

WORD OF GOD

by John W. White

John White's treatise on the Scriptures, examining how Jesus expounded the Law, Prophets, and Psalms concerning Himself to His disciples on the Emmaus road.

2 Chapters

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Adoption

ADOPTION By John W. White

Romans 9:4 "Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises;" Deuteronomy 7:6-7 "For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people:" Deuteronomy 14:2 "For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God, and the LORD hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth." Deuteronomy 1:1 "The LORD shall establish thee an holy people unto himself..." "And all people of the earth... shall be afraid of thee." Deuteronomy 28:13 "And the LORD shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the LORD thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them:" Matthew 21:42-43 "Jesus saith unto them...The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner... Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." NOT A PEOPLE, NOW THE PEOPLE

1 Peter 2:8-10 "And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense, even to them [Israel] which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed. But ye [Gentiles] are a chosen [e>klektov = elect] generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but NOW have obtained mercy." Ephesians 3:5-6 "Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:" Keep in mind that Gentiles have always been able to be saved. Rahab the harlot of Jericho was a Gentile and part of the lineage of Jesus Christ. Nineveh was a Gentile city and they were saved through the preaching of Jonah. Gentiles were not promised a heavenly inheritance but an earthly inheritance. Ezekiel 47:22 "And it shall come to pass, that ye shall divide it by lot for an inheritance unto you, and to the strangers.... they shall have inheritance with you among the tribes of Israel." There is a list of a few in Hebrews chapter 11 that were living by faith and were anticipating a heavenly inheritance. Hebrews 11:16 "But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city."

CHILDREN OF GOD When we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ we are saved as in Acts 16:31 "And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." The children of God are those who have been born, from above, into His family. In 1 Peter 2:2 "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:" we should desire

to grow spiritually beginning with the milk of the Word. In Isaiah 28:1-29 we find out that we should not continue on milk but we need to be weaned. Isaiah 28:9-10 "Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little:" Hebrews 5:13 "For every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe." We are expected to mature spiritually and grow in the Word until we are eating the meat of the Word. Hebrews 5:14 "But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." We are told that Emmanuel will eat butter and honey in Isaiah 7:15 "Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good." We find out how to make butter in Proverbs 30:33 "Surely the churning of milk bringeth forth butter..." The churning of milk to make butter is hard work. The meat of the word is IN the milk of the word. It just takes hard work to get those nuggets of truth to come together. Our ability to discern between good and evil is what will be judged at the Judgment Seat of Christ. 2 Corinthians 5:10 "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad [evil]." Responsibility and accountability comes with maturity in the word. Luke 12:48 ".....For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more." The main thing that we need to do is to grow. 2 Peter 3:18 "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen."

WHAT IS ADOPTION? When we read or hear the word "Adoption", we immediately think of a child being born into a family and then that child, through a legal process, becomes a member of another family. There are those who teach that when we are saved we are adopted into the family of God. This concept of adoption does not agree with what we find in John 3:3 "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again [from above], he cannot see the kingdom of God." When we receive Jesus Christ as our personal saviour we are born from above into the family of God. Being born into the family God, means adoption is not necessary. In Ephesians 1:5 we find the word adoption in context with the word children. "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will," The phrase "Adoption of children" is the translation of one Greek word, uioqesian. This word is the same word that is used in Romans 8:15, and is a compound word containing the words uiov and tiqhmi. The word uiov means "son". The word tiqhmi means "to put", "to lay", "to appoint" and "to ordain". There is not a single hint to suggest that the word uioqesian means "adoption." The word "Adoption" means "To appoint as a son" or "To ordain to sonship". WHEN DOES ADOPTION TAKE PLACE? The appointment was made before the foundation of the world, (Ephesians 1:4) but when does the appointment take effect? Romans 8:19-23, and 23 can help us with this question. Romans 8:19 "For the earnest expectation of the creature [creation] waiteth for the manifestation [Greek apokaluyin = the revelation, or the unveiling] of the sons of God." In Romans 8:23 The manifestation of the sons of God will take place when our bodies are raised from the dead. "...We ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit [that is to say], the redemption of our body." Jesus Christ was declared the Son of God with power at His resurrection: Romans 1:4 "And declared [orizw = appoint] to be [This verb is not in the Gr. text.] The Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the

dead:" In Php 3:21 we are given some insight into what will happen at the resurrection of the body. "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." AS CHILDREN, WE ARE SERVANTS

Galatians 4:1-2 "Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; But is under tutors and governors until the appointed time of the Father." A contemporary illustration of this is when a Jewish boy, at age 13, becomes a 'son of the commandment' and a full member of the synagogue at his bar mitzvah. The Hebrew word bar means "son", and the word mitzvah means "command" and the root word, tsavah means to "enjoin" and is translated "appoint", "charge", "put" or "command". Just as a Jewish boy would be placed into the family as a son, so also in the family of God, many of the children of God will be declared sons of God and will no longer be servants under tutors and governors. Until the Lord takes us home to be with him we are either being profitable or unprofitable servants. Matthew 25:23 "His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord." Luke 17:10 "So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do."

