

Christian Gospel, Doctrine
And
Experience Simply Put
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PART I

The Gospel Of Christ Simply Put

As Luke wrote his epistle and the Book of Acts to someone named "*Theophilus*," to "*set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us*," it seems good to me also to write to you, "in order," my "most excellent Theophilus" the things which compose the ***gospel of Christ*** when simply put. (Luke 1: 2-3.) The private aspects of this letter you have received, and as you have confessed to be taught that you are a sinner, I now set before you the more specific aspects of the gospel for your edification and spiritual benefit. As promised, this part of our communication is placed in booklet form for the edification and instruction of others who may be given a desire to better understand the gospel of the free grace of God. As presented, this *gospel* is viewed as ***finished and accomplished*** by the active and passive obedience of our blessed Lord Jesus Christ while here on earth two thousand years ago.

The word "*gospel*," simply put, means "*glad tidings*." In the framework of the Christian faith, then, it means "*glad tidings of salvation by Christ Jesus*," or "*good news*" about the salvation of sinners. Now "*all have sinned and come short of the glory of God*," and in that sense sinnership is universal. However, the Holy Spirit does not teach all men the "*exceeding sinfulness*

of sin. "Hence all are not made *feelingly sensible* of their sinfulness. Therefore, what is "*glad tidings*" to a quickened sinner is of no joyful nor fruitful benefit to those not yet called of God. So the *gospel* of the grace of God is of special benefit to *sensible sinners* only. This gospel tells sensible sinners of how Christ came under the law to *redeem* such as were under its condemnation; of Christ's active and passive *obedience* to the law in their behalf as their *substitute*; of the imputation (or "charge") of their sins to Him and of His consequent suffering the penalty of those imputed sins. It declares the *imputation* of His own righteousness to them for whom He suffered. In the broadest sense, the *gospel* includes all things that the Triune God did in the salvation of His elect. In a more narrow sense, it tells of **how** He saved His elect by the sacrifice of Himself in their stead.

The message brought by the gospel cannot be *glad tidings* to anyone who does not have a *feeling need* for salvation from sin. Indeed, the apostles tell us that while the gospel is a "*savour of life unto life to them that believe,*" it is also a "*savour of death unto death unto them that perish.*" (2 Corinthians 2:16.) Certainly, to unbelievers it cannot be *good news* that they are "*condemned already.*" (John 3:18) In order for one to believe it as good news, God must first **give** him an evangelic faith, "*for all men hath not faith*" to exercise. (2 Thessalonians 3:2.) Simply put, *faith* is a *prerequisite* to the message being *good news* to one, and this "*faith is the gift of God.*" (Ephesians 2: 1-10.) A *prerequisite*

to this God-given faith is *spiritual life* in which this faith resides. In turn, this *spiritual life* shows a quickened sinner his awful sinfulness and dire need for salvation. Now, if you trace this backwards, it can be of comfort to you. Have you felt a dire need for salvation? If so, it is because you understand the exceeding sinfulness of sin. If this is your experience, this is because of the presence within your "*inner man*" of *spiritual life*. Dead men do not have this experience! If *spiritual life* is present, *faith in God* is residing within. And this faith is the gift of God Himself. If you did not have faith in God, you could not feel a need for His salvation! See how this gospel is good news to sensible sinners? No greater message can be tendered to the heart of a sinner than the gospel of why and how Christ saved sinners.

From God's standpoint, salvation actually commenced **before** He created the world. It was that early that He set forth Christ as the "*Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*" (Revelations 13:8.) It was that early that "*He chose us in Him **before the foundation** of the world that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love.*" (Ephesians 1: 16.) It was then that He "*prepared a kingdom*" for them "*from the foundation of the world.*" (Matthew 25:34.) But we must be very clear here: We **were not saved before the world began**. If that were so, then Christ needed not to have suffered, bled, and died; nor would He be the *Saviour of sinners*. The purpose of God to save them by the sacrifice of Christ was before the

foundation of the world, and His purpose cannot fail: "*My counsel shall stand and I will do all My pleasure.*" (Isaiah 46:10.) But His pleasure was to do this by and in Christ that the glory would belong to Him.

God's people were *all legally* saved two thousand years ago by the combination of Christ's active and passive obedience. By His active obedience, He perfectly kept the law *for them*; and in His passive obedience on the cross, He *finished* and *accomplished* all the requirements that the Justice of God prescribed for their salvation. It is on this basis that He *imputes* (charges to one's account) ***His righteousness*** to them as their very own. This is also the foundation of the *gospel*, or *good news* to sensible sinners. In Christ, simply put, salvation is already ***finished***. He will never again suffer for anyone's sins. He will never again make Himself a sacrifice and offering to God for sin. He does not have to. He has already done all that was necessary, and they all are *already legally* (that is, by God's holy law) ***saved!*** Isn't that a sweet and glorious thought? Christ ***IS*** the Saviour of sinners!

Before one objects to that gospel concept, we hasten to "set forth in order" the next topic for our attention. That is, in time, the Holy Spirit *quicken*s (An Old English word which means to "make alive," or "to smart" or "be pricked" etc.) those that are ***saved*** by Christ on the cross, giving to them *spiritual life*. This is referred to in Scripture as "being born from above," or "begotten

again," and often Bible students call it *regeneration*. Freewillers call it "getting saved." Hollywood artists call it "being born again." However, these terms are rather confusing and often inaccurate. "Begetting" takes place before "birth." A sensible sinner will already be "begotten," but may not as yet have been "delivered" in birth. Principally, *regeneration* in both places in the Bible where it is used seems to refer to the re-introduction of life into someone prior to the resurrection of the body. But, we will not now go there. Rather, let us still "simply put" the order of the gospel of Christ.

The *spiritual life* begotten and conceived in a previously dead elect sinner produces various effects. They can now *feel* the awful sinfulness of their sins very clearly. Their conscience is *quicken*ed. They *smart* under the felt judgment of God's law. They now know their acute *need* for salvation. They now desire evidences that God loves them, and that Christ died for them. They now are brought by the Holy Spirit under the condemnation of God's holy law. They now mourn, being depressed spiritually, over their sinfulness. They have spiritual eyes to see their need, and feel that they yet walk in darkness. (Isaiah 50:10.) They become beggars at mercy's door, longing for a hope and evidence that they are one of God's people. Simply put, they are **alive!** They are in the process of birth - "*being born from above.*" (John 1:12-13.) And the first step in this process of birth is the *begetting* and *conception*, which is called *quicken*ing. This gracious and necessary work will ultimately and

unfailingly be produced in them "*at the appointed time.*" (Galatians 1:15.) They are *sinners*, and will immediately confess themselves to be such. As sensible sinners they are the only kind of people for whom Christ came to save. "*I came not to call the righteous, but **sinners** to repentance.*" Again, "*Christ died for the **ungodly.***" (Romans 5:6.) Simply put, the *gospel* is that Christ ***did in fact die*** only for sinners; that is, those who are in time made *feeling so*. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to reveal this sinnership to them; and that Christ died for such sinners as they! That is *gospel!*

In speaking of God's revelation of sin in His elect, and what He has achieved in their pardon and salvation leads to a brief discussion of revelation itself. God's revelation to man is three-fold. First, universally, all of creation reveals the eternal power and Godhead of the Creator. (Romans 1:20.) There are none who are excused from the knowledge of God. All mankind is *accountable* to their Maker, and the revelation of God in nature is sufficient for their eternal punishment. This revelation is found universally in the race of man. Even in communists' and antichristian cultures, the superstitious horoscopes and mysticism contradict their avowed atheism. Men must be taught atheism, for it is a natural perversion from demonstrable evidence all around them. "*The fool has said in his heart, there is no god.*" This revelation is such that the "*heavens declare the glory of God, and the earth sheweth His handiworks.*" Yet, nature cannot

reveal salvation in Christ Jesus. This is the exclusive work of the Spirit of God. All early Christian confessions teach this point as an article of faith. They all point out that while nature reveals God's power and glory, nature is insufficient to reveal salvation in Christ Jesus.

Second, God reveals Himself to all who can read and access His written record - the Holy Bible. The unlearned and those without this record are accountable upon the first universal revelation. But they are not accountable for that of which they can have no knowledge. As the first type of revelation, this too, is insufficient to reveal Christ to a poor sensible sinner within itself. It is a sealed book without the enlightenment of the Spirit of God. This second form of revelation has always existed. There never has been a moment when God has left all men without a revelation of Himself since He formed Man. Adam, even in his depraved condition knew much about his Creator. Through his son, Seth, and his offspring; before the flood and

Noah, Shem, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and especially Moses and the prophets of Israel, this revelation has been faithfully preserved. Among the Gentiles, the Magi of Central Asia, Job, and others, had this revelation to a limited degree. Lastly, by Christ, His apostles and ministers of the New Testament, and the early church kept this revelation alive and extended it throughout the world. Simply put, since God created Adam, this revelation has never been broken. The apostle could

write: "*If our gospel is hid, it is **hid from them that are lost.***" (2 Corinthians 4:3.) The reason the apostle gives for this is: "*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.*" (verse 4.) Simply put, God reveals Himself to some men in His written word, yet so as they too are "without excuse." But God does not reveal Himself through His written word to all mankind; nor to all who can read and have access to it. Millions around us read their bibles and never see the truth, nor *rejoice* in the gospel! Millions in Western Civilization have never in their lifetime heard the *gospel* preached in modern "churches." A point needs to be made here: Those who have this written revelation ought not take it for granted. Millions have died defending the right of men to have free access to its holy pages. How grateful ought believers to be!

But the written word is, within itself, unable to reveal salvation to sinners. The greatest proof today is the numerous "plans of salvation" with bits and pieces of the Bible inserted as magical incantations, and the resultant ignorance and darkness of their inventors and followers! The truth of the Scriptures must be *revealed*, or given, to a quickened believer. "*All scripture is **given** by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the **man of God*** (not everyone)

may be thoroughly furnished unto all good work." (2 Timothy 3: 16-17.)

Thirdly, in addition to the *light of nature* to rational creatures and the *written revelation* to educated people, it is necessary that there be an *extraordinary* and *inward revelation* by the Spirit of God. Without this, there can be no "gospel" or "glad tidings". "But God hath **revealed** them (the things which God has prepared for them that love Him) *unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, Yea, the deep things of God . . . Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.*" (2 Corinthians 2:10-16.) Again, "Before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto faith, which should afterwards **be revealed.**" (Galatians 3:23)

The following application will appear very unorthodox to Evangelicals who follow the theory of Andrew Fuller (Fuller taught that Christ has not yet saved His people, but merely made His atonement sufficient for all men) but it is necessary to declare the full value of this third kind of revelation. Isaac Backus in his massive and extensive history of the Baptists and New England colonies, cited case after case where the Spirit of God worked in the quickening of individuals in the *absence of the gospel ministry* during the Great Awakening. The followers of Andrew Fuller later introduced a scheme of *potential salvation* conditioned on the merits of men. He ignored the *accomplishments of Christ* in His sacrificial

death. A necessary part of Fuller's scheme was, and yet is, an absolute necessity of the gospel reaching a sinner **before** the Holy Spirit could do His important work. Thus, they made salvation dependent upon man, rather than by Christ two thousand years ago. This is **not the experience** of quickened sinners.

For the child of God to understand anything *spiritual*, he must first be made *spiritually alive*. "The dead know not anything." (Ecclesiastes 9:5.) Simply put, he must **first** be quickened, or begotten, spiritually. The only One able to **beget spiritually** must Himself be *spiritual*. "The natural man receiveth **not the things of the Spirit of God: for they** (the spiritual things) *are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they* (the spiritual things) *are spiritually discerned* (understood) *but he that is spiritual judgeth* (discerns) *all things, yet he himself is judged* (discerned) *of no man.*" (2 Corinthians 2:14-15.)

What might be considered *unorthodox* is this: At what point in time is spiritual revelation to an elect and redeemed sinner possible? The answer: Whenever one is *quickened to life, or begotten again, or spiritually conceived*. That "new creature" implanted within the "old man" of the flesh **has ETERNAL life**. This *life* never had a beginning. It knows the things of the Spirit of God within itself, whether it can adequately express or understand them or not. Such a person, then, "has the

mind of Christ" since "*Christ is in him, the hope of glory*". (1 Corinthians 2:16.) But, one may justly ask, "How early in life is this revelation possible?" The answer: Whenever it pleases God to reveal it. With John the Baptist, it was while he was yet in his mother's womb! With David, it was "*when I was upon my mother's breasts.*" (Psalm 22:9,) or as he also said, "*I was cast upon Thee from the womb: Thou art my God from my mother's belly.*" (Psalms 22:10.) What David said of Himself may also be applied to Christ. (Of whom it appears to be prophetically intended.) If one suggests that these scriptures are special cases, we then present the next:

When Herod sent and killed "*all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coast thereof, from two years old and under,*" (which had to have been a great slaughter!), it is written of these infants, "*In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they were not.*" (Matthew 2:16-18.) But what was the *gospel* revelation relative to these little mangled infants? "*Thus saith the Lord; Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord: and **they shall come again from the land of the enemy** (death). And there is hope in the end, saith the Lord, that **thy children shall come again***

to their own borders." (In the resurrection?) In this case, at least, one hundred percent of these infants will be in the resurrection of the just, unless there can be another interpretation of these passages which is not so clearly stated. Without discussing the state of *all infants dying in infancy*, the point to be made here is: That at least some infants, as here, die in infancy and are saved by the death of Christ. Second, the message, or *glad tidings, i.e., the gospel* has no part in making this true. "***It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing.***" (John 6:63.) There being but one way of salvation, such a salvation must invariably fulfill this prophesy. It must be able to include these infants as well as all elect adults alike. Who will argue that these infants *repented and believed the gospel*, or "accepted Christ as their Saviour? One must agree that (if they are saved at all) they were obviously elected, redeemed, ransomed, justified, called (in death), and quickened exactly as are all other elect who come to the age of understanding. Simply put, *hearing* the message of this salvation is a very great blessing to sensible sinners; but the *message* is ***about this salvation***; not the ***cause of it!*** The *hearing* does not do the quickening, nor does the *believing*. Christ alone is the Saviour of sinners; **not**, "will be if you let Him." It is rather too late for any "letting." Christ has already **died!**

To summarize this point: God has given a record of Himself, His creation, and of His salvation. The *gospel*, simply put, is that Christ "*came not to call the*

righteous, but sinners to repentance." "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." (1 Timothy 1:16.) The message of the gospel is *good news*, or *glad tidings*, to *feeling* or sensible sinners. From man's point of view, the gospel begins in the revelation by the Spirit of God of one's sinnership within his very being. Such sinners experience a dreadful and fearful sinfulness stirring within them. It is here, simply put, where the *need of salvation* is driven home to the heart of a poor, but quickened and unconverted elect child of God. From God's standpoint, however, salvation rests in His eternal decree of love to save sinners. By divine election and predestination and redemption by Christ, the sensible sinner is made to ascribe glory, honor, and thanksgiving to Him who loved him and gave Himself for him. It is proper to hold to a *gospel* that ascribes all the glory of one's salvation to God. And, simply put, sensible sinners are the only ones who can do so.

