

WIERWILLE COLLECTION REFI

by Victor Paul Wierwille

A collection of teachings on abundant Christian living by V.P. Wierwille, including 'How to Avoid Being a Failure.' These public domain works emphasize the simplicity of God's Word and practical application of biblical principles.

18 Chapters

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Wierwille, V.P.-How to Avoid Being a Failure

How To Avoid Being A Failure Another Study in Abundant Living by VICTOR PAUL WIERWILLE
This book is in the public domain. For more teachings by V. P. Wierwille, E. W. Bullinger and others, go to: www.eternallyblessed.org The simplicity of the Word of God, the Bible, is astounding. Most of us have too much theology and not enough practical believing. We are encased in so many negatives that even the positives are shrouded in darkness. We make God too difficult. Nobody wants to be a failure. God wills no failures — then, why be one? You don't have to be, if you don't want to. This is the exact meaning of this study. You have read the story of the ten pieces of silver. How a certain woman lost one of the ten pieces, and how diligently she searched until she found it. After she came upon it, she called in all the neighbors and had a celebration because one woman, having lost a little piece of silver, worth a few cents in United States currency, finally found it. All the neighbors rejoiced with her. Can you imagine a little town in your section of the country getting excited over a few cents — let alone all the neighbors becoming so animated about it! How did a woman avoid being a failure? Let us note Luke 15:8-10. "Either what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it? And when she hath found it, she calleth her friends and her neighbors together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost. Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." There are three interesting stories in the 15th chapter of Luke and all three deal with the same major subject. The first pertains to a shepherd having 100 sheep. Ninety-nine are safe and sound, but one is not. The third story is the one most people have erroneously called, "The Story of the Prodigal Son." It is not the story of a prodigal son, but the story of two prodigal sons, yet more appropriately, "The Story of the Forgiving Father." The second is a story of a woman who avoided being a failure because she found one little piece of silver. You may laugh but it is true — her husband would have tossed her out of the house had she not found the lost piece of silver. Thus she would have been a failure as far as the whole town, including both men and women were concerned. The pieces of silver are not merely ten ordinary pieces of money or ten coins with little significance — they are a most precious gift the bride receives from her bridegroom at the time of their marriage. Each piece of silver is approximately the size of an American quarter. On one side of the piece of silver is engraved the coat of arms of the husband's family, or the insignia by which that particular family is known. If the family crest happened to be a sheep, well fed, protected and safe, that is what would be engraved on one side of all ten of the pieces of silver. On the other side would be stamped the year in which it was made. The husband gives this special dowry to his wife on their wedding day. As for dollars and cents, it isn't worth much, but the sentimental value is unlimited. If the wife lost one piece of silver and her father would say to his new son-in-law, "I'll give you a thousand dollars," it would not be accepted, for money is no replacement for the lost piece of silver. In the days in which Jesus lived and today in the East, a woman may receive lavish gifts of jewelry at the time of marriage. All the jewelry a woman receives is her property and possession with the exception of the ten pieces of silver. She has all the legal rights to all of her jewelry, the husband has none. He can not take her jewelry away under