"THEY ARE THE SONS OF GOD" The first occurrence of the word "Adoption" is found in Romans 8:14-15 "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." In verse 14 we have the statement "They are the sons of God". If those that "Are led by the Spirit of God....are the sons of God", this seems to indicate that the sons of God have been manifested and the body has been redeemed. This has not happened. For us to understand what is being said in verse 14, we will have to study two verbs in that verse. The two verbs are "Are led" and "They are". Both are in the present tense, which means the actions of these verbs is continuous. You graph the action of the present tense with a straight line ($\frac{3}{4}$). We need to translate the verb (Gr. agw) "Are led" to reflect the present tense and passive voice: "For as many as are being led by Spirit of God...". The passive voice means the subject, "As many as", receives the action of the verb, "Being led." Because the present tense expresses continuous action, the action of " being led by Spirit of God" can continue for a while then be terminated. The other verb (Gr. eimi) "They are" is also in the present tense, and it is the verb "to be" in English. This word can be translated "they are being." As long as the Spirit of God is leading us, we are being the sons of God. As soon as we stop being led by the Spirit of God, we are no longer being, behaving or conducting ourselves as sons of God. We have similar uses of the present tense in Romans 8:5-8; Romans 8:1-39. Romans 8:5 "For they that are [present active participle of eimi, they are being] after the flesh do mind [present active of du>namia, they are minding] the things of the flesh..." Those who are behaving themselves in the flesh are being mindful of fleshly things. Romans 8:7 "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." If we are not subject to the law of God neither are we subject to the Spirit of God. We have become lawless. Romans 8:8 "So then they that are [present active participle of ei>mi, they are being] in the flesh [This is not referring to being in the flesh literally, but minding the things of the flesh as in verse 5.] cannot [Two Greek words "Can" and "Not". The word "Can" is present passive of du>namia, "They are being able"; plus the Greek word: ouj, the emphatic "Not"

] please God." To be led by the Spirit of God is to "Be spiritually minded" (Romans 8:6), and to behave ourselves as sons of God, and to live in such a way as to please Him. Again, if Romans 8:14 is making the statement that we are now sons of God, then the sons of God have been revealed and we are in our glorified bodies. This just simply is not the case.

BECAUSE YE ARE SONS

Galatians 4:6-7 "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art [present active of ei>mi, ye are being] no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." The verb "Ye are" is present active of eimi, and should be translated "ye are being sons", just as it is in Romans 8:14. The verb "Thou art" in verse 7 is also present active of ei>mi, and should be translated " ye are being no more servants." It is obvious that we cannot say that we are the sons of God literally, just as we cannot say literally that we are no longer servants of God. We are still in this body of death.

HOW DO WE LIVE LIKE A SON

Jesus Christ is our example. The following is selected verses that will show His example. 1 Peter 2:21 "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:" Php 2:5-6 Php 2:8 "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:"; "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Hebrews 5:8 "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;" John 4:34 "Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." Mark 14:36 "And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt." Matthew 10:24 "The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord." We can cry Abba, Father also. Romans 8:15 "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the sprit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." Galatians 4:6 "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." Hebrews 12:2 "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith [ability to please Him]; who for the joy that was set before him [a good and faithful servant] endured the cross [not just the crucifixion], despising the shame [that comes for disobedience], and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God [overcomer]."

2 Timothy 1:7 "For God hath.. given us the spirit... of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." POWER - "ALL things are possible unto Thee." LOVE - "Not what I will but what thou wilt." SOUND MIND - Isaiah 33:6 "And wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, and strength of salvation: the fear of the LORD is his treasure." WHO ARE THE SONS OF GOD TODAY?

Job 1:6 "Now there was a day when the sons of God [These are angels.] came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them." Daniel 10:13 "But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief

princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia." Ephesians 6:12 "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." These passages show that the angels of God, whether they be fallen or not, are known as the sons of God and they are the principalities, rulers, and powers in the heavens today. WHO WILL BE SON'S OF GOD

IN THE AGE TO COME?