PART II

THE FELT NEED FOR SALVATION

SIMPLY PUT

When one considers that men are, as David said, "*shapened in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me,*" (Psalm 51:5) and that "*the wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as*

they be born, speaking lies," (Psalm 58:3), it becomes certain that man is in no way able to save, or to help save, himself. He has always been depraved since the fall. Before the flood, "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that **every** imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." (Genesis 6:5.) After the flood, it remained unchanged: "For the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." (Genesis 8:21.) Today, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? (Jeremiah 17:9.) Simple put, the "natural man" is totally depraved in **all** of his faculties, being "dead in trespasses and sins." (Ephesians 2:1-6.) In fact, the highest and best faculty of man is his conscience, and "even their mind and conscience is defiled." (Titus 1:15.) This condition locks man into captivity to sin and death so strongly that he cannot even grieve over his condition. In fact, he loves to have it so. Still, "sin is the transgression of the law" and "the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, **neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.**" (Romans 8:78.) Being **dead** to spiritual things, the natural man cannot become *alarmed* over sin; cannot *feel* poverty stricken, or "poor and needy," nor can he "hunger and thirst after righteousness." Yet, it is these very conditions that identify those who are the objects of the *gospel message*: "Come unto Me, all ye that **labor** and are **heavy laden**, and I will give **you** rest."

(Matthew 11:28.)

The overwhelming numbers of religious people today appear to have never *felt* themselves to be the "*chief of sinners*" in dire need for God's salvation. They are satisfied with being man-made "Christians". This is abundantly evident in the simplistic schemes they invent and press on others to "get saved," not knowing that Christ has already **finished** saving all His people on the cross legally. The gospel of the grace of God declares Christ to be the Saviour of sinners. Nowhere does the Bible present "*plans of salvation*," "*decisions for Christ*," nor bits and pieces of the law or "gospel" to be the savior of the "righteous." On the contrary, the Bible presents a very ugly and pitiful condition under which sinners are born; and every feeling sinner acknowledges that this condition is real. They are "*born dead in trespasses and sins*." (Ephesians 2:1.) They had their "*conversations in times past in the lusts of the flesh and of the mind; and were **by nature** the children of wrath, even as others*." (Ephesians 2:3.) That "*at that time*" they "*were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world*." (Ephesians 2:12.) Simply put, that is a woeful and helpless condition! Such men cannot be *feelingly sensible of their sins*, and consequently, of their *need for salvation*. Yet, the Bible presents the condition of natural man even worse than the above. Let us look more closely at their condition:

First, "*There is **none** righteous, no, **not one.***" (Romans 3:10.) So none have anything to offer to God to commend them to Him. All they can bring to Him is sin. Thus, God owes none of them anything but cruel justice - "*the wages of sin is death.*" While they may boast of all kinds of "goodness" and "charities" and "political correctness," "*there is **none** that understandeth, there is **none** that seeketh after God*". (Romans 3:11.) That within itself destroys the whole fabric of evangelical motivation as used today. It is often said that no matter what it cost, if only **one** soul is saved, it is worth it. The problem is, the Bible says **none** seeketh after God. "*They are **all** gone out of the way, they are **together** become unprofitable (worthless); there is **none that doeth good, no, not one.***" (Romans 3:12.) And how descriptive of so many man-made "Christians" of today: "*Their mouth is an open sepulcher (grave); the poison of asps (snakes) is under their lips.*" (Romans 3:13,) "*Their mouth is **full of cursing and bitterness**; their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are in their ways: and the way of peace have they not known; there is no fear of God before their eyes.*" (Romans 3:14-18.) Paul concludes this description saying, "*Therefore by the **deeds of THE LAW there shall no flesh be JUSTIFIED in His sight.***" (Romans 3:20.) If Paul can say this about **God's law**, what then can be said of **men's** unscriptural "plans of salvation!" If the works of the LAW cannot justify, surely anything less can be of no more benefit. We must, therefore, readily conclude that

by Andrew Fuller's (the founder of modern "evangelism" so-called) plan of salvation, no flesh can be justified before God either. Decisionism cannot be superior to God's holy law. If by that law, which Paul writes, "*is just, holy and good,*" no man can be justified, then by simple mental decisions for Christ shall no flesh be justified in His sight either. Is that not a reasonable conclusion? If so, then, man must be justified by something outside of his own ability. Simply put, none of these things can **redeem** us from the curse of the broken divine law. But Christ did by His death! None of them can provide a needed **ransom** from death and hell, so that the captive could go free; but Christ did! Nor can any of them **pay the debt** of sin we accrued by the transgression of His law; but Christ did! Again, simply put, there is nothing a *lifeless carnal person* can do to help him to attain salvation. It was left to the merits of Christ, and He achieved that blessed end. In fact, since salvation is **completed** in Christ's atonement, these plans and programs are not needed anyway.

As Paul said again, "*I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.*" (Galatians 2:21.) One may extrapolate readily from this divine principle the following: Can one walk down an aisle and make a decision whether Christ died or not? Yes. Can one believe about Christ as readily as about Caesar, Buddha, or anyone else, without Christ having died? Of course! Then simply put, these man-made systems of works cannot replace what Christ

Himself has done for sinners! They cannot save a man from the power, dominion, penalty, nor love of sin. "*If righteousness come by any plan of salvation, verily Christ died in vain,*" is a legitimate conclusion from the above Biblical principle. Repentance did not die on the cross. Moral suasion (often called "faith today") did not suffer for our sins. Decisions are activities of the natural, or carnal, mind and cannot atone for sins. Walking down an aisle can only make one a member of a religious institution; but one cannot walk into the kingdom of God. One must be **born into it!** Simply put, these things are **not good news** to sensible sinners simply because they do not put away, or remit, the heavy burden of sin. After doing all the above, the sensible sinner comes away feeling as lost and undone as ever he did beforehand. He needs deliverance from sin, the wrath of God, death and hell. The *good news* is a message about what God did in providing this deliverance for sensible sinners.

Simply put by Paul, "*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,***" and then he adds, "*let him be accursed.*" (Galatians 1:6-9.) This is serious business, isn't it? Or, as he said more clearly, "*for if he that cometh preaching **another Jesus**, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive **another spirit**, which ye have not received, or **another gospel**, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with*

him." (2 Corinthians 11:4.) Children of God believe that Jesus is one with the **almighty** God, so if someone describes a Jesus who "can't save you unless you let him," then certainly this Jesus is not the one whom God "has given all power in heaven and earth, that He should give eternal life to all that the Father gave Him." Listening to the descriptions of the modern Jesus preached today will show that Paul was correct when he said there was **another** Jesus. Since "*the Spirit quickeneth whom He will*", then if one preaches a spirit that is only "trying to save you, but can't unless you let him," then surely this is **another** spirit! The real Jesus and Spirit are valuable to sensible sinners, for from them he derives his life, comfort and salvation. The other Jesus, Spirit, and gospel cannot reach his case. He has a *feeling need* for a salvation which is of God, and which will give him a lively hope in Christ Jesus. The blessed work of the Spirit alarming him to his *need* for forgiveness of sins, and bringing him to a knowledge that salvation is free, unmerited, and *finished* by Christ in his behalf answers that felt need in him. As knowledge is conveyed to him by the Spirit of God, he grows in understanding and turns away from his own works of righteousness to embrace the righteousness of Christ as his only hope of salvation. This knowledge is given "line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, and there a little" until he is established in the "faith of God's elect."

In the next section, we will present *some* of the many aspects of the *gospel of the grace of God*, hopefully, in a way easy to understand and yet Biblically

full without sacrificing doctrinal soundness.

PART III

SOME COMPONENTS OF THE GOSPEL

SIMPLY PUT

The Gospel is the *message* of what Christ has done in the salvation of His elect people. (Ephesians 1:4; 1 Thessalonians 1:4; 2 Thessalonians 2:13, to mention but a few passages.) To declare what Christ has done will involve many things, for He did a great deal for them. He *obeyed the law* for, or in the stead of, His people because they could not keep it. He *died for their sins*, because they could not die for them and yet be saved. He *paid a ransom for them*, because they were captives to sin and could not set themselves free from its dominion over them. He *redeemed them from the servitude* to sin, Satan, the Law, and their own corruption because they were unable to pay for their own deliverance. He *paid the debt they owed for sins, iniquity, and transgressions*, because they had nothing with which to pay, and "*the wages of sin is **death***." So He **died for them** Himself. He did **all** of these things, and more, for them two thousand years ago!

He *sanctified them*, because they were unholy, unclean, polluted, and could not wash away their inborn corruption. He became the *propitiation for their sins*, because they could not appease the wrath of God's

judgment against them, nor make *satisfaction* to His justice. That too, He did two thousand years ago. He "*justified them **by His blood,***" when He died on the cross, because they could not justify themselves before God. He "*reconciled them to God,*" because they were by nature His enemies and could not gain His pleasure or fellowship by anything they could do. These are *some more* of the things Christ did for His elect sinners two thousand years ago, because **He loved them!** All these things Christ actually "*accomplished by His death at Jerusalem not many days hence*" as He said to Moses and Elijah on the mount of transfiguration. Therefore none of these things are predicated on any of our doing or believing. We **believe it**, not in order to **make it so**; but rather, we believe it **believe it IS so!** This list of seven things that Christ actually *accomplished* for sensible sinners in their salvation while here in His flesh, we will present as components of *the true gospel of the grace of God.*

1. Christ's *obedience* for His people
2. Christ's *death* for the penalty for their sins
3. Christ's shed-blood as a *ransom* for them
4. Christ's *redemption* of His people
5. Christ's *sanctification* of His people
6. Christ's *propitiation* for their sins

7. Christ's *reconciliation* of His people to God

You will gain a preliminary understanding of the *true gospel of grace* if you will here note that every one of the above was actually accomplished by Christ two thousand years ago. Simply put, the elect now have a perfect *obedience* and *righteousness* already imputed to them, an *acceptable sacrifice* for their sins, which *ransomed* and *redeemed* them; which also *sanctified* them being their *propitiation*, and thereby *satisfying* the justice of God, they are ***now reconciled*** to God by the death of His beloved Son. That lengthy sentence *is the gospel* in a nutshell, so to speak. Since too few people today even understand these seven terms, we will elaborate on each to make them as simple as we can without sacrificing the truth or beauty of them. Consider all of the following to be *definitions* of these Biblical terms and doctrinal statements. It will help your understanding of *the gospel* greatly.

Christ's obedience for His people

It is both reasonable and Biblical that anyone going to heaven must be without sin. Heaven is not the habitation of the wicked. "The soul that sinneth it shall die." (Ezekiel 18:4.) Since sin is the "transgression of the law" and the "wages of sin is death" (1 John 3:4 and Romans 6:23) and "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God," a poor feeling sinner cannot help but think, "Who, Lord, then can be saved?" And the answer to that question by our Lord on another occasion

is as good today as then. *"With man it is impossible, but with God all things are possible."* It is right here that a convicted sinner often falters. "If I must be sinless, or if I must be holy, then there can be no hope for me!" How often and how long have God's quickened children been plagued by this most logical argument against themselves? Yet, when the apostle presented the reason for divine election in Ephesians 1:4, He gave the reason for election to be *"that we should be **holy and without blame** before Him in love."* **Not** so much that **we** are holy and without blame; but are such **before Him**, or in **His** sight. We will in this flesh never be that in our own sight! In our nature, we know we are not holy or blameless. So, simply put, in some way God Himself must deal with our violations of His law. He must find a way to *"be just and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."* (Romans 3:26.) And He did!