any circumstances, with one exception: the husband has claim to only one jewel and that jewel is called the ten pieces of silver. This jewel, in the event of the husband's death, must be handed back immediately to the husband's side of the family. The jewel called the ten pieces of silver is worn by the wife only on very special occasions. Because of her love for her husband, she may put them on while her husband is away at work and gaze at herself in a mirror, appreciative of her husband's gift and love. (Very rarely does a wife lose one of the ten pieces of silver.) Because they are so precious to her, she seldom wears them for fear of losing one. The 25th or 50th wedding anniversary would call for their wearing. Nothing less than the most outstanding occasion. When the wife does wear the ten pieces of silver jewelry, she wears five pieces of silver on one side of her head, towards the front of the head, and the other five pieces on the other side of her head. Each piece of silver has a little hook at the top. With these hooks the wife fastens the pieces of silver in her hair. Thus, you can understand how easily one piece, or a number of them, might become unhooked and, without her noticing it, she would lose them. If she loses any of the pieces of silver, she will be put out of the house by her husband. The husband will not divorce her or be angry with her because of this, but simply expels the wife for she has disgraced him and his house and has brought reproach upon his family. Not because of the monetary value of the ten pieces of silver, but since the losing of one of the pieces of silver means the withdrawal of God's favor upon the family, he dispossesses his spouse. The loss of a piece of silver is looked upon as a great curse on the whole family. God's favor has been lost. Neither the husband nor the parents have spitefulness for her; but the wife will receive no sympathy from her husband, his parents or her in-laws. A million dollars, even though the ten pieces of silver may be worth only a few cents, given by the wife's family to the husband, would not rectify matters. The whole town is concerned about her for they know the consequences of being dishonored and expelled. The women of the entire city know what she must endure. Therefore, when the wife finds the lost piece of silver and knows it is safe and secure, she calls in all of her neighbors to rejoice with her over the piece of silver which she has found. She avoided being a failure. We avoid being a failure by putting first things first. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Matthew 6:33. Seek anything else first and all things will be subtracted from you. We are God's most precious creation. He wants no failures and He makes no failures. His will for us is success in everything. The first step in this ladder of success on avoiding failure is for a sinner to repent. Who is the sinner that needs to repent? The lost jewel. Repentance is for the unsaved sinners; confession is for the saved sinner. God's love, the Father's heart, so yearns for the lost one that the Church will spend itself unreservedly, leaving nothing undone, in order to find the one precious lost jewel. Who is that one? We are, if we have not accepted Him. You say, "What must I do?" The Father says, "Repent." How do you repent? Repentance is doing the will of God. It is not crying your eyes out, raising your hand, singing hymns, or running to an altar. All these may or may not be involved, yet they are not repentance. Repentance is to do what God says; and He says, "...if thou wilt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thine heart that God has raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Romans 10:9. Repentance on your part is to confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus as your personal Lord and Saviour. It is to believe in your heart, your innermost being, that God has raised Jesus from the dead; that Jesus is resurrected and alive, yes, living for you and in you. That is repentance. It brings joy, not only to the angels in heaven, but also to the Father's heart for a most precious lost jewel has been found; one more life has avoided failure. But you say, "Can I still do this? Can I rise up beyond all failure? Can I be

sure?" Yes, you can be as sure as God Himself. For He is in His Word; He backs up His Word; He sees to it that His Word is performed; He is synonymous with His Word. A number of years ago there lived a great man whose source of inspiration was the one Book he loved above all others, the Bible. At the age of 32 he was defeated for the legislature. In the year 1831 he failed miserably in his business venture so at 33 he was bankrupt. At 43 he was defeated for Congress and at 48, for U. S. Senator. In 1855 he was defeated for the office of Vice-president. In 1860 he was elected President of these United States. In 1865 he was assassinated. Most of his life he was a so called failure, but this FAILURE was ABRAHAM LINCOLN. He knew how to avoid being a failure for he knew the priceless value of a lost piece of silver. By comparison let me tell you the story of a group of men who met at the Edgewater Beach Hotel in Chicago in the year 1923. Newspapers and magazines printed their success stories on how they had avoided being failures, and urged the young people of our nation to follow in their footsteps. Present at that meeting in 1923 was: the President of the world's largest independent steel mill, the President of the largest utility company in the world, the greatest grain speculator, the President of the New York Stock Exchange, a member of the President's cabinet, the greatest of the great on Wall Street, the President of the Bank of International Settlement, plus the head of the world's greatest armament monopoly. These eight men controlled more wealth than there is in the U. S. Treasury, yet 25 years later here is what happened. The President of the world's largest independent steel company had died in bankruptcy, living on borrowed money the last five years of his life. The President of the largest utility company had died a fugitive from justice and penniless in a foreign land. The greatest grain speculator had died in a foreign country, unloved. The President of the New York Stock Exchange had been released from a federal penitentiary, humiliated and broken. The member of the President's cabinet had been pardoned from prison to come home to die. The greatest bear on Wall Street died a suicide, as did the President of the Bank of International Settlement and the head of the world's greatest armament monopoly. It is not WHO you are, but WHAT you are. In Him you are complete. You are a son of God; a co-heir with Christ Jesus. You have resources unlimited. You are a branch attached to the Vine and the Life of the Vine is in the branch. With Him you can not fail; only succeed. Without Him you can not succeed — only fail. His invitation is to you, for it is to all, "Come unto me, all... and I will give..." "...lo, I am with you always..." "...I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Come! Avoid being a failure!