Revelation 12:9 "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him." About the middle of the tribulation the principalities and powers in heavenly places will be kicked out of heaven. Those who have been appointed to sonship will begin to rule from the heavens. Revelation 2:26-27 "And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: And he shall rule them with a rod of iron..." Who is with Him when He comes to make war? Revelation 17:14 "These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful." The words called, chosen, and faithful are adjectives describing the kings and lords that are with him. The promise made to the apostles: Matthew 19:27-28 "Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?" "And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration WHEN the son of man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." This is during the 1000-year reign of Christ over the earth. THE CHALLENGE

Revelation 21:7 "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son." Hebrews 11:16 "But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city." 1 Corinthians 15:57-58 "But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

Word Of God

The Word Of God By John W White THE SCRIPTURES In Romans 15:4, we have a reference made to the "scriptures:" "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience [endurance] and comfort [exhortation] of the scriptures might have hope." This verse also tells us that the scriptures were written in the past, which is a reference to the Old Testament. This thought is confirmed in the following verses when Jesus joined himself with two of his disciples on the road to Emmaus. Luke 24:27 "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." He began with Moses and included the prophets when he expounded to them the scriptures. In Luke 24:32, "And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?" He explained the scriptures to these disciples. We can see from Luke 24:44-45, "And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. 45. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures," The scriptures start with the Law of Moses, and include the Psalms and the prophets. The Old Testament scriptures are divided into the Law (Genesis-Deuteronomy), History (Joshua-Esther), Poetry (Job-Song of Solomon), and the Prophets (Isaiah-Malachi). What we see is that within the scripture, we have the law, the psalms and the prophets. In other words, the scripture is made up of parts. Hebrews 1:1 "God, who at sundry times [many parts] and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,"

ALL SCRIPTURE WAS GIVEN BY GOD The scriptures are not all prophecy. Prophecy is just a part of the scriptures. 2 Peter 1:19-21 "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: 20. Knowing this first that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. 21. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." When the New Testament was added, it too, became part of the scriptures so that 2 Timothy 3:16-17 can be applied to us who are alive today: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17. That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." can be applied to us who are alive today.

SOME SCRIPTURE IS NOT FOR EVERYONE

Many that wrote the scriptures did not understand what they wrote. The Old Testament writers did not understand the salvation that was to be revealed at the end of the age, which pertains to our inheritance and not birth into the family of God. 1 Peter 1:10-12 "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: 11. Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of [for] Christ, and the glory that should follow. 12. Unto whom it

was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into." Peter commented about some of Paul's writing ministry as being hard to understand in 2 Peter 3:15-16 "And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; 16. As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction." This salvation is not the common salvation that all of the prophets in the Old Testament knew about because they were saved. This salvation is about a heavenly inheritance.

PARABLES USED TO VEIL TRUTH

During the teaching ministry of Jesus, he taught doctrine in parables. Mark 4:34 "But without a parable spake he not unto them: and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples." The parables stimulated questions that he explained to those who had questions. Most were not interested in the meaning of the parables. By teaching in parables he was making sure that the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven would stay a mystery. Matthew 13:10-11 "And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? 11. He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given." Matthew 13:16 "But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear." THE WORD OF GOD IS VEILED

It seems to me that God continues to hide things in the scriptures. Proverbs 25:2 "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honour of kings is to search out a matter." The mysteries of the kingdom of the heavens are still being veiled. That mystery is the Word of God as found in the parable of the sower according to Luke 8:8-11, "And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundredfold. And when he had said these things, he cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. 9. And his disciples asked him, saying, What might this parable be? 10. And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand. 11. Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God." The seed sown in Matthew 13:1-58, Mark 4:1-41; and Luke 8:1-56 is the mysteries of the kingdom of the heavens and defined as the Word of God in Luke 8:11. This mystery was not being revealed to Gentiles or Samaritans. The mystery was not the common salvation because Samaritans and Gentiles have always been able to enter into the common salvation. Examples of that are Rahab and the whole nation of Nineveh. Samaritans were descendents of Joseph and Asenath, a gentile. In John 10:34-35 "Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? 35. If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken;" we have the words "law", "scriptures", and the phrase "the word of God" in two verses. The pronouns "you" and "whom" are references to the nation of Israel. God gave Israel the law as well as the "word of God." At the beginning the "word of God" was offered only to the nation of Israel. John the Baptist began the ministry of the Word of God to the nation of Israel when he began to preach the baptism of repentance in the wilderness. Luke 3:2 ". . . the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness." John's message is further defined in Matthew 3:1-2 "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, 2. And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." It was the

nation of Israel that responded to John's ministry in Matthew 3:5 "Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan,"