Now the sweet mercy of God led the apostle to deal specifically with that problem, so it is a fundamental aspect of *the gospel*. Consider our definition of the *gospel* - *glad tidings*. One must be accounted as *absolutely **obedient*** if he is to be *without sin*. The sensible sinner knows that he is not there! To him, that is an insurmountable problem if considered outside of the gospel revelation! Paul wrote, *"Wherefore, as by one man (meaning Adam) sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death (as a deadly infectious disease) passed upon all men, for all have sinned."* This point every living feeling sinner can easily

understand. But look what mercy applies to just such sinners: "*Therefore as by the offence of one (Adam) judgment came upon all men to condemnation; **even so** by the **righteousness of one** (meaning Christ) the free gift came upon all (manner of) men unto justification.*" (Romans 5:12 and 18.) Now watch closely what he says about **our obedience**. "*For as by one man's disobedience (Adam's) many were made sinners, so by the **obedience of one** (Christ's) shall many be made **righteous**.*" Simply put, Adam disobeyed and **all** of his offspring yet *in him* were made sinners. So also, Christ perfectly obeyed the law to "*its jot and tittle*" and **all in Him** by divine election are counted to have obeyed also. That is *good news*, for in His sight they are no longer considered disobedient. On that basis His righteousness can be imputed to them as if they had never sinned at all! See! That is *how* He actually "*made*" us "*holy and without blame before Him in love.*" (Ephesians 1: 2-6.) What wondrous grace is this? Since we ourselves have not been perfectly obedient and thus became sinners, God ordained that Christ's obedience should be counted as His people's obedience. Isn't that *pure grace*? "*The wages of sin is death; but the **gift of God** is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*" (Romans 6:23.) When this is given to us to see and believe, it surely is *the gospel*, or *glad tidings* to our souls. View then, dear sensible sinner, Christ's perfect obedience that gives to you a hope in the righteousness of Christ imputed to His people. His obedience, and only this, makes you "holy and without

blame before Him in love."

Christ's death as the penalty for their sins

This aspect of the gospel is the most familiar of all those listed, and yet strangely, so few truly believed by most people in a consistent manner. *"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ **died for our sins** according to the scripture."* (1 Corinthians 15:3.) Some people recognize what that passage says, and yet do not want to receive the force of it. So they modify it by saying, "Christ died for all our sins *except the sin of UNBELIEF.*" This view still does not solve their problem with it, but it is the best they can do to make the atonement universal and explain why all mankind is not saved. The text does not teach this, nor could it possibly mean it. Consider this: It teaches that Christ died for **all our sins**. The only limitation is in the word "our," which excludes "theirs", but fully includes "all" of our sins - not *some* of them. If Christ did not include the "sin of unbelief" in His sacrificial death, or propitiation, then *all men still* would have that one sin for which they must die! That one sin not atoned would plunge the entire race of man into damnation. Becoming a believer would not remove this one sin anymore than it would atone for all other sins! Only *"the blood of Christ cleanseth us from **all our sins.**"* (1 John 1:7.) "Belief" has no effect upon the removal of sin. The wages of sin is still death. So in such a situation where Christ failed to cover the sin of unbelief, He needs not to have suffered for any of the rest. The result would be the

same!

In the 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians, Paul shows the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ and called this "***the gospel***" that was delivered to him. Why? Because everything that Christ died to accomplish is included in that great event. The death of Christ is the *sacrifice* made to the Father by the Eternal Spirit for our salvation. By it, our sins were "*put away as far as the east is from the west*" and He promised that He would "*remember our sins no more.*" Isn't it good that He did not merely put them away as far as the north is from the south! Paul compared Christ's death and its effect on His people to Adam's death and its effect on his offspring, saying, "*For as in Adam all die, **even so in Christ shall all be made alive.***" (1 Corinthians 15:22.) Simply put, as it is true that all that were in Adam's seed died when he died and thus inherited death; so of a truth, all that are in Christ shall also be made alive. They are ***in Christ*** by divine election, **not** by their decision to join a religious institution. They "*were chosen **in him** before the foundation of the world.*" (Ephesians 1:4.) Simply put, that *choice* was long before He died, and it determined for whom He would suffer and die. Upon the basis of His everlasting love and election of them to salvation, His atonement stands. He died for ***all of their sins***, and **only** for them. "*I lay down My life for My sheep.*" (John 10:15.)

Christ's shed-blood as a ransom for His people

Usually when reading about a kidnapping most people know what is meant by a *ransom* price. However, when they hear the word in the context of the Christian faith, they appear as blind as if they had never heard the word at all! It means exactly the same in both settings. The *ransom price* is paid in order to set the *captive free*. That is surely *the gospel* to one who feels to be a captive to sin! Again, that price was paid two thousand years ago, not when one believes it!

By definition, a *ransom* is a price paid for the freedom of one that is held *captive* against his will. In reality, sinners are held captive by sin and Satan, and when they are *quicken*ed to spiritual life, are no longer willingly so. To put it simply: The ransom price frees the *captive*! "*If the Son shall make you free, you are free indeed.*" And when was this ransom paid? You already know the answer. There is some time, however, between the payment of the ransom and the actual deliverance of the captive from his captivity. The *ransom price* was paid two thousand years ago, and the expected result is certain. The actual deliverance is by the work of the Spirit and the *good news* of the gospel.

Jesus said, "*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 20:28.) So by definition, *many* are freed from their captivity to sin and death, as of when He paid that price. That is *good news*!

But, one may ask, "Does not the scripture say: *"Who gave Himself a ransom **for all**?"* Yes, it does. But does the word "all" in its context mean "everyone of Adam's race"? No. "All" is an *indefinite pronoun*, and therefore refers to the "all" in some context. In this context it is for "all" for whom Christ stands as a Mediator. Since He only mediates for His elect people, the "all" is limited to them. In this context particularly it refers to *all sorts of men. "For kings, and for all that are in authority," etc.* (1 Timothy 2:2.)

[It is difficult to omit James North and Hugh William's study of this text. We borrow their thoughts from their reply to Charles H. Spurgeon's abuse of this text. It is this in brief: The word "all" in the Greek is derived from *pas*, and is here *pastas*. In the set of meanings, there are five given: "all without exception", "any", "whole," "total", and "every kind

of." Now which use of these definitions will fit the doctrine taught? It cannot be "all without exception", for if so, all without exception are ransomed, and thus saved. No Bible scholar will accept *universal salvation*. Will "any" fit that passage? "He gave His life for any". No, that will not work either. Does it mean "total"? No, that will not fit. Does it mean "whole". Whole what? No, that cannot be its meaning. So we are left with *"every kind of."* Will that agree with the doctrine taught? Yes, because it is the truth. That is consistent with what all else that Christ did. The "all" of the "many" cover those

for whom Christ actually died.]

Putting arguments aside, the beauty of the doctrine is rather obvious. Our precious Lord loved His people with an everlasting love and with lovingkindness draws such to Himself. To free them from their captivity to sin and death, He lovingly, willingly, and graciously laid down His own life, shedding His precious blood to *ransom* them and set them free. In time, He gives faith to these quickened and feeling sinners to believe in Him as their salvation. He is their Deliverer, and to Him they will ever be grateful. They will ever be showing forth His praises! How gracious to such unworthy sinners! Again, simply put, Christ has *already ransomed* all His captive people from the condemnation of sin, death, and hell. Oh, wondrous grace! A *feeling sensible sinner* upon believing this can rejoice with joy unspeakable. Free! By such freedom, he is enabled to come to Christ his loving Lord with a heart full of gratitude.

Christ's redemption of His people from their sins

"*Redemption*" is similar to a ransom. It also sets someone free. There are two major differences to be noted here. *Redemption* sets a **slave** free, whereas a *ransom* paid delivers a **captive**. Secondly, *redemption* applies to someone having a *prior right* to the slave; whereas a *ransom* can be paid for anyone. As shown already, it involves all kinds of people. Redemption

considers the poor sinner as held in bondage by sin and Satan. "*He that committeth sin is a servant (bond-slave) of sin.*" (John 8:34.) Again, "*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.*" (Romans 6:16.) If a sensible sinner knows anything at all, he knows that he is a bond-slave to sin. Ah! How he has fought the lusts of the flesh, and how he has been confounded! Try, try, try as he will, "*sin is ever present*" with him. He knows exactly what Paul meant when he said, "*I find a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.*" (Romans 7:21.) And, Oh, how many times has he felt as Paul expressed it, saying, "*But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bring me into **captivity to the law of sin** which is in my members.*" (Romans 7:23.) With Paul and the household of faith, he has inwardly mourned "*O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*" (Romans 7:24.) Paul's answer is *the gospel* to every quickened sinner: "*I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.*" And why? It is because He redeemed them and brought liberty to the captive slave.

Satan is a "strong man that keepeth his house." Being such a strong man, the slave needs a great Redeemer to buy him back and set him free. As quoted before, "*Being justified freely by His grace through the*

redemption that is in Christ Jesus." In Galatians, again, Paul addressed the subject in the past tense, saying, "Christ **hath redeemed us** from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, *Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.*" (Galatians 3:13.) It should be noted, for it to be *glad tidings*, that the word "redeemed" has an "ed" on the end of it! Redemption is not contingent upon future conditions. As in all things else in the gospel, it is a *message* of what Christ *accomplished* already for those He loved! How glad is the feeling sinner's heart when he no longer has to *work* at saving himself. He is enabled to hear the *joyful news* that he has *redemption* through the shed-blood of the precious

Lord Jesus Christ. How great is the love and mercy of God! He could not pay anything towards his release from the power and dominion of sin; but bless the Lord, He had both the power and the will to pay the debt and set the bondman free! Two thousand years ago this wonderful transaction took place when Christ took all the sins of His people upon Himself and gave to them His righteousness in exchange! There, there on that bloody tree, He redeemed all He would ever redeem, and when that was accomplished, He exclaimed, "***It is finished!***" He then "*commended His soul to His Father.*" That very hour, He ceased from all His labor and entered into His Sabbath rest. This is another aspect of an *accomplished salvation*.

Christ's sanctification of His people

By definition, the word "*sanctification*," teaches the "setting aside of someone or something from others for an exclusive and holy use." In the old temple worship, almost all things were sanctified by the sprinkling of blood. The Eternal Godhead is involved in the sanctification of sensible sinners. The Father, as it is written, "*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.*" (Jude 1) This sanctification, we believe, has reference to the Father electing His people and giving them to His Son that He represent them in all He did, and redeem and save them. They were set aside for the exclusive use of God as "*vessels of mercy afore prepared unto glory.*" (Romans 9:23.)

[This subject is also treated again in Part IV, under the Article 7.]

God's people are also *sanctified* in Jesus Christ. Paul addressed his epistle to the Corinthians, saying, "*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.*" (1 Corinthians 1:2.) We understand that such people as are taught that they are sinners in an experimental way are *sanctified* by divine election. This put them **in** Christ representatively, and being in Him, all that He did is

accounted to them also as if they had done them. All His works are good, and being *sanctified in Him*, all of their works are those that He did representing them. He also particularly *sanctified* them through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. They *are redeemed* "out of every kindred, tongue, and people, and nation." (Revelations 5:9.) Being redeemed "out of" implies others were left out of redemption. Therefore these that are redeemed are set aside for God's own glory.

The Holy Spirit also sanctifies them when He calls them to life in Christ, or when they are born from above. They are "*Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through **sanctification of the Spirit**, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.*" (1 Peter 1:2.) A sensible sinner will search often for these evidences within himself. And, true, sometimes he can't seem to find sufficient evidence in which to rejoice. A very sweet and precious truth is hidden here: "*But of Him are ye **in Christ Jesus**, Who of God is **made unto us** wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.*" (1 Corinthians 1:30.) We said, "hidden here." For it is Christ Himself who is our **sanctification**, we being **in** Him. We are set aside **in** Him to be an exclusive and holy people to God. We are no longer the servants of unrighteousness, but the servants of Christ, Who is our Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption.

Simply put, sanctification is **not** something new

when one believes. He has ever had it in Christ before he heard the *gospel of it* and rejoiced in that precious truth. Paul puts the stroke of finality to this subject, when he wrote, "*Then said He, Lo, I come to do **Thy will**, O God. He taketh away the first (covenant of the law) that He may establish the second (covenant of grace), by the **which will** we are sanctified through the **offering** of the body of Jesus Christ **once for all.***" (Hebrews 10:10.) Simply put, that sanctification took place **when** Christ died. Now, while we so often find ourselves polluted by sin and out of the way of holiness, our blessed Lord knew this would be the case with us. Therefore, He by Himself sanctified us **forever** by that one offering of His own precious body as a sacrifice for our sins. Under the law, these sacrifices figured the putting away of sin, purification from the defilement of sin, and to sanctify the comer to the offering. "*They are Mine, said the Lord.*" Christ is the fulfillment of all the figures of the legal sacrifices that *sanctified* the poor sinners who brought their offerings to the altar in faith. This sanctification purged them from all of the pollution or defilement of various sins.

Christ's propitiation for the sins of His people

*"And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes to heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be **merciful** (propitious) to me **a***

sinner." (Luke 18:13.) The word "*propitiation*" means to *appease divine wrath, and to render satisfaction*; to be propitious, or, *to be merciful*. Our dear Lord, two thousand years ago, actually did *appease* the Justice of God, and did in fact then render *satisfaction*. The law demanded satisfaction for its breach by elect sinners. The satisfaction required the death of the transgressors. Christ stood as the substitute for these transgressors and met the law's terrible claim upon them. Jesus met the just requirements of the law against them. **He**, instead of them, **died**. The law was **honored** and Justice was **satisfied!** That, dear Reader, is "*propitiation*." Blessed be His name, He did it for His people because there was no way that they could do it for themselves. Again, simply put, He did this gracious work two thousand years ago. Our believing it **now** does not establish it, it is **already** done, and our believing it (and faith is God's own gift to us) is God's way of comforting us and causing us to magnify His grace. For us to view the *gospel* as *good news to us*, we must stress that Biblical fact. Christ is our *propitiation*.