Wierwille, V.P.-How to Avoid Being a Failure

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These eight men controlled more wealth than there is in the U. S. Treasury, yet 25 years later here is what happened. The President of the world's largest independent steel company had died in bankruptcy, living on borrowed money the last five years of his life. The President of the largest utility company had died a fugitive from justice and penniless in a foreign land. The greatest grain speculator had died in a foreign country, unloved. The President of the New York Stock Exchange had been released from a federal penitentiary, humiliated and broken. The member of the President's cabinet had been pardoned from prison to come home to die. The greatest bear on Wall Street died a suicide, as did the President of the Bank of International Settlement and the head of the world's greatest armament monopoly.

It is not WHO you are, but WHAT you are. In Him you are complete. You are a son of God; a co-heir with Christ Jesus. You have resources unlimited. You are a branch attached to the Vine and the Life of the Vine is in the branch. With Him you can not fail; only succeed. Without Him you can not succeed — only fail. His invitation is to you, for it is to all, "Come unto me, all... and I will give..." "...lo, I am with you always..." "...I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Come! Avoid being a failure!

Wierwille, V.P.-Simon of Cyrene

Simon Of Cyrene and The Cross Christ Bore

Another Study in Abundant Living by VICTOR PAUL WIERWILLE This book is in the public domain. For more teachings by V. P. Wierwille, E. W. Bullinger and others, go to: www.eternallyblessed.org The Scripture used throughout this study is quoted from the King James Version unless otherwise noted. Any explanatory insertions by the author within a Scripture verse are enclosed in brackets [].

I want to acknowledge my indebtedness to my good friend Jack Hunt for bringing to my attention the accuracy of The Word regarding the subject of the cross Christ bore. May his inspiration and mine be yours to enjoy.

You are acquainted with the generally accepted teaching of how Jesus appeared before Pilate, who scourged Him . After that the soldiers put the heavy cross on Him to carry it to Calvary. Then, as they approached Calvary, Jesus broke down under the burden of the cross. So the soldiers grabbed Simon of Cyrene out of the crowd and they said, "You must carry the cross." So Simon carried the cross the rest of the way to Calvary, where they crucified Jesus. This makes a beautiful word picture, beautiful colored pictures in the churches, beautiful story, beautiful this and beautiful that, but it is not true.

Let's find the truth. If I were in The Way Teaching Center and I said that I was going to my residence and if I said to you, in telling this story that I met my brother Harry as I came out of the Bible Center, where would you say that I met Harry? What do you understand that I meant when I say that as I came out of the Bible Center I met Harry? To discover the accuracy of The Word regarding the cross Christ bore, let us consider each record in the gospels separately, beginning of course with the gospel of Matthew. "Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers. And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe. And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before Him, and mocked him, saying Hail, King of the Jews! And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head. And after they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him and his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify him." Matthew 27:27ff. Where were they? They were in the Praetorium, Pilate's Judgment Hall. "And as they came out" of the hall "they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross." As they came out of the hall, they found a man at the entrance, and "...him they compelled to bear his cross."

There is nothing in the gospel of Matthew teaching that Christ even touched the wooden cross. In Matthew we are informed that; at the entrance at the doorway, within a few feet of the door there was a man, Simon of Cyrene, and they compelled him to bear the cross all the way to Calvary.

"And the soldiers led him away into the hall, called Praetorium; and they call together the whole band. And they clothed him with purple, and platted a crown of thorns, and put it about his head.

And began to salute him, Hail, King of the Jews! And they smote him on the head with a reed, and did spit upon him, and bowing their knees worshipped him. And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple from him, and put his own clothes on him, and led him out to crucify him. And they compel one Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by,...to bear his cross." Mark 15:16 ff. Passed by where? Passed by the hall. There is no record in the Gospel of Mark about Jesus ever touching a piece of wood, a tree or anything like it, is there? The Word is explicit, plain and simple.

"Pilate therefore, willing to release Jesus, spake again to them. But they cried, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. And he said unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him: I will therefore chastise him, and let him go. And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified. And the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed. And Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required. And he released unto them him that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, whom they had desired; but he delivered Jesus to their will. And as they led him away" (note carefully) "as they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus." Luke 23:20ff. As they led Jesus away, right there at the hall; at the door, was Simon a Cyrenian. On him (not on Jesus) they laid the cross. Note the word AFTER. Some say that word means he carried it after Jesus had carried it. No, Jesus went ahead and Simon followed after him.