John tells us that everyone who is born from above will see the kingdom of God in John 3:3 "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." In addition to being born from above to see the kingdom, John the Baptist and Jesus were teaching what was required to enter into the kingdom of God. There is a difference between seeing and entering. You can see a baseball game but if you are qualified you enter into playing the game on one of the teams. The Lord tells us what it takes to enter into the kingdom in Matthew 7:21, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." To enter into the kingdom of the heavens is to rule and reign over the earth from the heavens. To qualify for positions in His kingdom you have to do the will of the Father. We are told that brethren are the ones who do the will of the Father in Matthew 12:50, "For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, . . ." We are also told that it is the brethren who listen to the Word of God and do it. Luke 8:21 "And he answered and said unto them, . . . my brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it." It is the word of God that teaches us how to qualify to enter into the kingdom of the heavens and not how to be born into the family of God.

HEARING THE WORD OF GOD BRINGS BLESSING

Jesus taught that those who would hear the word of God and do it would be blessed in Luke 11:28, ". . . blessed are they that hear [present active] the word of God, and keep [present active, do] it." It is the hearing of the word of God preached that allows faith to come into our lives. Romans 10:17 "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." If we have faith we are able to have grace to serve God acceptably, Hebrews 12:28 ". . . let us have [present active subjunctive, may we have] grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear." Accessing grace by faith allows us to stand and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Romans 5:2 "By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." It is the standing fast and rejoicing in hope that are the evidences of faith. Hebrews 11:1 "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." The message of the word of God presents all that is required to enter into the kingdom of the heavens. Faith gives substance to that heavenly kingdom. Faith also stimulates evidence of our hope by our obedience and lifestyle to gain an entrance into that coming kingdom and glory.

THE WORD OF GOD IN THE BOOK OF ACTS

I am persuaded that it would be profitable to look at passages in the book of Acts and the rest of the New Testament that have in them the phrase "word of God". Knowing that the phrase, "word of God," refers to the mysteries of the kingdom of God or heaven, will help us to understand what the Holy Spirit wanted the churches, as well as individuals, to understand about that truth.

Acts Chapter 1 The last forty days that Jesus was here on earth he taught things pertaining to the kingdom of God. Acts 1:3 "To whom also he showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." This would have included the mysteries of the kingdom of God as well.

Acts Chapter 4

What part did the Word of God play in the ministry of the Apostles and disciples in the book of Acts? Acts 4:31 "And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness." Being filled with the Holy Spirit they spake the word of God with boldness.

Acts Chapter 6

We see that the priority of the twelve Apostles was the word of God in Acts 6:2, "Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables." They further emphasized the significance of that message in Acts 6:4 "But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word."

Acts Chapter 8 The next occurrence of the word of God is found in Acts 8:4: "Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word [of God, minor mms]." Philip preached Christ to the Samaritans in Acts 8:5 "Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them." What was the subject found in the message of preaching Christ? The preaching of the word in verse 8 and Christ in verse 5 was indeed the preaching of the "word of God" which are the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. The preaching of the word and Christ is further defined in Acts 8:12 "But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God (which is the seed and the mysteries of the kingdom), and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." The apostles in Jerusalem heard that the word of God was being preached in Samaria according to Acts 8:14 "Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John:" When Peter and John were come down in verse 15, they prayed for them that they might receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The gift being the promise of everlasting life found in 1 John 2:25, and not the Holy Spirit himself. Peter, John, and Philip continued to preach the word of God throughout Samaria according to Acts 8:25 "And they, when they had testified and preached the word of the Lord, returned to Jerusalem, and preached the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans."

Acts Chapter 8 in Gaza This was the same message that Philip preached to the Ethiopian eunuch in Gaza; and associated with the mysteries of the kingdom of God, is baptism. After hearing Philip preach, the eunuch asked Philip a question in Acts 8:36-38: ". . . and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? 37. And Philip said, If thou believest [present active] with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe [present active] that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. 38. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him."