We know exactly what part of that text the modern religionist will go to. "O," says he, "And He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the **whole world**." (1 John 2:2.) With no knowledge of what is meant by "propitiation," he will jump onto the words "the whole world" and apply it universally. Yet, amazingly, he will immediately withdraw his universalism, and limit it to those only that will make "a decision for Christ!" This, in effect, denies

“propitiation” altogether. If one asked him if he thought that the “whole world” was already saved, he would emphatically deny it. If one asked him if he thought the “whole world” would eventually, and ultimately be saved, again he would deny it! But it is certain that **if** Christ is the propitiation for “everyone” on earth, then He has **already satisfied** the just demands of the law and has **already appeased** the wrath of God against “everyone on earth.” Such a conclusion that person would never draw! So what is his problem? Simply put, such do not know what a *propitiation* is. The phrase “*the whole world*” is **not** a universal all- inclusive term. Read this passage written by the same apostle in this same Epistle: “*And **we** know that **we are of God**, and the **whole world** lieth in wickedness.*” (1 John 5:19.) It takes no Einstein to see that there are two different groups of people in that text! One is the “**we**” that “**of God**,” and the other the “**whole world**” that lieth in wickedness! Which “whole world,” then, is the world for whom Christ is the propitiation? The answer is obvious.

Simply put, Christ Jesus is our Advocate with the Father, and as such He alone stands as the propitiation of our sins. All that He did while on earth was to this very end. His standing before the Father for us is the crowning glory of our salvation. John wrote, “*Herein **is love**, NOT that we loved God (for we didn't), but that **He loved us**, and sent **His Son** to be the **propitiation for OUR sins.**” (1 John 4:10.) If only we could always believe and rest in this, how comfortable would our soul*

be! But in times when God grants us to recall it, believe it, and rest in it, it *is the gospel* to our burdened souls. How gracious is our dear Lord to keep us from having to *appease* the wrath of God against us, or render *satisfaction* to the just demands of the law! Faith, repentance and works cannot *satisfy* the justice of God nor *appease* the wrath of God against our sins. God gave this sweet and blessed doctrine upon a ***finished work*** of two thousand years ago. It is **His work!** "***It is finished!***" To conclude this point with emphasis: Christ is our **propitiation** because by His suffering and death in our place, He rendered *satisfaction* for the broken law of God, and thereby *appeased the wrath of God* against sinners. Surely, this is *the gospel* to sensible sinners!

Christ's reconciliation of His people to God

This, as all other Biblical subjects, is intended for our comfort and instruction. It is a most precious doctrine! How great is the need for a *feeling sinner* to be at peace with God? How often, in our daily lives, do we find our carnal nature at war with His holy commandments? How often are we found to be enemies of God in our nature. We are so far from the perfection that our own minds admit we ought to be. And we know He is unchangeably holy! We surely need some means to be reconciled to God. His rod upon our backs and our consciences testify to this need. Our experience is totally adverse to peace within our hearts toward God. As David put it, so the sensible sinner feels, "*God judgeth the righteous, and*

*God is **angry with the wicked every day.***" (Psalms 7:11.) Many a sleepless night one can have while feeling the "terror of the Lord." Yet, that is one strong evidence such a person is **alive** ! God has graciously covered the anxiety of such quickened and sensible sinners by the revelation of His *reconciliation* of them by Christ. It is He "*Who has made peace with God*" for them. That is one of the glorious aspects of what He *accomplished* by His crucifixion, and is well worth a trembling sinner to consider. How can one fight with God and win? It is a legitimate question for one to ask himself, "How can any one ever expect to have peace with God?" As before, Jesus' answer is appropriate here also: "*With man it is impossible, but with God all things are possible.*" Especially is this, for it is one of the principle works of Christ on the cross.

Can you see how God has everything needful arranged? This is surely a testimony to the perfection of His infinite Wisdom! He left nothing incomplete that is necessary for our salvation. This is a ***finished work*** as are all the others we have discussed. We cannot take from these blessed works, nor can we add to them. They need no improvement. Let us look specifically at the clear testimony of scriptures.

Paul connected the elect's *reconciliation* with their *justification **by His blood***, and put both of them in the past tense. That is, **when He shed His blood** on the cross. Watch carefully to the exact wording of this text: "*Much more then, being **NOW justified** by His*

*blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, **when we were enemies** (in need of reconciliation), we **WERE reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being** (now, already) **reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.**"* (Romans 5:9-10.) That is as plain as one can make it; yet very few seem able to comprehend. It just does not fit their preconceived view of an uncompleted salvation. Invariably, they think that this becomes true when someone "makes a decision for Christ." The text clearly shows **when** and **how** God's people were *reconciled* to Him, and it is clear that it is **true**, not because one believes it, but they believe it because it is **already true**. Believing it, (and that perhaps it was for you), makes it *the gospel* to your soul. Given faith to believe that Christ made peace for you through the blood of the cross, it becomes a source of both joy and comfort. Deep within our carnal nature we would think that we should "do something" to reconcile ourselves to God, but simply put, it is too late for that! And it isn't necessary, for Christ has already done it for all His people. He did it Himself because they could not do it. "*And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom we have **now** received the atonement*" (or, reconciliation: KJV, marginal reading, Romans 5:11.)

Again, in 2 Corinthians 5:18 and 19, Paul put *reconciliation* in the past tense, and timed it to that great event on the cross, saying, "*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** (or message) of reconciliation." Isn't that clear?*

We believe we have proved the doctrine. Now let us apply it. We need peace with God, not only in reality, but also in conscience. A sensible sinner is greatly comforted in those times in which he is enabled to view himself reconciled to God. In that way he is made a "friend to God" and God is made "a friend to him." This is one of the reasons that Christ came in the flesh, so that He could be a perfect High Priest for us, and make this *reconciliation*. As the apostle said, "*Wherefore in all things it behooved 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. For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted. He is able to succour them that are tempted.*" (Hebrews 2: 17-18.)

Under the law, the high priest's business was to make atonement (at-one-ment) for the sins of those he represented. He finalized all the sacrificial offerings made by the priests. He made intercession for the sins of the people. So, our Great High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ has done all these things needful for His people. What He **accomplished**, and the ways in which He accomplished them, simply put, is *the gospel*, or *glad*

tidings of our salvation. That, dear "*Theophilus*" is ***the gospel simply put.***

PART IV

THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST SIMPLY PUT

"*The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus,*" on **The Gospel Of Christ Simply Put**, *of all that Christ began both to do and to teach,*" and what He actually did accomplish in the salvation of His elect people while He was here on earth in the flesh. In that treatise, salvation is presented as an already *accomplished* event, and the Holy Spirit in *regeneration* and *conversion*, gives His people faith to believe it. An important thesis of that section is that the *believing of it* does not make it true; but rather, His people believe it because *it is true.*

When we are made to hope (which, as faith, is also a gift of God and fruit of the Spirit - Romans 8:24, Hebrews 6:19, and 1 Corinthians 13:13) in Christ as our great salvation, we begin then to grow in grace and knowledge of the truth. This truth *sanctifies* the child of God. That is, it sets him apart to the service of God. It separates him from those who do not believe the truth. It adds him to the comfortable fellowship of those of like

precious faith. As Paul stated, “*But we are bound to give thanks always 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.*” (1 Thessalonians 2:13,14.)

All of the Bible is true. Yet, our forefathers often expressed their faith in *organized statements* which were designed to show what they believe which others denied. To illustrate: All of the Eastern Orthodox Churches followed the Greek Church in baptizing by *immersion*, or dipping, even though they baptized unconscious infants. They still continue that mode today. Until the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, the Catholic and Anglican churches baptized by immersion. In time, however, the baptismal fonts were removed from those churches and *sprinkling* and *pouring* began among Protestant bodies. Infant baptism is known as *paedobaptism*. In opposition to this practice, those retaining immersion as the mode and insisting upon *believers* as proper subjects became known as “*Baptists*”, and these Baptists most often placed an article in their confessions on baptism *of believers by immersion*. If there had been no *peadobaptists*, obviously there would have been no *baptists*! The above issues may be vigorously debated by theologians, but

they are the *subjects* of statements of faith.

In this treatise, O Theophilus, we set forth *some* of these Articles as stated by our forefathers. We shall do so as simply as we can without destroying the essence of their Biblical truthfulness.

Our larger confessions (London Confession of 1689; the Westminster Confession of the Presbyterians; the Savoy Confession of the Congregationalists, or Puritans) present the scriptures first and then the Godhead. Almost all of the "Abstract of Principles," or "Articles of Faith" begin with the subject of God. It is here that we commence this presentation of our historical faith, article by article respectively.

"1. We believe in only one true and living God, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one. (1 John 5:7; John 1:1.)

This article is as well stated as one can state it. The apostle John composed it in the first century of the Christian era. He wrote, "*For there are three that **bear record** in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these **three are one**.*" It is because of this "three-in-one" relationship that Christians refer to God as a "*Trinity*." The Article is simple enough as John stated it, and the Articles have kept with John's definition. John did not say what these three were, other than "record bearers." The Catholic Church once battled within itself over the Arian controversy, which they said denied the

Trinity. At the Council of Nice, the Western branch of the Roman Church said "three **persons**." Most Protestants follow that view. Today, if one objects to the use of the pronoun "persons", that man would be accused of denying the Trinity. But this is not necessarily true. According to John's original definition, there are "three" and these three are "one." John did not say "three persons" but no one would accuse him of being anti-trinitarian!

Many among us prefer to keep closely to John's article. They state their objection to the Council of Nice wording, using "persons," because of the meaning conveyed by that word. A "person" is "the composite of characteristics that make up an individual personality." These characteristics make one a unique, or that is, separate and different being from all other beings. It sounds contradictory to say that there are "three persons," and then add that these three are in reality only one person. It does not need to be that confusing. So, those that hold to the **tri**-personal Trinity say that others should except the seeming contradiction and move on.

Those that believe in a **unity of the Triune God**, or the *three record-bearers in heaven* being one God are accused of denying the Trinity primarily because they refuse to accept the definition of a Catholic council, nor the Arian's concept. They object to it, primarily, because individuals are prone to view the Father, the Son, and

the Spirit as separate gods; praying to each separately; and trying to distinguish them separately. In other words, some too often tend to mentally deny the Oneness of the Triune Godhead.

Simply put, there are three that bear record in heaven, and however you perceive of these three, so long as you know there is but one God, you do well. The London (Baptist) Confession says that there are three *subsistences in the Godhead*, and that these three are one. We will admit that the Bible doesn't say that either; but neither does it say "Trinity." The London Confession's statement is less likely to confuse one than saying "three persons." By saying "three subsistence" they have not denied the **unity** of the eternal Godhead, nor have they denied the **Trinity**. As John, they are Trinitarians.

Simply put, God is incomprehensible. No one can understand His fullness, or explain Him. Instead, we have a hope of spending eternity learning more and more about Him who loved us and gave Himself for us. May we agree that a man, say, "John Doe," is composed of "body, soul, and spirit, and these three are also one"? *"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."* (1 Thessalonians 5:23.) In nature, we find such a unity of three: two parts of hydrogen to one part of oxygen is *water* at one range of temperatures; *ice* at another range; and *vapor, or steam* at still another. Yet

all three states, although different, are still H2O! Simply put, there is but "one only true and living God." And this God is manifested to us as the Father, Son, and Spirit.

"2. We believe that the Old and New Testaments are the Word of God, and the **only rule of faith AND PRACTICE.** -2 Peter 1:21; 2 Timothy 3:16,17."

There are not many people left in modern society that believe the first part of this Article; and fewer still which believe in the second part. So let us look at the two parts separately and see how our God-fearing forefathers took the Scripture sacredly.

First, "*We believe that the Old and New Testaments are the Word of God.*" It is a cardinal point of the true Christian faith that the Bible is absolutely true in all its parts, being *inspired by God* as it was committed to us to this day in its **received text**. That *received text* is the Holy Bible as preserved and received by the saints throughout all the Christian era. The Old Testament is derived from the *received text* of the saints among the Hebrew nation, and confirmed by Christ Himself as God's Word or revelation to His Church. The New Testament's *received text* contains those things that God gave by His Spirit to the Apostles in the Greek language of that period. It was to the Apostles that Christ gave "*the keys to the kingdom*" to seal or bind upon the Church, and to

"loose" those things to which the Church was not bound. The two testaments together have been preserved and received for two thousand years by God's *providence and grace* by the household of faith. It has been preserved in the Greek text in which it was written. (The "Old Testament" was written in Hebrew. It was translated into the Greek language by scholars of Alexander the Great and was the Greek text that was in common use in the time of Christ's advent.) It was this text that the King James translators used to translate the Bible into

English. All of the King James translators were free grace Christians with a holy awe toward the Bible. This important statement cannot be said of any modern translators or translations.

Satan has always presented to men's minds arguments that they are smarter than gifted men of God who translated the *received texts*. The pride and fleshly desire for preeminence have led men to print and distribute many "Bibles" flawed by doctrinal contradictions and doctrinal denials; all in the name of making them "easier to understand." It was never God's design for everyone to understand His Word. "*He hid these things from the wise and prudent, and has revealed them unto babes.*" The reason that Christ spoke in parables was that they should not understand Him. As Paul said, "*But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost.*" (2 Corinthians 4:3.) God would not **hide** things that He willed that men should know.

We should give this warning to anyone purchasing Bibles: Evil and unscrupulous men are today issuing "Study Bibles" and regular texts, claiming these to be "King James Versions," in the which they have actually changed the text from the original KJV. Among such are Schofield Bibles, the Hebrew Greek Key Study Bible (Zodhiates, and some Nelson Publisher prints), to list a few recently examined. To check these King James Versions, look at 2 Timothy 3:17. If it reads "Thoroughly furnished unto all good works," it has been tampered with. The original text says, "**thoroughly** furnished," referring back to the four things presented in verse 16, **through** which the "man of God" is furnished unto all good works. There are other places changed, but this is a good place to check. Merely because the publisher *claims* that it is a King James text does not mean that it is. It is a *revised version of the King James* and an honest publisher would state that it was.