"When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha. And it was in the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour:" (twelve midnight) "and he said unto the Jews, Behold your King! But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, we have no king but Caesar. Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him away. And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha." John 19:13ff.

"And he, (Jesus,) bearing his cross..." is the phrase from which has been inferred that Jesus bore the wooden cross. This does not agree with the clear record in the other three Gospels. The first three Gospels stipulate very plainly that Simon bore the cross from the door of the Judgment Hall. But, the Gospel of John states, "And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull,..." "HIS CROSS" was not wooden but spiritual. The cross Jesus bore was composed of our sins and our transgressions. If it had been a wooden cross, what good would that have accomplished? He did not bear a piece of wood or a tree, He bore our sins. If the penalty for sin was paid by the cross of Jesus, the price is not only right, but paid. We do not need to pay that which Jesus already paid.

Note that Colossians 2:14 gives us in part, at least, the cross Jesus bore. "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to HIS CROSS."

"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." Isaiah 53:6.

He took all the things that were against us; the transgressions, the sins, the bondage, the sickness, and the pain and made it apart of His cross. "His cross" is a figure of speech, an orientalism.

"For he" (God) "hath made him" (Jesus) "to be sin for us,...that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." That we might be made as righteous as God. II Corinthians 5:21. Isn't that wonderful!! You say, "me"? Yes, you. The cross of bondage is what Jesus bore. "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free,..." Hath is in the past. How hath he made us free? By him bearing that cross, the cross of bondage, which He bore for us. "...and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." Galatians 5:1. He bore that cross of bondage, the law, just for you and for me, that we wouldn't need to live under bondage, "which neither your fathers, or we were able to bear." Acts 15:10.

"And when even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick:" Jesus did this with His Word. "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses." Matthew 8: 16,17. He bore our sicknesses. Not only was His cross composed of our transgressions and sins, plus the bondage of the law, but of our sicknesses. He became sickness just like He became sin. The very last clause of Isaiah 53:5 says "...and with his stripes we are healed." In Isaiah 53:3, 4, we read "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows (pains), and acquainted with grief (sickness): and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne (carried or put on Him) our griefs (sicknesses), and carried our sorrows (pains)..." The cross of Jesus — what was it? "They led him away and he bearing HIS CROSS —," the cross of Jesus was, of sin, bondage, sickness and pain. The "natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God," and these are the things of the Spirit of God. The natural man has made the cross of Jesus a wooden cross. The Word and the spiritual man know it was the cross of sin, bondage, sickness and pain. You can see why a wooden cross could not do anything, but the cross of Jesus did.

"For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel; not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. For the preaching of the cross" (The wooden cross? No, the cross of Christ) "is to them that perish foolishness;... " I Corinthians 1:17, 18.

Why does a millionaire act like a millionaire? Because he BELIEVES he is a millionaire. Does he have a million dollars laying in front of him? No! All he has is the broker's report that says he has so much in bonds and stocks. He has his banker's report and balance sheet indicating he has so much money in the bank, so much in this and so much in that. He has his attorney's record. ALL WRITING — but he BELIEVES it. And when he wants something what does he do? He buys it. Why? Because he believes what is written. He believes the legal documents set before him indicating that he is a millionaire. The Bible is the legal document for you. This is your broker's report, your bank account, your attorney's record. If a man of the world can walk by WORDS we as sons of God can walk by HIS WORD. We must walk like it, talk like it, act like it. I don't care what you say, or anybody says, I am and have what The Word says. Anything others say won't change what The Word says I am and I have. I believe what God says.

We must claim the promises of God like a business man can claim the promises of what he has accomplished. Why not? "God is not a man that He should lie." The Word is God Himself. The

Word of God is the Will of God. It means what it says and says what it means. The natural man, Satan and all his corps of workers do not want you to understand that this cross of Christ took care of all your needs. No, he wants you to believe it is a wooden cross — something you get splintered up on, beat down with, hung up on, by condemnation, sin, judgment, frustration, fear and defeat. God says you are free because Christ bore everything contrary to you, nailing it to HIS CROSS. The enemies of the cross of Christ are those who do not believe or accept what Jesus did.