Acts Chapter 9, Paul

Paul was accosted on the road to Damascus and was led to a house on Straight Street where he was to wait to find out what the Lord wanted him to do. Ananias received a vision from the Lord as to what he would have him do. In Acts 9:15 "But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel." Ananias told Paul of the vision he had received from the Lord. He was to bear his name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. What is the significance of bearing his name before these peoples? I believe this is found in Revelation 19:13 ". . . his name is called The Word

of God." Paul was commissioned to preach the mysteries of the kingdom of God before Gentiles, kings, and the nation of Israel. Before he could do that he had to have his eyes opened to see Acts 9:18 "And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized." The scales falling from his eyes opened his understanding of the mysteries of the kingdom of God. Believing the mysteries of the kingdom, he was baptized. What did Paul begin to do? I believe this is found in Acts 9:20; "And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God." This is same message that Philip preached unto the Ethiopian Jew on the road to Gaza and when the eunuch believed in the present tense he was baptized.

Acts Chapters 10 and 11 The word of God was preached in the house of Cornelius in Acts 10:1-48, but we do not learn that until we read of it in Acts 11:1 "And the apostles and brethren that were in Judaea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God." Cornelius was not a lost Gentile but a saved Gentile who had embraced the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as his God. The message of the word of God was, for a time, not offered to Gentiles and Samaritans who were in the family of God, but only to Israel who had ears to hear. There were those who still resisted Peter's testimony as is shown Acts 11:19 "Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution . . . preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only."

I think we should look at Peter's message to Cornelius in Acts 10:37 "That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached." It is easy to see that the message that was published throughout Judaea was the word of God. Peter was preaching a message to Gentiles that he had previously been forbidden to do in the past. The Holy Spirit fell upon Cornelius and his house with speaking in languages to convince Peter and those that were with him, that truly Gentiles were now included as far as having an entrance into the kingdom of the heavens. Cornelius and his house were baptized. When someone is baptized they have received the word of God and believe, present active, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

Acts Chapter 13 at Salamis on Cyprus The next time we find the phrase "the word of God" is in Acts 13:5 "And when they were at Salamis (which is on the East side of the isle of Cyprus), they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews: . . ." I think it is noteworthy to notice that Paul and Barnabas went to the synagogue in Salamis. This message of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven continued to be to the Jew first, saved Israel, and also to saved Gentiles until Acts 28:28. Today this message is to both saved Jew and saved Gentile alike. Apparently there were neither saved Jew nor Gentile that responded to the message of the Word of God. No church was established in Salamis.

Keep in mind that the Word of God is for those who have ears to hear and eyes to see. You cannot hear and understand the word of God until you are saved, in the family of God. The mystery of the kingdom of God is the seed that was sown to the nation of Israel and that seed was the Word of God. This message is not about the common salvation but the so great salvation of Hebrews 2:3 "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord (the kingdom of heaven is at hand), and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;" This salvation was preached only to the perishing sheep of the house of Israel and it was a message of an inheritance in the kingdom of the heavens.

Now when you read that Paul and his companions sought out the local synagogue they were looking for saved Jews who might have ears to hear and eyes to see. Just as Cornelius, a saved Gentile, worshiped the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob at the temple, so there were Gentile proselytes worshiping at local synagogues throughout the Roman Empire. The door had been opened for Gentiles to receive the message of the kingdom by Peter in Acts 10:1-48; so saved Gentiles were responding to and believing the word of the kingdom, the Word of God.

Acts Chapter 13 at Paphos on Cyprus

Paul, Barnabas, and John crossed Cyprus to Paphos in Acts 13:7-8 "Which (Elymas, a Jew and a sorcerer) was with the deputy of the country (city of Paphos, on West side of the isle of Cyprus), Sergius Paulus (who I believe is a Gentile), a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God. 8. But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith." Keep in mind that faith is what it takes to please God. Hebrews 11:6 "But without faith it is impossible to please him: . . ." How does faith come? Romans 10:17 "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." A sorcerer is one who is controlled by Satan and his host and they do not want any child of God to please Him. We do read in Acts 13:12 "Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord." There is no proof that the deputy was baptized which would have been the next step for him if he believed, present tense, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God as in Acts 8:37. Baptism is burying those who have died to self, which is required if one is going to enter into the kingdom of the heavens. We will see later that the Philippian jailor believed and then was baptized after he received the word of God in Acts 16:33. Another observation is that there was no church established on Cyprus.