2b, "and the **only rule** of faith and practice." Our forefathers sincerely believed that the scripture was the Word of God, and that the church and believers were to be obedient to all God's commandments. On that basis, they attempted as best that they could to order their church and lives by its contents. This holy awe for God's Word led to exceedingly great **reforms** from the Catholic and Episcopal churches. The medieval structure of the church was completely abandoned because it was unscriptural and antichristian. Some reformers believed that ministers ruled the New Testament church. A ruling

body of ministers is a "presbytery." This group became known as "Presbyterians." Another group believed that the New Testament church was ruled by the members. These became known as Congregationalists. Baptists and Puritans are Congregationalists. The rituals, or liturgies, of the medieval church were refused for the unscriptural. The priestly garments and priestly intercessions ceased upon the same principle. The "prayer book" and readings of prayers were discarded. The churches returned to the Biblical practice of immersion as the proper mode of baptism, and conscious believers as the proper candidates for the ordinance. They rejected the doctrine of "freewill" introduced by Pelagius in the fourth century, and revived by James Jacobus Arminius in the seventeenth. All this, and more, simply put, because they truly believed the Scripture was the **only rule of faith and practice.**

It is needless to say that in the twenty-first century that few men are guided by that blessed volume. Modern churches have rejected the doctrines of the Christian faith. The desire to allow the scripture alone to be the rule of practice has also been abandoned wholesale. For proof of this assertion, look at the Sunday schools, training unions, youth groups, adult groups, organized fellowships, camps, church tee-ball teams, church little league teams, church base-ball teams, missions, choirs, instruments of music, praise bands, rock bands, skating parties for Jesus, karate for the Lord, gymnasiums for "Christian life centers," promise-keepers, crusades for

Christ, "revival" meetings, religious canvassing, outreach programs for proselytizing, "Christian" dramas, watchnight services, Easter, Christmas, committees for this, that, and others; and all the hundreds of others invented since this is written. **None of the above things are found in that sacred book!** In the list cited, not a one of them were found in our colonial American churches! The Great Awakening took place **before and without them.** Simply put, they are unscriptural and unnecessary. But, now in the twenty-first century, the *"old and new testament"* is no longer **the *only rule* of faith and practice** for man-made "Christians."

"3. We believe in the doctrine of original sin. Romans 5:12, *"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."* And Psalm 50: 1-5, *"Behold, I was shapened iniquity and in sin did my mother conceive me."*

This is a fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith. It being true necessitates salvation by **free and sovereign grace.** *"The wages of sin is death,"* therefore if there is no original sin then there can be no infant deaths. Simply put, babies **die**, and that confirms the truthfulness of this Article. In our age, the church is persecuted greatly by murderous doctors and misguided

women who slaughter their unborn children, and this by the millions! If, and we say **IF**, we suppose that these infants are God's children, or any part of the number, the church is deprived of their support. Death reigns only because *sin reigns!*

Since everyone is born "*dead in trespasses and sins,*" (Ephesians 2: 1,3,5) there are many things a carnal natural man can believe, but a *spiritually dead man* cannot believe anything to the saving of his own soul. He cannot evangelically repent; he cannot pray for his own salvation, "*For we know that God heareth not sinners, but if a man be a worshiper of God, and doeth His will, him He heareth.*" (John 9:31.) He cannot truly "come to Christ." He can, of course, join a religious society as easily as some civic organization, but coming to Christ is a *spiritual act* that dead men cannot perform: "*No man can come unto Me **except** the Father which sent Me **draw him**; and **I will** raise him up at the last day.*" And, "*Therefore said I unto you, that **no man can come unto Me**, except it were **given unto him of My Father.***" (John 6:44 and 65.)

Simply put, the doctrine of *original sin* establishes the doctrine of the *total depravity and inability of man*, to save, or to help to save himself. He is, simply put, born *spiritually dead!*

"4. We believe in man's incapacity to recover himself

from the fallen state he is in by nature, by his own free will and ability. (John 6:44; Jeremiah

13:23.) *"Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil."*

Jesus reserved to Himself the revelation of the doctrine of the *new birth*. He told Nicodemus, *"Ye must be born again."* Nicodemus thought that he must refer to being born twice according to nature, but Jesus separated the natural birth of water from the spiritual birth by the Holy Spirit's quickening, saying, *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, **except** a man be born of water **and** of the Spirit, he **cannot** enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."* (The margin says, "from above".)

Now, it is commonly held by religions in America that one can be born again by walking down an aisle and joining a religious institution; or by "making a mental decision," or in fulfilling some man's "plan of salvation", etc. To them this is most reasonable. But is that the meaning of the phrase *"being born"*?

Not likely! Do infants make "decisions" to come forth from their mother's womb? Do infants "walk down an aisle" to be delivered in the maternity ward? In fact, do

they “choose” to be begotten by their father and conceived by their mother? Simply put, such a concept is rather ridiculous, isn't it? Words have meanings, and the Lord used a word with an established meaning to declare this doctrine. In the preceding text, John had written of these twice-born souls, saying quite plainly, “*which were born, **not** of blood, (meaning natural birth) nor of the **WILL of the flesh**, (one's own desire to be saved) nor of the **WILL of man**, (the desire of ministers, soul-winners, etc) **BUT OF GOD.**” (John 1:13.) One would think that nothing could be clearer! If they are not born “Christians” by blood lines, nor born “Christians” by their own wills; nor born “Christians” by the will of other interested parties, then it must be that the word *born* in this text means the same thing as it does in a maternity ward of a hospital!*

Our forefathers were correct when they said that one could not recover himself by his “own free will and ability.” They did not concede to a point that man “has a freewill,” but rather denied it. They merely used the language of their adversaries to refute the false teaching. Simply put, man's will is **not free**. To be “free,” it must be independent of all forces and able to select freely different alternatives as it pleases. But the will of man is “sold under sin.” A servant is **not** free. He cannot willingly save himself, nor even will to help someone else to save him. Again, simply put, he is **dead!** Emphatically, dead!

“5. We believe in the doctrine of eternal and particular election. - Ephesians 1:4; *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.” And, *“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.”* (Romans 8:30.)”

This Article and the above texts are very provocative. There is hardly a neutral position here. Either one loves it as one of the sweetest manifestations of God love in the Bible, or they hate it to its core. How one reacts to it is a strong indicator as to whether he is a true believer or a stranger to the grace of God. How often one hears, “Oh, I just believe in the Bible; but I don't believe in “predestination and election!” What a contradiction! As if these texts are not in the Bible! If one that does not believe in predestination, yet thinks that he believes the Bible wants to be truthful, then he should say: “I believe the Bible, but I do not *understand* predestination.” One cannot be truthful saying it as previously stated. Of all the hated aspects of the doctrine of Christ, this one is perhaps the most sweet to a true believer. If one lacks a belief in divine election, there is no way possible for him to be humble in spirit. On the other hand, it is the source of great joy, and is most pronounced in establishing one in the faith of Christ. Not only so, but the spirit of those who believe it is drawn into fellowship with others who believe it likewise. There is a unifying power in that doctrine above almost any other Biblical truth.

In 1790, the “new nation under God” known as the United States of America was federally formed. In that year of our first census, the “*Register Of The Baptist Denomination In North America*” was compiled. According to the statistics presented, 93% of all “Baptists” believed in ***unconditional election*** and ***absolute predestination***, or what was called ***Calvinism***. These Baptists were in various fellowships, such as “Particular Baptists,” “Six Principle Baptists,” “Separate Baptists,” and “Regular Baptists.” Their Articles of Faith express the same as we are herein covering, “feet-washing” excluded. In 1790, only 7% of Baptists in America believed in ***conditional election*** and ***limited predestination***. These Baptists were collected into these fellowships: “Seventh Day Baptists,” and the “General Baptists,” with a few “Separate Baptists” admitting they were “generalists.” From these groups sprang what is today known as “Freewill Baptists” and some “Conditional Primitive Baptists.” But, simply put, **ALL Baptists**, whether Particular or General, absolute or limited, **believed in election and predestination**. They disputed among themselves, not whether God chose His people in Christ or predestinated them to salvation, but rather, whether this election and predestination was **conditioned on foreseen faith** or not. They were never so foolish, or blind, as to deny outright these blessed truths. However, in 1790, it was evident “*that blindness in part*” was setting in that early; but *total blindness* had not then developed. The truth historically

stated is, in early America, ninety-three percent of all Baptists believed in God's unconditional election of His people in Christ before the world began, and that His sovereignty extended over all His works. Just incidentally, not a single one of these Baptists had been converted by a "Missionary," "evangelist," or "soul-winner." The Modern Missionary Movement that began in England with Andrew Fuller in 1782 had not yet reached America in 1790. [Fuller is the founder of the Missionary Baptists denominations.]

The Bible is as clear on these doctrines as it can possibly be: "*According as He hath **chosen us in Christ 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.***" (Eph.1: 4-5.) Hence, *unconditional* and *absolutely!* This predestination must be absolute to embrace all the necessary events to bring to pass *the good pleasure of His Will.* If not, there can be no certainty that a single one of these elect ever being born on earth! The specific father of each elect had to have met the specific mother of each, and every event in time in the lives of each, all the way back to Adam and Eve. Even the specific genetic code of each had to have been predetermined, or they would not be who they are! One necessary event failing, would have thrown the decree of election and predestination into chaos! Can anyone imagine his father walking down the street on

which he was to meet his mother, and at that important moment turning aside onto another street and forever missing her! Where then would election stand? Predestination must cover all the events necessary to the fulfillment of God's eternal purpose, or He need not to have purposed it! Simply put, *conditional* election and *limited* predestination is folly.

It is folly, first, because God could not foresee anything that was not **certain to be**. The scripture presents a God of purpose, not a God of chance. In the context of Ephesians on election and predestination, Paul wrote in verse 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 **own will**: that we should be to the praise of His glory, who first trusted in Christ.*" Predestination in this verse, not only affects the persons elected, but all the "things" that He works according to His counsel and wisdom. The apostle says that this is according to God's own will. Predestination is **not as limited** here as many insist. It embraces each and every event of "all things" necessary to fulfill God's own will. How broad or how narrow is His **WILL**?

Election certainly is not presented as being *conditioned upon the foreseen faith* or prior works of the one elected. No clearer doctrine can be found in the Bible than this: "*For the children being **not yet born**, neither (of them) having **done any good or evil**, that*

*the purpose of God according to **election** might stand, **not of works**, but of Him that calleth."* (Romans 9:11.) Here the apostle proves **unconditional** election by using the unborn twins of Rebecca (Jacob and Esau) and makes it amply clear that this election was **not** based on anything good that Jacob had done. He had not done any! Nor had he believed anything! The rejection or reprobation of Esau was **not** based on anything evil that he had done, for the same reason. He had not done anything either! So it is with all of God's children. Their election, or choice by God, was **in Christ** before He created the world; just as the twins were **in Rebecca** when their election and reprobation was pronounced. So election cannot be predicated on anything that the elect have done or have believed. This is called "free grace." Simply put, the Bible doctrine of election is that God's choice of individuals is *unconditional* and *free*; and predestination has to be *absolute* and *certain*. To a feeling sinner in need of the knowledge of salvation, he would want it to be just that way: unconditional, free, and absolutely certain. To a carnal man-made "Christian," such a doctrine is hated to its core. He will fight it, mock it, dispute it, and say, "Even if election is in the Bible, I still don't believe it!" Why? Because it leaves what little occasional good that he does out of the equation altogether.

"6. We believe that sinners are justified in the sight

of God, **only by His imputed righteousness.** 2 Corinthians 5:21, "*For He hath made Him to be sin **for us**, Who knew no sin; that **we** might be made the **righteousness of God in Him;***" And Jeremiah 23:6, "*And this is His name whereby He shall be called, **The Lord our Righteousness.***"

This article is the central theme of the true gospel of grace. If one has righteousness imputed to him, that one is saved and safe forever more. If one does not have righteousness imputed to him, he is lost and forever without hope in salvation. **How** one attains this *imputed righteousness* is the message of the gospel of Christ. Simply put, "*There is **none** righteous, no, **not one.***" (Romans 3:10.) So, within man's nature there is no way possible for him to become *righteous*. Yet, in the sweet mercies of God, it pleased Him to take **all** of the sins of His elect people to Himself, *imputing these sins as a mountain to Christ*, and these sins were **condemned** and **punished** in the body of Christ when He died on the cross. Christ died for these *imputed sins*, for He had none of His own for which to die. Now that all His elect have no sins for which *they* must answer, they are at least legally **sinless** before the judgment of God. But this alone does **not** make them **righteous**. Another act of God's sweet grace is as necessary as this to this important end.

Since Christ is "*God manifested in the flesh,*" He **IS our righteousness.** His righteousness, which is perfect,

is **imputed** to His now "blameless" people in like manner as their sins were imputed to Him. The word "impute," simply means, "to charge to one's account." It is a book keeping, or accountant, term. So, just as the sins of the elect were "charged to Christ's account," that resulted in His atoning death for them; so His righteousness is "charged to their account." It is a "cross," or "exchange," or "swap." My sins to Him and His righteousness to me is grace! Our *unrighteousness* became His, and **His righteousness** became ours! What grace! If one thinks about this, it is a very sweet and precious truth. It is very humbling to consider that the holy Son of God should, of all things, be condemned **for sin!** And more so when considered "for **my sins!**" How condescending that He should exchange so unevenly His righteousness for our awfulness! "*Greater love has no man than this, that He should lay down His life for*" of all people, "*sinners.*" Simply put, His imputed righteousness **IS our salvation** that was accomplished two thousand years ago. It is practically applied in our being "born again," for it is then that we receive (not, "accept") "**Christ in us the hope of glory,**" and are thereby "justified by the **faith OF Christ.**" Not by *our faith*, but by **His**.

