17. (See also Jeremiah 23:6; 33:16.) What a wondrous blessing that our legal standing before God is in Jesus Christ and not in ourselves!
Our time is up for today; farewell.

A Vital Lesson From Abraham (4TH)

(This is a continuation of studying that part of the life of Abraham that is often overlooked or ignored regarding justification and faith. Today's study is to show that the "it" in Genesis 15:6 refers to the "seed" of Genesis 15:5 and not the faith of Abraham.)

In previous podcasts quotes were supplied showing that the general consensus is that the "it" in Genesis 15:6 is the faith of Abraham's. Furthermore, it is said that the faith of Abraham was imputed for righteousness. I shall supply again a quote from John Calvin that clearly testifies to what has been said. It is as follows:

> In the first place, the faith of Abram is commended, because by it he embraced the promise of God; it is commended, in the second place, because hence Abram obtained righteousness in the sight of God, and that by imputation. … [W]hen this faith is said to have been imputed to him for righteousness, to mingle with it some other meaning, than that the faith of Abram was accepted in the place of righteousness with God.

It cannot be questioned as to what Calvin believed. He said that "the faith of Abram" (Abraham) "obtained righteousness in the sight of God, and that by imputation." He further said "that the faith of Abram was accepted in the place of righteousness with God."
However, when we search the Scriptures we find that the righteousness that justifies a sinner is found in the Person and work of Jesus Christ. At the expense of be redundant, allow me to digress somewhat and refresh our memory concerning the

four basic phrases and or scriptures regarding justification. They are:

> Romans 3:28, "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by ***faith*** without the deeds of the law."
> Romans 5:9, "Much more then, being now justified by his ***blood***, we shall be saved from wrath through him."
> Galatians 2:17, "But if, while we seek to be justified by ***Christ***, we ourselves also are found sinners, *is* therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid."
> Titus 3:7, "That being justified by his ***grace***, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."

As a side note, we are not including James 2:21, "Was not Abraham our father justified by ***works***, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?" with these verses because works are an evidence of justification and not the cause or ground. Equally, if we were to do an in-depth study of faith we would find that faith also is an evidence that one is justified. However, the four verses above refer to the judicial aspect of justification. As mentioned above, we discussed this in some details in a previous study. (See Podcast 126.) Yet, when comparing the phrases "justified by faith," "justified by his blood," "justified by Christ," and "justified by his grace," it should be obvious that God is not telling us of four distinct ways to be justified, but that these statements are referring to the same thing—the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. We closed out the previous podcast by referring Isaiah 45:25; 54:17; Jeremiah 23:6; and 33:16, showing that justifying righteousness is that the righteousness that justifies is that procured by the Lord Jesus Christ.
If "the faith of Abram was accepted in the place of righteousness with God" as Calvin wrote then how is it that the ground of justification is the righteousness of God as the Scriptures affirm? Romans 5:18 in the context affirm that justification is by the "righteousness of one" which is the righteousness of Jesus Christ. It states, "Therefore as by the offence of one *judgment came* upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one *the free gift came* upon all men unto justification of life," Romans 5:18. Therefore, justification cannot be established by the faith of an individual and by the righteousness of God (or Jesus Christ) at the same time. Romans 10:4 equally affirms that "Christ *is* the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Furthermore, II Peter 1:1 declares that this righteousness is "of our God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." While it is true that those who are justified by the righteousness of God believe and that by faith justification is received experientially in the heart and soul, the sinner is not accepted by God because of faith; the sinner is accepted on the ground of "the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ." Therefore, when Genesis 15:6 states that Abram "believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness," the "it" refers not to the faith

of Abram, but to the "seed" in the preceding verse (Genesis 15:5). The Scriptures make it plain in Galatians 3:16 that the "seed" is Christ: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ."

A rich and inspiring study can be made in tracing this "seed" from the protoevangelium as declared in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:15) down to Abraham and clearly proclaimed in the manifestation of the Person and work of Jesus Christ as note in the book of Galatians. Nevertheless, time and space does not allow for us to do this in this study.