Acts Chapter 13 at Antioch in Pisidia The next place that we find the word of God being preached is in Antioch in Pisidia. Acts 13:14 "But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and sat down." Paul's message makes mention of the ministry of John the Baptist in Acts 13:24 "When John had first preached before his coming the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel." John was preaching the word of God to saved Israel who had ears to hear. Paul was doing the same thing here as well. We see this in Acts 13:26: "Men and brethren, children [sons] of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent."

After Paul's ministry of the Word of God in the synagogue, we see many following Paul and Barnabas. Paul and Barnabas persuaded them to continue in His grace in Acts 13:43 "Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue [present active] in the grace of God." Paul knew what the Grace of God would do for them. Acts 20:32 "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." Paul also knew that if grace reigned in their lives that they would reign in the coming kingdom and glory. Romans 5:21 ". . .so might grace reign through righteousness unto [leading to] eternal [age-lasting kingdom] life by Jesus Christ our Lord." For grace to reign we must continue in the faith. Acts 14:22 "Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue [present active] in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." It takes faith for grace to reign. Romans 5:2 "By

whom (Christ) also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." Continuing in faith will cause our hope of glory to be a living hope. The word of God reveals this hope of glory. Colossians 1:27 "To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery (the word of God) among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:"

Acts 13:44 "And the next Sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God." The Jews spake against the Word of God, and this is the unpardonable sin. By speaking against, blaspheming, what Paul preached was the same as speaking against the Holy Spirit and that will not be pardoned in this age or in the kingdom age that is coming. Matthew 12:32 ". . . . whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world [age], neither in the world to come [present active participle, the one coming]." After the Jews opposed the word of God, then Paul and Barnabas told the Jews that they would not be ministering to them any longer but to Gentiles in Acts 13:46 "Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you (Jew first): but seeing ye put it (the message of the word of God) from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting [age-lasting, kingdom] life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles."

Acts Chapter 16 - The Jailor This passage of scripture is very significant. It shows the progression of going from the common salvation to the so great salvation of Hebrews 2:3 ". . . so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord (the word of God)". The common salvation is presented in verses 30 and 31. The so great salvation is opened up by the word of God in verses 32 through 34. Acts 16:30-31 "And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? 31. And they said, Believe [aorist tense] on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." The so great salvation is presented in Acts 16:32-33 "And they spake unto him the word of the Lord [God, 24th edition of Nestles], and to all that were in his house. 33. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway." Jesus Christ is the one who died on the cross for all of mankind. To believe, aorist tense, that Jesus died for your sins and accept that sacrifice is to be saved, born from above. To believe, present tense, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God qualifies one to be baptized which is the first step one takes to enter into the kingdom of the heavens. It was the preaching of the word of God that brings one to the understanding of baptism and the kingdom of the heavens. Without the message of the Word of God baptism is not relevant.

Acts Chapter 17 at Thessalonica

Acts 17:1-2 "Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: 2. And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures," These two verses help us to see that when Paul went to Thessalonica he reasoned with the Jews out of the scriptures. What Paul was doing by reasoning out of the scriptures was to present to them the "word of God" according to Acts 17:13 "But when the Jews of Thessalonica had knowledge that the word of God was preached of Paul at Berea, they came thither also, and stirred up the people." There were those who responded to the word of God in Thessalonica according to 1 Thessalonians 2:13 "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which

effectually worketh [present middle] also in you that believe [present active]." They received the word of God as it is the truth.

Notice that, the word of God, worketh, present tense, effectually in those that believe, in the present tense. It does not work effectively in those who only believe, aorist tense, that Jesus died for them leading to the common salvation. There are those who believe in the aorist tense and are saved that later receive the word of God with joy, and continue to believe, present tense, the word of God and produce fruit that glorifies the Father.

Acts Chapter 17 at Berea

Paul had to leave Thessalonica. The preaching of the word of God in Thessalonica met with such resistance that it became dangerous for Paul to continue his ministry in that city. Acts 17:10-13 "And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews. 11. These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things (the Word of God, verse 13) were Song of Solomon 12. Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few. 13. But when the Jews of Thessalonica had knowledge that the word of God was preached of Paul at Berea, they came thither also, and stirred up the people." The message that the word of God gives is a message that is vehemently attacked and resisted even to this day. Those who have been studying and searching the scriptures for the truth often have less trouble understanding the message of the mysteries of the kingdom of God. They are able to ask intelligent questions. It seems that those who oppose the mysteries of the kingdom and who are not able to refute it from the scriptures often resort to stirring up the people against the teacher. This is what happened to Paul.