"7. We believe that God's elect are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ and called. - Jude 1:1 "*To them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called,*" and

Acts 2:39, *"For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God **shall call.**"*

The subject of *sanctification* is covered extensively in Part 5. We will only briefly cover it here. There are several aspects of sanctification. But first, we stress this definition of the doctrine as used herein: sanctification is the setting of someone, or something, apart from others to the **exclusive use of God**. For what other end could there be to election? Predestination? Calling? *"You are not your own, but you are bought"* with the price of the blood of Christ. Therefore, *"glorify God in your body which is the Lord's."* The vessels, used in the Tabernacle and the Temple of the Jews, were all *sanctified*; when these were desecrated by the king of Babylon, swift judgment fell on that kingdom in that very hour!

God's people are sanctified in a three-fold sanctification. They are selected for the exclusive use of God, and all admonitions to holy behavior in mind, heart, and deed rest upon this fact. No wonder the apostle refers to the saints' calling to grace and salvation a "high calling." What honor and grace is bestowed upon elect sinners!

As shown in the texts above, our forefathers recognized this doctrine, and prized it. The eternal Godhead, Father, Son and Spirit is involved in this

sanctification. The Father *sanctified* all He gave to Christ before the foundation of the world. He **chose** Christ as the first Elect and His people in Him, thus "setting them apart" from all others for His exclusive use to the "*praise of the glory of His grace.*" (Ephesians 1:6.) "*Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee: as Thou hast given Him **power over ALL flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him.***" (John 17: 1-2.)

Those that the Father gave to His Son, the Son also sanctified. "*Then said He, Lo, I come to do **Thy will, O God. He taketh away the first** (covenant of the law) **that He may establish the second. By the **which will we are sanctified** through the **OFFERING OF Jesus Christ.*****" (Hebrews 10: 9-10.) It is well to note that this sanctification was actually accomplished by the offering of Christ to the Father by the Spirit two thousand years ago - **not** when we believe it. This passage also presents something else worthy of serious thought: "*For by **one offering** He hath (past tense) **perfected forever** them that are sanctified.*" (Verse 14.) Almost no one believes that today. But it is still true, and to a feeling sinner, this is just what he knows that he needs! When the Son sanctified those that the Father gave to Him He did so by the **offering** of His body as a sacrifice to God. By the act of offering Himself to God, the Son **perfected forever** those that He sanctified. That is astounding doctrine! Simply put, this sanctification and the consequent perfecting of the saints took place long

before they became feeling sinners. As stated frequently, the elect are given grace to believe it, not to make it so, but because it **is already so**. And that is *the gospel* or *glad tidings* to sensible sinners.

*Obviously then, those set apart by the Father, and sanctified and perfected by the Son as a holy people, are also sanctified by the blessed Spirit. The Godhead is not divided against Himself. "But we are bound to give thanks always 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."* (2 Thessalonians 2:13-14.) Both the Holy Spirit and **the truth** sanctifies them.

The sanctification of the Spirit and His subsequent teaching God's people **the truth** of free and sovereign grace is what *sanctifies* them. It sets them apart from the natural will-worship of religions all around them. They no longer can find comfort nor pleasure in this will-worship. The truth is very divisive. It separates, or sifts out, those sanctified by the Father, Son and Spirit from all the nominal man-made "Christians" who are not sanctified *by the truth*.

There is a very practical value in this three-fold sanctification. Recall its definition? All such that God has claimed as His very own are not their own, but they are purchased by the precious blood of Christ. They are set

apart for the exclusive use of God as a holy and peculiar people who are "**ordained to good works.**" This sanctification to the exclusive service of God is designed specifically to glorify Him. One will not wait until he arrives in glory to begin glorifying God! The sensible sinner is **ordained** to that end already. Therefore, they are to walk as those who are called to honor the God of all grace. They are, in fact, **vessels of honor**, and are to "*glorify God in their body which is the Lord's.*"

"8. We believe that baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances of Jesus Christ, and that true believers are the only fit subjects for these ordinances; and that the mode of baptism is immersion. - Luke 3:31,32. "*Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized and praying, the heaven was opened and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art My beloved Son: in Thee I am well pleased.*" And, Acts 8:37,38. "*And Philip said, if thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest (be baptized). And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still and they **went down INTO the water, BOTH Philip and the eunuch and he baptized him.** And when they **were come UP out of the water,** (This is sufficient to prove *immersion, or dipping,* as the mode of baptism) *the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way**

rejoicing. "Matthew 26:26, "And as they were eating bread Jesus took bread and blessed it, and brake it and gave to the disciples, and said, Take eat; this is my body. And He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them saying, Drink ye all of it."

Baptism is an **ordinance** of Christ and all true believers are **commanded of Him** to show forth the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ therein. Every believer who loves the Lord and the truth of His free grace is directed to His ordinances. However, they are limited to true believers. Faith and repentance, both gifts of God, are prerequisites to them. Notice what Philip told the eunuch: "*If thou **believest with ALL THINE HEART**, thou mayest.*" That does not signify a simple stroll down an aisle and taking a minister's hand. Not at all! It implies a work of grace that produces a true commitment based upon a full persuasion that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and that the believer is ready to follow Him in a Christian life and walk. This persuasion must be a work of the Spirit within him.

Baptism is a beautiful, yet *symbolic, figure* of Christ's atoning death, burial and bodily resurrection. We say, *symbolic **figure***, with emphasis. Throughout the gospel dispensation men have mistakenly taken the *figure* for the *substance* it figured. Baptismal regeneration has often been drawn from this mistake. Baptists that believe no one will be in heaven that has not been baptized (*the figure*) in water, fall victim to this

error. That it is the *figure* is Biblically presented: "*The like **figure** whereunto baptism doth also save us (not the **putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a GOOD CONSCIENCE toward God,**) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.*" (1 Peter 3:21.) If baptism was the substance, rather than a figure, why then did Paul say, "*Christ sent me **not** to baptize, but to preach the gospel*"? Paul also was glad that he had baptized but a **few** in Corinth! As a *figure* it is consistent with the gospel, but otherwise it is not. The gospel message is what Christ **has accomplished** for sinners; baptism is what the sensible sinner **does in return** to "show forth" His death, burial and resurrection. The "saving" was done by the work of Christ while on earth; baptism "doth save us," not in putting away sin, but in the sense that it is an answer of a good conscience toward God as a fulfillment of His commandment. "*For even hereunto were ye **called**: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us **an example**, that ye should follow in His steps.*" (1 Peter 2:21.)

The Lord's Supper is also an **ordinance** of Christ, and **all baptized believers** are to declare the gospel of their salvation by partaking of the holy elements: wine and unleavened bread. Both the baptism and the Lord's Supper declare the fullness of the gospel of Christ. The Lord's Supper is a beautiful fulfillment of the Old Testament type and shadow of Christ's suffering, the innocent victim for the guilty sinner. In His breaking of bread, He shows the mangled, flayed, and broken body

of the sacrificial Lamb. In the wine, He presents the sprinkling of the blood at the altar in the purification of the poor sinner. By "*the shedding of blood*" there was a ransom and redemption price paid for our sins. It is a "bequest," or "last will and testament" to all His redeemed people.

A *bequest* speaks of a **family** interest and no stranger or outsiders have any part or lot in its blessings. All His children, and only His children, are *predestinated unto an "inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will: that we should be to the praise of His glory, who first trusted in Christ."* (Ephesians 1:11,12.) This inheritance is "reserved in heaven" for them. Paul explained that so long as the Testator lived, the testament was not in force. But with the death of the Testator, Christ, the heirs are legally come into possession of the inheritance. It is already theirs, because He has already died! All this, and much more, is presented in these sacred ordinances. It is truly a sad day in this end-time when loving believers are not given to honor these two most sacred ordinances. The Lord was extremely gracious in not shackling the Church under endless rituals, sacrifices, liturgies, and ceremonies; but gave them two very simple straight forward symbols as *figures* by which to remember Him and His suffering in their behalf.

[The following Article on "feet-washing" appears in *most* of the early Abstracts of Principles in the Southern United States. Both Old School and New School (Missionary, or Fullerite) Baptists and some Congregational Puritans practiced it. Among the New School party, few Southern or Northern Baptists still practice it. However, many Missionary Baptists outside of these two denominations yet practice it, especially among those called "Landmark" Baptists. Both Predestinarian Old School Baptists and Conditional Primitive (Old Liners) Baptists practice it alike, as well as some Church of God and Pentecostal congregations. It is **not** considered an "ordinance" by most of these, since the death, burial, and resurrection is not therein presented. Those that practice it consider it "**an example**" that **ought** to be kept. For this reason, we include it in this section without considering it as a "doctrine," but rather a "**practice.**" The discussion may tender the subject to the reader's closer attention, and it is presented in a positive light for this reason. The reader has liberty to examine it freely.]

"9. We believe in washing the saints' feet in a church capacity immediately after communion. - John 13: 11-15. *"He riseth from supper and laid aside His garments; and took a towel and girded Himself. After that He poureth water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded. . . Ye call Me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye **also ought***

to wash one another's feet. For I have given you AN EXAMPLE, that ye should DO AS I HAVE DONE TO YOU."

It is extremely difficult to reason why one ought **not** to do, what the Lord said clearly, "**ye ought**" to do. Many Christians who do not practice it find a quickened conscience when they read the thirteenth chapter of John, yet for tradition's sake they suffer the pain silently, and quickly put it out of their minds. However, many others are given to obey it joyfully. What frame of mind or conviction of conscience one can have, being a living believer, to deny this commanded **example** is difficult to conceive. Clearly, those who refuse to do it must either have some peculiar approach to the text, or else do not want to be so humbled before their brethren in the church.

To say that it is "only an example," as many do, and then not do it is to deny that it is an "example." It cannot be an *example* of anything unless it is done! Some say that it is merely an example of "humility." Yet it is contrary to *humility* to refuse to do what the Lord so plainly commands that "ye ought" to do. That is far from humility. It would be much more consistent to humility to bow before a brother and wash his feet, than otherwise. But the Lord never said that it was an example "*of humility,*" nor do those who practice it understand it to be. It is a **divine "ought to!"** As understood by many there is a far deeper meaning associated with the

practice than "humility." To wit:

At the time the Lord instituted the Lord's Supper and this practice, He was then for the last time with His beloved disciples. He would immediately afterwards be arrested and become their sacrifice for sins, thus fulfilling the Old Testament types of sacrificial offerings. Those offerings, simply put, were: First, the slaying of the innocent victim in the place of the guilty sinner on the brazen altar; Second, the *washing at the brazen font, or laver*; and third, the burning of sweet-smelling herbs on the golden altar. These three typified, first, Christ suffering and dying for the sins of His people as a penalty to satisfy the justice of God against them; second, the *washing of defilement* of the priests who had touched the dead bodies of the victim; and third, the intercession of Christ for the sinner making the offering. Needless to say, but these offerings were for Jews and not for the Gentile nations around them. This is called "*particular atonement.*"

In that context, they see the *washing* of the saints' feet as fulfilling that washing of the *defilement of the way* of the Christian's walk and conversation. The Old Testament priests washed immediately *after* they had stained their hands with blood (which is unclean) at the brazen altar. Brass speaks of *judgment*. Their washing was prior to the High Priest's intercession at the golden altar, which speaks of Christ sitting now in heaven interceding for His people. To those who practice this

example, Christ has already (two thousand years ago) made that *one offering unto God*, and is now set down at the right hand of the Father. What yet is needed, to the poor sensible, feeble and failing sinner is a conscience of Christ having washed away his sins by His blood.

Simply put, even though Christ has already redeemed them, forgiven them of their sins, and washed them in His blood, nevertheless they are yet daily sinners and need His intercession. In "*washing their feet*," "*He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit; and ye are clean, **but not all**. For He knew who should betray Him; therefore said He, Ye are not all clean.*" (John 13: 10-11.) Our Lord concluded the example saying, "*If ye know these things, **happy are ye IF YE DO THEM.***" (Verse 17.) And they have found this to be true by doing it.

The above practice is not considered a bar of fellowship against those who have not found this happiness in its observance. But this point is simply put, if one is a believer, he should follow the teachings of our Lord as closely as he can. He should be baptized, partake of the communion, and "*observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.*"

(Matthew 28:20.) And He said of this example, "**Ye ought to.**"

"10. We believe no minister has the right to administer the ordinances of the gospel but such as are called of God, as was Aaron; and came under the hands of the Presbytery. - Acts 12: 2,3. *"As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate unto Me Barnabas and Saul for the work where unto I have **called them**. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away."* (1 Timothy 4:14,) And, *"Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was **given** thee, by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery."*

One of the most abused doctrines of the Christian faith is found here relative to the qualifications of a minister of Christ. Large numbers are ordained as career professionals to serve as administrators of religious enterprises called "Churches." Among more faithful congregations, many good deacons have been ordained as very poor ministers. As one aged minister observed, "An empty hand on an empty head can never make a preacher!"