When we understand the overall picture of salvation and/or justification, we find that the elect were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:4) and that Christ was their surety from eternity (Hebrews 7:22) in the everlasting covenant (Hebrews 13:20); therefore, faith (like works, James 2:21-26) is merely an evidence that one is justified. Furthermore, as previously mentioned in a former study (Podcast 126.), the "law of faith" (Romans 3:27) teaches us that justification is by the Person and work of Christ and not by the works of man.

Romans 5:15-19 teaches us that righteousness which justifies is a *free gift* and that is by one Man—Christ Jesus or the Seed of Galatians 3:16. As Robert Haldane said, "On account of the offence of Adam, sentence of death was pronounced upon *all* whom he represented. On account of the righteousness of Jesus Christ, sentence of justification unto life was pronounced in favour of *all* He represented." (*The Epistle to the Romans*, p. 217.) Remember that justification is the opposite of condemnation and that both are judicial acts and not experimental acts. When the guilty is condemned in a court of law, he does not have to believe it for it to be true and valid. Likewise, when one is justified he does not need to believe it for it to be factual or correct. Just as "by one man's disobedience many were made sinners," conversely, "by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous," (Romans 5:19). In other words, all mankind were represented in Adam and by his sin they were made (legally constituted) sinners and believing did not make it so. Likewise, all who were represented in Christ were made (legally constituted) righteous and believing did not make it so. It was true because the justice of God was satisfied. Faith did not make it so. Furthermore, faith cannot receive what is not; faith can only receive what already exists. It is true that the saints prior to the death of Christ were justified based on what Christ would do and saints after His death are justified because of what He did. Additionally, the blessings of justification are received into the heart and soul of the justified by faith, but the judicial reality of justification is by the righteousness of Christ and not by the faith of the individual. Also, some affirm that justification is by the object of faith, which is Christ. However, this needs to be clearly stated so that one is not confused in thinking that it is his individual faith that God accepts for righteousness or justification. No. Genesis 15:6 is not when Abraham initially

believed. He had justifying faith prior to his leaving Ur. How much he understood we cannot say. That Genesis 15:6 was a critical, focal point in the life of Abraham and justification is certain, but we cannot scripturally say that he did not have faith prior to that according to Hebrews 11:8.

Allow me to say again that I do not want anyone to think that I am minimizing the necessity of faith. The Scriptures abundantly teach that faith is a gift of God by the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 2:8; Galatians 5:22), but they equally teach that true faith is active and produces works (James 2:17-26). However, to give the impression that justification is by the faith of the individual is to rob God of His purpose, to rob the Lord Jesus Christ of His Person and work, and to rob the Holy Spirit in the application of the truth and reality of justification. I will close this podcast by extending the normal time somewhat with a couple of quotes from the *Works of Robert Traill*, Volume I, pp. 276, 289.

> That there is a decreed justification from eternity, particular and fixed as to all the elect, and a virtual perfect justification of all the redeemed, in and by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, Isaiah liii. 11. Rom. iv. 25. Heb. ix. 26, 28. and x. 14. is not yet called in question by any amongst us; and more is not craved, but that a sinner, for his actual justification, must lay hold on and plead this redemption in Christ's blood by faith." Vol. I, p. 276, The Banner of Truth Trust publication.

Then, he said, regarding the importance of preaching justification:

> That as it is a point of highest concern to every man, so it is to the whole doctrine of Christianity. All the great fundamentals of Christian truth, centre in this of justification. The Trinity of persons in the God-head; the incarnation of the only begotten of the Father; the satisfaction paid to the law and justice of God, for the sins of the world, by his obedience and sacrifice of himself in that flesh he assumed; and the divine authority of the scriptures, which reveal all this; are all straight lines of truth, that centre in this doctrine of the justification of a sinner by the imputation and application of that satisfaction. No justification without a righteousness; no righteousness can be but what answers fully and perfectly the holy law of God; no such righteousness can be performed but by a divine person; no benefit can accrue to a sinner by it, unless it be some way his, and applied to him; no application can be made of this, but by faith in Jesus Christ. Page 289.

This concludes the study in "A Vital Lesson From Abraham." Farewell.

END OF VOLUME ONE