Acts Chapter 18 at Corinth In Corinth Paul reasoned with the Jews as he had in many synagogues and cities. When Silas and Timotheus came, Paul was stirred in spirit to press the truth that Jesus was the Christ. Acts 18:6 says that the Jews resisted this truth and Paul cast them off symbolically by shaking his garment in their presence. The shaking of the garment is similar to shaking the dust from your feet in the presence of those who rejected the message of the kingdom in the Gospels as well as in Acts 13:51. Acts 18:6-8 "And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles. 7. And he departed thence, and entered into a certain man's house, named Justus, one that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue. 8. And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing (present active participle) believed (verse 11, the Word of God), and were baptized." In Acts 18:11 "And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them."

Acts Chapter 19 at Ephesus The phrase "word of God" is not in Acts 19:1-41, but the phrase "kingdom of God" is in Acts 19:8 "And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God." Things concerning the kingdom of God certainly included the mysteries of the kingdom of God. This would be consistent with the message that Paul boldly preached in every synagogue.

Acts Chapter 28 at Rome The phrase "word of God" is not found in Acts 28:1-31 but the phrase, like in Acts 19:1-41, "kingdom of God," is found. Acts 28:30-31 "And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, 31. Preaching the kingdom of God, . . . " I am persuaded that Paul continues as his manner was in Acts 17:2 "And Paul, as his manner was, . . . reasoned with them out of the scriptures," but as a prisoner of Rome.

1 Peter 1:23

We find the phrase "word of God" mentioned in 1 Peter 1:23 "Being born again [anagennaw only here and 1 Peter 1:3], not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." The incorruptible seed is the "word of God." I believe that the incorruptible seed is the mysteries of the kingdom of God found in Luke 8:10-11 "And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand. 11. Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God." The Greek word translated "born again" is only found here in 1 Peter 1:23 and in 1 Peter 1:3-5 "Blessed be the God and Father . . . which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4. To an inheritance incorruptible . . . reserved in heaven for you, 5. Who are kept [guarded] by the power of God (sufficient grace) through faith . . ." "Begotten us again" is the same word translated "born again" in verse 23. This new beginning is not the salvation found in John 3:3 which is based upon the death of Jesus Christ on the Cross. This new beginning is based upon the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. This new beginning is unto a living hope for an inheritance in the heavens. Hope of a heavenly inheritance is not a sure thing because faith is not a sure thing. We are kept or guarded by the power of God, which is his grace. Romans 5:2 "By whom (Jesus Christ our high priest) also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." If we make shipwreck or depart from the faith, then the guarding power of God will be lost as well as the heavenly inheritance. This does not mean we will be removed from the family. Our birth into the family of God is based upon Christ death on the cross and not his resurrection.

Colossians 1:25-27

"Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God; 26. Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: 27. To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:" The "word of God" had been hidden for ages and from generation to generation but is NOW made manifest to his saints and not to the lost. The mysteries of the kingdom of God have been hidden until the Lord came and presented them to the nation of Israel. These mysteries were denied to Gentiles and Samaritans until Peter in Acts 8:1-40 and Acts 10:1-48 opened that door to them. Paul was a minister of the Word of God to Jews and then, with the new dispensation, to the Gentiles as well. A new dispensation began when Gentiles were included in the blessings of the kingdom of God. Paul refers to those blessings to the Gentiles in Ephesians 3:2-6 "If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: 3. How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, 4. Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) 5. Which in other ages was

not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; 6. That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:" Now Gentiles, that have ears to hear and eyes to see, can enter into a heavenly inheritance and not just Jews.

2 Corinthians 4:2

Paul made a commitment to "the word of God" in 2 Corinthians 4:2 "But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully." When Paul went into the synagogue to present the word of God, he did it boldly and with great plainness of speech. When you are disputing with others you must be bold and Paul was bold when presenting the "word of God." Acts 19:8-9 "And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the (mysteries of the) kingdom of God. 9. But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus."

TRADITION HINDERS THE WORD OF GOD As it was in the days when the Lord and his disciples presented the mysteries of the kingdom of God, so it is today. The rulers of the Jews, who were Israel's teachers, taught against the "word of God." Mark 7:13 "Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, . . ." Tradition teaches that when you are born from above you enter into the kingdom of God. Jesus did not teach that according to John 3:3 "Jesus . . . said unto him, . . . Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Seeing the kingdom is not the same thing as entering into the kingdom. Moses saw the promised land but did not enter it. When one is born from above he becomes part of the family and is an heir of God. The kingdom of God is inherited so it is a family matter. Matthew 25:34 ". . . Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:" You can lose that inheritance according to 1 Corinthians 6:9 "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind," These and other sinful lifestyles will disqualify you from inheriting the kingdom of God.