Our forefathers viewed the ministry much more seriously. The church must have recognized a divine **call** to the ministry in a man first, and no church would ordain a man unless a church first called for his ordination. It was considered sound order that any church that called for the ordination of a minister must also call that minister as their pastor. Simply put, they considered it "out of order" for a church to ordain a minister that they

were not satisfied to serve them. They should not ordain someone not qualified according to the scriptural rule and turn him loose on other churches to endure. Yet, today, it is done very frequently, and all the churches suffer under that abuse. How many “evangelists” and “ministers” (so-called- Scripturally, there is not such an office in the church today) who serve no church, but are imposed upon the churches nevertheless? A query submitted to the Kehukee Baptist Association on one occasion addressed how long a candidate for the ministry should serve before being rejected. The answer was, that twelve months was enough. If he could not edify the church in that time period, he was not qualified. Certainly one year is plenty of time!

The *qualification* for a man which is to be ordained to the work of the ministry is not left to men to decide. It is specifically spelled out in the Bible. God gave *enumerated qualifications* for the church to use in **every** ordination. **All** these Biblical criteria are required to meet the standard for a true gospel minister. So let us look at them.

First of all, the church should *"lay hands suddenly on no man."* (1 Timothy 5:22.) *"A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of **one wife**, vigilant, sober, of **good behavior**, given to **hospitality**, apt to **teach**."* (1 Timothy 3:2.)

So, first mentioned, first in preeminence! A candidate for ordination must be one who is respectable

relative to deportment, past and present, and a good example to the church. He is to be the husband of one wife. It is not "one at a time", nor the "wife of one husband"! Just one wife! That is enough for any man that is to be an example to the flock. God does not violate His own qualifications when He calls a man to preach the gospel. The church is not given one standard, and the Lord uses another! If such were the case, the church would be left in confusion, and "*God is not the Author of confusion.*"

The candidate to this high calling is to be watchful over the "*church of God which He has purchased with His own blood.*" He is to be serious in the work of the ministry. It is not a weekend part time employ. He is to be of good behavior, and he is to be addicted to hospitality, entertaining the saints of God joyfully. Of equal importance, he must be gifted as a "teacher." He must apply his sermons consistent with a "thus saith the Lord." "*All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for **doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.***" (2

Timothy 3:16.) In this way, he can teach sound doctrine of free and sovereign grace. (If he can't do this then he is not a minister of Christ.) He can reprove those that need to be reproved when in error. He must be willing to reprove, even when the one(s) reproved will be offended with him and lay charges against him before the church and demand his apology. He is to correct those that need

correcting and instruct those that need instruction. Finally, he must *practice* what he *preaches*.

"Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre (money); but patient, not a brawler, not covetous. (Verse 3.) While the Scripture teaches that wine is acceptable and a blessing of God (Deut. 7:13, and 11:14) and was subjected to the tithe, or tax, to Israel (Deut. 12:17,) nevertheless, its misuse or abuse is equally condemned in the Scripture. Of all people who should not to given over to its power, a minister of the living God must be such. If he cannot be free from its power, he fails to meet the qualification of a minister of God. The church must discipline their ministers when their minister misbehaves. Their behavior should be without reproach, nor are they to hire themselves out for their services to God. Covetousness should not accompany those that are ordained to the work of the ministry.

"One that ruleth well his own house; having his children in subjection with all gravity; (for if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)" [Verses 4,5.] This Article is consistent with the first, *"the husband of one wife;"* but too many conclude that he should in ruling his own house, also rule his own wife as a tyrant. The text says "children", not wife. A Christian man should understand that his wife is his "helpmeet," not his floor-mat. Where the Bible states that the *"elder women should teach the younger women to be keeper at*

home,” this phrase, “keepers at home,” is the Greek word, “*despotes*”. A despot is an absolute ruler! His wife is to be the head of the household, while he is “head of his wife.” Too few understand the Biblical role of a wife. But surely an ordained minister ought to be an example to all men in the Christian faith, and he should ever show respect to his wife because she is *one* with him.

“Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.” (Verses 6, 7.) Nothing can be more practical than this. To be a minister one must be skillful in the Word sufficient to feed the flock of God. The devil is certainly out to bring reproach upon the ministry in every way possible. Hence, he must have a good report in public. This does not mean that he should be popular, or that his doctrine is unopposed. But his behavior, Christian faithfulness, and community kindness should be such to commend him before men.

To sum up these qualifications, simply put, a man must be both **called** and **qualified** by God for the full work of the ministry. Needless to say, if such is the qualifications that God has enjoined on the ministry, then it is certain that God has **not** called all Christians to be ministers. It is equally certain that God has not called all “ministers” to the ministry!

"11. We believe that the saints shall persevere in grace and never fall away. *"And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall **never perish**, neither shall any man pluck out of My hand."* John 10:28; and Colosians 3: 3-4: *"For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, Who is **our life**, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory."*

It is difficult to imagine that anyone could think that God was not able *"to save to the uttermost them that come unto Him by faith,"* yet many will worshipers believe in "falling from grace," and many more practice it! If a man saved *himself*, then it is reasonable doctrine. But if God the Creator of all things did the saving, or if He has saved them already (which He has), then it is senseless to suppose that He *that hath begun a good work in you,* is not able to finish it. Paul plainly wrote, *"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."* (Philippians 1:6.)

The eternal security of all the elect is the central theme of the *gospel of Christ* as it relates to believers. *"Much more then, being **now** justified by **His blood**, we **shall** be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we **were reconciled** to God **by the death of His Son**, much more, being reconciled, we **shall be saved by His life**."* Paul based his argument on this premise: *"But God commendeth His love towards **us**, in that, while we*

were **yet sinners**, Christ died for **US**." (Romans 5: 8-10.) What an inescapable argument! If He loved us while we were such unlovable sinners, surely He can love us now that He has reconciled **ed** us to God!

"12. We believe in the resurrection of the dead, both small and great, and a **general judgment**. John 5: 28-29. "*Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in the which **all that are in the graves SHALL HEAR** His voice, and shall **come forth**; they that have done good, unto the **resurrection of life**; and they that have done evil, unto the **resurrection of damnation**."* Acts 17: 31. *Because He hath **appointed a day**, in which **He will judge** the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained: whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath **raised Him** from the dead."*

It is one of the strangest evidences that men in nature are spiritually blind, in that these clear declarations from our Lord, first, and then His apostles, should be denied. They are the same truth taught by the Hebrew prophets. One would expect that atheists and unbelievers would deny such; but many that have a name among "Christian" denominations are enemies of this great truth. Every passage on the subject of the resurrection asserts that there will be a resurrection of the dead. Simply put, nothing can be **resurrected** except something has first been *laid down!* And **only**

the BODY has been laid in the grave! Hence, **only the body** can be resurrected. A man is composed of body, soul, and spirit. There are many discussions relative to what constitutes the soul of man, and we leave that for others here. But the following is to this writer evident: The first part of this composition is the *body*, which in the beginning God made of the earth. Into this *body* God "*breathed the **breath of life**, and man became a living **soul**.*" Hence, we gather, that it is the *breath of God*, or as in the Hebrew, *spirit*, which welds together the body and the soul. Take away the *breath* and the soul leaves the body. Take away the spirit of man, and his soul and body separates. His spirit accompanies his soul to God who gave it (As we shall prove hereafter.) Neither the spirit nor soul of man ever enters into the grave. Only the lifeless **body** is laid to rest therein. Jesus made this as clear as language can make it, "*For the hour is coming, in the which **ALL** that are **in the grave** shall hear His voice, and shall **come forth**; they that have done good, unto the **resurrection** of life; and they have done evil, unto the **resurrection** of damnation.*" (This is a quotation from Daniel.) The only seeming reason that any "Christian" would deny the Lord's own word is stark unbelief. It is **only** the **body** that is committed to the grave; and hence it is **only** the **body** that can **come forth**. It is certain that something "*will come forth*," for Jesus said so! So simply put, if something does *come forth*, as Jesus said, it must be the body! There is nothing

else left there to come forth except the body and any burial materials not yet deteriorated. It is doubtful that He meant burial materials!

*"Now if Christ be preached that He **rose from the dead**, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?"* (1 Corinthians 15: 12.) So in Paul's day, there were these unbelievers among the household of faith. The entire 15th chapter of 1st Corinthians is devoted to proving that there is a **bodily resurrection of the dead**; yet there are men who read it with the veil over their eyes. Read this clear declaration: *"Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we **shall all be changed**, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, **at the last trump**; for the trumpet shall sound, and the **DEAD shall be raised incorruptible, and WE shall be CHANGED**. . ."* Then follows a series of arguments to prove that the body must and will be *changed*.

Whatever is *"dead"* is what will be *"raised UP."* Whatever is **dead** will be changed. Is the spirit dead? If so, who then are these **"spirits** of just men made perfect" of whom Paul speaks? (Hebrews 12:23.) Again, who are those to whom it is intended by, *"He went and preached unto the **spirits** in prison; which sometimes were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah"*? If these *spirits* were alive to hear, then they were not in the grave!

Is it the *soul* that is in the *grave* and must *come forth*, or be **resurrected**? Then of whom does the Spirit refer, saying, "*And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the **souls of them that were slain** for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held.*" (Revelations 6:9.) Whoever they were, they had been **slain**, but their souls were not in the grave. Again, of whom did John refer when it was written, "*And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw **the souls** of them that were **beheaded** for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, etc.*" (Revelations 20:4.) Again, these souls were not in the grave, and yet they had been beheaded! Simply put, they **died**. Thus we have proved that (1) the spirits of the deceased are not in the grave, and cannot "*come forth*." (2) The *souls* of the dead are not in the grave, and cannot "*come forth*". (3) The bodies are the only constitute part of man left in the grave, and will, as Jesus said, "*come forth*," and (4) these *bodies*, according to Christ will come forth in "*the resurrection*." Is this not a fair conclusion to be made from these texts?

Since, the above is often disputed by some, we give this additional argument: What is it that goes into the grave and will yet "*come forth*"? If this can be Biblically established, this topic is proved. In the passage in Job, he said, "*In my flesh shall I see God.*" So two things will be brought forth from the grave in the resurrection: his

eyes and his *flesh* will both come forth. Since "*flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God,*" and yet "*shall come forth,*" then Job's eyes and flesh must undergo a radical *change*. It is this very point Paul labors to prove! In Revelations, the *tongue* shall give praise to God, and "*every **knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that He is Lord.***" One does not know if spirits and souls have eyes, mouths, flesh, and knees, but it is unlikely. It is certain that *bodies* have these members. Since they shall *sing* around the throne of God, we must assume they have *mouths and vocal cords*, both of which are members of *the body*; and not of souls and spirits! So the point is made. Only the *bodies* of the dead can be resurrected from the grave, and this is the historical Biblical doctrine of the Christian faith. In truth, it is undeniable. So the apostle prays, "*And I pray God your whole **spirit, and soul and body** be preserved blameless unto the **coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.***" (1 Thessalonians 5:23.) And so it will!

The statement in the Article "and of a general judgment" deserves comment. Many pre-millennialists read that statement and reject it, saying that it is the position of "A-millennialists." It can be, but not necessarily so. It is used in the same sense as the phrase "general atonement." It means that everyone will be resurrected and everyone will be judged. That doctrine, of course, is denied by many today. Arminians have preached that "God loves everybody" to such an extent

that most "Christians" have become sentimentalists. If God loves everyone, they reason, He can't send anyone to hell. If He does not send any to hell, then there is no use for a *judgment*. However, our forefathers stated the doctrine exactly as the Bible teaches it.

This Article expresses the finality of all the Christian's hope. There is an after-life. There is a resurrection of the dead. It is a *bodily resurrection*. There is a heavenly home for the Church, the Bride, or the Body of Christ. There is an eternal hell. The justice of God demands it, and God will honor His own justice. Simply put, the elect and reprobates will be finally and forever separated.

The *one* verse of scripture that the non-resurrectionists rely on for their error is the one Paul used to teach the necessity of a change in the resurrected body. He say, "*Flesh and blood cannot **inherit** the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.*" (1 Corinthians 15:50.) The very next verse shows clearly that Paul is arguing the necessity of a **change** being made in the resurrected **body**. The spirit of man, nor the soul of man, needs any **changing**. It is the body that must be changed. "*Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall **all be changed**.*" Flesh and blood is corruptible, and Paul points out that corruption cannot inherit incorruption, which necessitates a radical change. This change can only be in **the body**. So he proves it saying, "*In a*

*moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound and the **dead** (What is dead? The body, soul, or spirit?) shall be **raised incorruptible**, and we shall be **changed**. For **this** corruptible (only the body is corruptible), and **THIS mortal** (only the body is mortal) must put on immortality. So when **this** corruptible (which is the body) 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** (To which only the body is subject) is swallowed up in victory.” (Verses 51-54.)*

It is the *mortal body* that puts on immortality, and it is the *corruptible body* that puts on *incorruption* from “flesh and blood” to that which can be sustained in a resurrected state and environment. This is Paul's argument for the bodily resurrection of the dead. It is a good one, indeed, but *“all men will not receive this saying; save they to whom it is given.”*

Again, that the body only is the subject of the resurrection, Paul amply proves. Notice his use of the word “it” in the following text: *“So also is the resurrection of the dead.”* (Only the body is dead) **“It is sown in corruption; it is raised** (same “it”) *in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory.”* (Again, the same “it,” the body) **It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power:”** (Same “it” again, the body) **It is sown a natural BODY:”** (Can there be any

question here what is sown?) ***"It is raised a spiritual BODY. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."*** (1 Corinthians 15:42-44.) That is "plain English". No true believer can deny these plain declarations of the Word of God.

The actual word "***resurrection***" means the *raising up again* of something that was previously *standing*, and has been laid down. This can only apply to the body. The soul and spirit, as proven above, does not die nor enter the grave. Thus our Lord's declaration stands literally as He stated it. All that are in the grave shall hear His voice and come forth in the resurrection of life, or the resurrection of damnation. This Article of Faith is true and there is no Biblical room to dispute it. Nor can we see why any would want to deny it, unless they fear the resurrection of damnation.

Christ is referring to the Old Testament prophecy of Daniel, and confirming what he foretold, saying, ***"And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, everyone that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever."*** (Daniel 12:1-3.) Then he wrote,

*"Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked **shall understand**; but the wise **shall understand**."*(Verse 10.)

"13. We believe that the punishment of the wicked will be everlasting and the joys of the righteous will be eternal. Psalm 9:17. *"The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all nations that forget God."* And, Revelations 21:4. *"And God shall wipe away all tears from their **eyes**; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things have passed away."*

Those who deny the resurrection of the body usually deny that there is a judgment. In this sense, while unscriptural, yet they are consistent. If there is no resurrection of the body, then there is nothing left to judge! The spirit and the soul of the departed dead are already in glory, or in hell. Only the body is left below to await the resurrection. The topic of the judgment, however, is fully presented in both the Old and New Testaments. To deny the judgment is to deny the Scripture to be the inspired Word of God.

In the Old Testament, the passage in Daniel cited above speaks clearly of the resurrection of the body. It connects the resurrection to the judgment, for both

subjects are interrelated. *"And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake."* This is exactly what Jesus stated. This *awakening* refers to *regeneration* in the New Testament in both places the word is used. Those in the *grave* (dust of the earth) *shall **come forth*** (awake), *"some to everlasting **life**, and some to shame and everlasting **contempt**."* To assign one to everlasting life and others to shame and everlasting contempt necessitates a **judgment!**

Throughout the Old Testament, hundreds of times, God is described as a God of judgment; He is a just Judge; His judgments are right, etc. Simply put, "judgment" is an attribute of God as surely as mercy and forgiveness are His gracious acts.

In the New Testament, Jesus said, *Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the **DAY OF JUDGMENT, THAN FOR THAT CITY.*** (Matthew 10:15.) Notice this: (1) Sodom and Gomorrha were no longer in existence when Jesus made this declaration. Therefore no one can reasonably say this judgment is in "time." (2) The Lord projected this comparative punishment to take place at a future *"**day of judgment.**"* Simply put, that is the doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ, so a true Christian cannot refute it.

Again, our Lord said, *"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.) Peter echoed the doctrine of Christ on this same subject, writing, *"The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the **DAY OF JUDGMENT.**"* (2 Peter 2:9.) Paul's great sermon on Mar's Hill to the Athenians echoes through the ages, *"Because He hath **appointed a DAY**, in which He will **judge** the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead."* It is clear, then, that the Old Testament prophets, Christ, and His apostles all believed in a resurrection of the dead and a specific **day** of judgment for **all men**.

Thus, with suffering Job, the child of God can fully agree: *"IF A MAN DIE, SHALL HE LIVE AGAIN? ALL THE DAYS OF MY APPOINTED TIME WILL I WAIT, TILL MY **CHANGE COME**. THOU SHALT CALL, AND I WILL ANSWER THEE: THOU WILT HAVE A DESIRE TO THE WORK OF THINE HANDS."* (Job 14:14-15.) And,

*"FOR I KNOW THAT MY REDEEMER LIVETH, AND THAT HE SHALL STAND AT THE LATTER DAY UPON THE EARTH: AND THOUGH **AFTER** MY SKIN WORMS DESTROY **THIS BODY**, YET IN **MY FLESH SHALL I SEE GOD**: WHOM I SHALL **SEE FOR MYSELF**, AND NOT ANOTHER; THOUGH MY REINS BE CONSUMED WITHIN ME."* (Job 19: 25-27.)

PART V

CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE SIMPLY PUT

In my former treatise, O Theophilus, ("Theophilus" in the Greek means "a friend of God."), the *gospel* was presented as the "*glad tidings,*" or "*good news*" of what Christ has already done in His active and passive

work on the cross. In the second treatise, the official stated doctrines of our fellowship of churches were simply stated. In this treatise, we shall attempt to apply the whole. Setting forth the *gospel* and the *doctrine* of Christianity without the application of these to a poor sinner would be to neglect a vital part for which the former two are designed. But, where to begin is difficult to determine. If we begin where Christian experience begins, it must be in the eternal love and decree of God from which it rises. But how deep is that sea of love! How wide is that topic! We shall spend eternity wondering at its vastness. So we will only "hint" at this and pass on.

As with Jeremiah, the same can be said of every sensible sinner, "*The Lord hath appeared of old unto me saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: and with lovingkindness have **I drawn thee.***" (Jeremiah 31:3.) It is from this everlasting love that God moved to save such wretched sinners. He said of Ephraim." *I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus; Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke:*

Turn Thou me, and I shall be turned; for Thou art my God. Surely after that I was turned, I REPENTED; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth." (Jeremiah 31: 18,19.) If one would look closely at *the order and arrangement* of this text, one should be able to see the Christian's experience laid out consistent with what every quickened child of God has experienced. First, God *moves upon the sinner*, and following God's chastening him, he desires that God *turn him*. It seems evident that such a soul is taught this early that he cannot *turn himself* from what he is by nature. So he begs God to turn him. He recognizes the effectual work of God's Almighty power: "***Turn Thou me, and I shall be turned!***" There is no dispute here. If God *turns* a man, that man is *turned!* The reason he is turned is because the "*Lord is my God.*" God is GOD, and He surely can turn whomsoever He will.

But notice what follows next in the order. "***After that I was turned, I repented.***" That is totally reversed from the order of man-made plans of salvation. But it is in perfect harmony with the New Testament that states it is, "*godly sorrow that leads you to repentance.*" Modern religions teach that if you would but repent, then God would turn you! But that, simply put, is contrary to experience. Since a man is born "*dead in trespasses and sins,*" he is unable to turn himself, and also unable to repent. But when God turns him he most certainly will

repent, for repentance is God's work too! "*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.***" (Acts 5:31.) Again, on the report of Peter to the church at Antioch, the church rejoiced and "*glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles **granted repentance unto life.***" (Acts 11:18,) Paul rebuked natural men for "*not knowing that the goodness of God **leadeth thee to REPENTANCE.***" (Romans 2:4.) So with these Scriptures before us, let us turn to the experience of sensible sinners.

Are you then a feeling sinner? Has God chastened you so that you feel that you are a stubborn bull unaccustomed to the ox-yoke? You just cannot do good, but are condemned for not doing it? There is solid comfort here if the answers to these questions are "yes." One of the earliest declarations of our Lord Jesus was this: "*I will have mercy, and **not sacrifice, for I am not come to cal the righteous, but sinners to REPENTANCE.***" (Matthew 9:13.) Why would our Lord reject your sacrifices and gifts? Sacrifices were commanded under the law to Israel. The reason is to display His **mercy**. How is His mercy displayed? His mercy is displayed by calling **sinners**, rather than the self-righteous souls, to **repentance**. The Lord "*delighteth in mercy.*" It is one of His sweetest attributes, or characteristics. If He made salvation

conditioned on either faith or repentance, then the "righteous" would have it by works. But no! Ten thousand times no! He made it a matter of His own sweet mercy! He does the *chastening*; He does the *turning*; He *gives* the results: repentance; and He does it to and for sinners! What solid comfort this is to a believing sinner. No wonder the saints love to sing of His free grace and mercy! While "*repentance and remission of sins is to be preached unto all nations,*" it is never to be predicated on creature merit. Christ is the Savior of sinners; not repentance and faith. The above flow from God's everlasting love and lovingkindness to sensible sinners.

The single prerequisite for all gospel benefits is **spiritual life** within an individual. Without life, one cannot *believe*. Without life, he cannot *spiritually repent*. Without life, he cannot *know feelingly* that he is a wretched, miserable, sinner. Without life, he cannot "*hear the joyful sounds*" of the gospel. Without life, he cannot *mourn* over his sins. Without life, he cannot *see* any real need for Christ. Without life, simple put, HE IS DEAD SPIRITUALLY. **Life**, then, must **precede** all these things "*which accompany salvation.*" And, from whence comes this **life**? Jesus said, "*Ye must be **born again.***" (John 3:3.) Or, "*Ye must be born **from above***" (center margin). As in John 1:13, "*Which were born, not of blood, nor the will of the flesh, nor the will of man, **but of GOD.***" It makes perfectly good sense to an

informed Christian. Your father and mother brought you into this world. They were “natural,” and so are you. Bovines (cows) have calves, but goats don't. If you are ever to be spiritual, you must have a ***spiritual birth***. Your Father must be *spiritual*. So you come into this spiritual **life** by a spiritual begetting and birth; and whoever begat you and brought you to **spiritual life** is your spiritual Father!

But of concern by many poor sinners is the question, “Am I His or am I not?” Is there any marks or evidences to which one may find comfort? Yes. Jesus said, *“He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, **HATH everlasting life.**”* (John 5:24.) That is good evidence. Notice that He did **not** say that *if you believe* that you *would receive* everlasting life. He said, *“**hath everlasting life.**”* He is showing one that he already has everlasting life if faith is in evidence. Faith did not produce the life; but the life produced the faith! *“Faith is the substance of things hoped for; the **evidence** of things not seen.”* (Hebrews 11:1.) Paul spent much of his time in the 7th chapter of Romans on this very subject. It is worth reading many times over. Are you alive, or are you dead? We showed the difference between those who are alive and those who are dead above. Into which category do you fall? Isn't there comfort there for sensible sinners? Or, perhaps your comfort can be found here: *“I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, **sin revived, and I died.**”*

Have you been there? Again, *"For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that I do."* Has Paul described you yet? By his own experience, the fact that he did those things which he otherwise would not do, he had a witness that the law was good. But he also realized something else. If he was actually doing those things that he would not do, then something else was doing it. And that something else was *"sin that dwelleth in me."* (Verse 20.) Are you with him yet? He explained it further, saying, *"I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me,"* (Verse 21.) If he has reached your condition, then take comfort that these things give evidence of *spiritual life* dwelling within.

With the commencement of that spiritual life within one previously dead in trespasses and sins, there also begins a spiritual warfare. An evidence of spiritual life is a *spiritual warfare*, for those dead in trespasses and sins cannot have a spiritual warfare. Comfort can, then, be found in that experience, even though it may be a trying experience. *"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."* (Galatians 5:17.) Is this clashing experience in you? That would be good news indeed, for surely if the Spirit is **not** within one, that description would not fit him at all. This **conflict** is a mark of God's **living** children.

We have presented the work of Christ for sinners, as well as the Father's sovereign decree in salvation. When viewing the experimental work within the child of God, we are expressly concerned with the Holy Spirit's work. Jesus promised the Spirit as a Comforter, saying, "*I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may **abide WITH you forever**, 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.***" (John 14: 16,17.) Now there is a contrast made here. The child of God has the Spirit of truth, whereas the world does not. We would not conclude that everyone with a head-knowledge of the five points of grace (Calvinism) is saved, but we can say that if they *love and cherish* such precious truth, then grace is dwelling within them.

The living child of God has an "infirmity" in praying. The world can say a pray at a ball game, beer joint, sick bed, or anywhere and at any time they wish. But the *infirmity in prayer* makes a child of God totally dependent upon God, even for his prayers. "*Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know **not** what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the spirit, because He maketh intercession for **the saints** according to the*

will of God." (Romans 8:26,27.) In your experience, are you there? Is your prayer-life easy and at any time you wish? Or must you wait for an unction of the Spirit to indict your heart before God? Such individuals are "poor in spirit," and our Lord promised that such were "blessed" already. Simply put, being poor in spirit is an evidence of one's blessed state. Is that your present state? If so, then take comfort in it as the *gospel* to your soul.

Another good test of one's sonship may be by looking within with the most basic and honest examination: What are my values? What are those things I really honestly prize deep within? Well, you might say, "I really prize righteousness, and as Lot, I am vexed daily by the unrighteousness of the wicked." Well, how is that in God's sight? "*Blessed are they which hunger and thirst after righteousness. . .*" (Matthew 5:6.) Is that what you are saying? Do you hunger and thirst after it? If you do, again, our Lord said you were "blessed" already. It too, simply put, is an evidence of one's sonship. But the Lord's answer should be of even more comfort. That is, "*for they shall be filled.*" You'll never attain it in your flesh, or outer man, in this present life; but in the spiritual creature born within, that "inner man," you have a perfect righteousness imputed to you by the faith of Christ Jesus. His righteousness is yours, and that by a free gift of God. That is as "full" of righteousness as one can be!

There is another precious work within God's people

that can be of comfort to a living, trembling, sinner. God's people invariably **mourn** over their sinfulness. They are quick to condemn their evil thoughts, words, or deeds. This is one of the most cutting of their experiences. They are "dead to sin," but find that sin is not dead within them. It confronts them daily, and is the most troubling experience to test their faith. Sin dwells within their flesh, and sin grieves their spirits without. Sin is ever present with them, which gives them no rest day or night. Their rest can only be in Christ Jesus and His sustaining presence. They do, unlike the happy go lucky manmade "Christian," **mourn** over their awful condition in the flesh. They long for full deliverance from its presence. But here, too, the Lord's words are of great solace" *"Blessed **are** they that mourn: for they **shall** be comforted."* (Matthew 5:4.) So again, simply put, *mourning over sin* is an **evidence** of one's blessed state. It is from this condition that the Lord promised they would be comforted, for He is ever their strength and shield. He delights to help those who mourn, and in comforting them He proves His love for them.

So, dear, "Theophilus," find your comfort in the Lord and the precious work of the Holy Spirit's teaching within. There is your rest; and it is a *"rest that remains for the people of God; and we do enter into that rest when we cease for our labor as He ceased for His."* May the eternal God graciously bless you and all His elect people you live among; and fellowship in the *gospel of the free grace of God.*

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