There are those who teach the kingdom message is only for Israel. That is simply not the case at all. The nation of Israel as a whole rejected that message and that is when the door was opened to a nation that would produce the fruits required to enter into the kingdom of God. Matthew 21:43 "Therefore say I unto you (Israel), The kingdom of God shall be taken (salvation was not lost) from you (saved Israel), and given to a nation (saved Gentiles that would) bringing forth the fruits thereof."

There is one tradition that needs to be addressed briefly and that is the concept of "possessors and professors." If you don't produce the fruits thereof you were never saved and therefore a professor and not a possessor. This false doctrine is a tradition that hinders the word of God. Those who teach this heresy must be Armenian. When they believe on the Lord Jesus for salvation, they can never know for sure they were saved. They have to wait and see when they die if what they did will prove that they were a possessor. The concept of being a professor and not a possessor is a stronghold known as a high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God. 2 Corinthians 10:5 "Casting down imaginations (strong hold), and every high thing (another strong

hold) that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God. . ." The teachers that teach this false doctrine want you to believe that if you fall in to such sins as strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, and envying, as found in Galatians 5:1-26, and you do not repent before you die, you will be cast into the lake of fire because you were never saved. These false teachers want you to believe that if you are saved you will not practice these sins that would exclude you from entering into the kingdom of the heavens.

Examples of those who did not repent of their sins before they died were Kings Solomon and Saul. Solomon was, at one time in his life, a man of prayer. God honored his prayer for wisdom by giving him more than wisdom. God blessed Solomon in the building of the Temple, yet he departed from the Lord because of his wives and died before he repented. Saul was anointed by God and prophesied with the prophets and then departed from following the Lord. We can see this in 1 Samuel 15:11 "It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king: for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments." Saul was not a professor but was a child of God that followed the Lord for a while then stopped. Just because you are saved does not mean that you cannot depart from the Lord.

PERSECUTION FOR THE WORD OF GOD

Paul suffered as an evildoer because he preached the word of God. 2 Timothy 2:9-10 "Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound." It is uncanny how many in the church today oppose this doctrine. Suffering for the word of God is part of the spiritual warfare and opposition from those in the family make the warfare even more difficult. Satan knows how to use those in the family to hurt those who are seeking to grow in the mysteries of the kingdom of God. The "word of God" is the sword of the spirit according to Ephesians 6:17 "And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:" The word of God is a powerful weapon according to Hebrews 4:12 "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

Satan has used, and will use, the threat of death to try to offend those who are embracing the message of the kingdom of God. Matthew 13:20-21 "But he that received the seed [he that was sown] into stony places, the same is he that heareth (present active) the word (the seed, the word of God), and anon with joy receiveth [present active] it; 21. Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word (of God, the mysteries of the kingdom of God), by and by he is offended." This happened during Christ's ministry. The message of the kingdom of God will be preached during the tribulation period according to Matthew 24:14 "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Those that preach this truth may suffer death according to Revelation 6:9 "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:" This thought is repeated in Revelation 20:4 "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, . . . they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." It cost dearly to believe and preach the "word of God." There are those in the local church that vehemently oppose this truth today. Jesus told His disciples that they that kill you will think that they are doing God a

service in John 16:2 "They shall put you (apostle) out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service." There are those in the body of Christ today that hate the Biblical definition of the word of God with such a passion that they are willing to scandalize them in the church. Rather than trying to help a brother see the error of his way, according to James 5:19-20 "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; 20. Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." they just kick the brother out of the church because helping him is not worth the time. I personally believe the reason they do not take the time is because they cannot refute the truth with their tradition.

Hebrews 13:7

"Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation." We are to remember them that have led us. We are to consider their life style and imitate it. Paul encouraged the church at Philippi to do this in Php 4:9 "Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you." In the same epistle Paul encourages them to imitate him. Php 3:17 "Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample."

Paul was a church leader and a role model. Pastors and teachers who are teaching the "word of God" have a responsibility to live what is taught in that message. If the message of the mysteries of the kingdom of God does not change the lifestyle of the one who is teaching it, it will not change the lifestyle of those who listen. If we will listen diligently to that message our faith will increase. When faith increases so does the reality of the object of our faith, which is the surety or confidence of the things for which we hope.

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