Stand fast, therefore, in the Lord. Jesus bore His cross — not of wood, but of sin and all its consequences, so that you could live the more abundant life. The wooden cross was borne by Simon of Cyrene, the spiritual cross by, Jesus.

Simon Of Cyrene When we consider the galaxies of personalities about the cross, we uncover a variety of men. The soldiers were there to see that the law was properly enforced and that the crucifixion went off according to schedule. The Jewish priests and rabbis, plus the majority of the members of the Jewish court of law, the Sanhedrin were there to see that the Roman soldiers did their work properly and that this Jesus of Nazareth be put out of the way this time. A few of the disciples and close friends of Jesus were intermingled with the crowd to see their favorite star of hope wain into death; they loved Him as the redeemer of Israel, but they had come to stand at a distance to see their last ray of hope pass on.

Yet, the majority of people gathered at the cross were merely curiosity seekers. They had perhaps never heard of the condemned man before, but because so many went, they too followed. You know how we flock to see a train wreck or an automobile accident — likewise these hordes of people followed the crowd. And yet, there was one man at the foot of the cross who did not want to be there. He had no more desire to beat the crucifixion than you or I have to be present at the electrocution of a criminal, and yet he was there. If you had told this man yesterday that today he would be an important character in the crucifixion of a criminal, he would have laughed, but he was there.

Yes, among the personalities gathered about the crucifixion there are many prominent men like, Pilate, Caiaphas, the Centurion, and others. They were Broadway lights in the contemporary setting of the time; they were key men. But I should like to have you forget about those big and important men around the cross and think with me about a little fellow, a man who was just an average man. He wasn't a big ruler, he wasn't an important man at all. He was just a common man like most of us; as a matter of fact, he did not want to be at the crucifixion, but he was there.

Matthew, Mark and Luke each give us just one verse about this man which is all the information we have concerning him.

Matthew 27:32, "And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear His cross." Mark 15:21, "And they compel one Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear His cross." Luke 23:26, "And as they led Him away, they laid hold upon one Simon a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus."

Yes, the man who didn't want to be there, ended up being one of the chief personalities around the cross, Simon from the city of Cyrene. All he wanted was to be left alone. To be allowed to go his way. He was coming out of the country from the region beyond the gates and evidently he was on

his way to Jerusalem to attend the big temple celebration, the Passover, when all at once his plans were changed, as a matter of fact his whole life took on a different tenor. To this man it must have been an extreme annoyance and indignity. He had business of his own to take care of. His family or his friends might be waiting for him, but he was turned the opposite way. To touch the instrument of death, the cross, was as revolting to him as it would be for us to handle the hangman's rope, or press the button in the electrocution chamber; perhaps more so, because it was Passover time and this act would make him ceremonially unclean. All he wanted was to be left alone, and yet, had Simon entered the city one hour sooner or one hour later, his later history might have been entirely different. Sometimes when we want to be alone, when we want no one to interfere with us, it is just then that the interference may make all the difference in the world. The greatest results may hinge on the smallest circumstances. Doubtless to Simon this encounter seemed at the moment the most unfortunate incident that could have befallen him — an interruption, an annoyance, and humiliation; yet it turned out to be the gateway of life. Are you spiritually in the condition that you just want to be alone? The interruption of Christ into your life right now will make all the difference in the world for you, for your children and children's children. It made a great difference for Simon.

We are apt to speak of trouble as a kind of cross, but properly speaking, the cross of Christ is that which he bore on our behalf. The scorn, loss and censure, is the cross of Christ, that we might have joy in speaking to another in Christ's name. The time we give in Christian work, the giving of our means that the cause of Christ may spread at home and abroad, and that we manifest the power of God in our lives, yes, this is the living, joyous cross we bear. "He that taketh not his cross and followeth after me is not worthy of me."

"...Simon a Cyrenian..., the father of Alexander and Rufus." Evidently the two sons of Simon were well known to those to whom Mark was writing. The compelling of Simon to bear the cross issued in his salvation and issued in the salvation of his house. Let me ask you this question and then be honest with yourself — Are you the kind of parent that your children can be proud of? Will they, 25 years from now, remember you because of the heritage you extended to them? Are you setting a good example for your children? Are you leading your children to Christ or away from Him? Listen, the Bible says, "so then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." Some day you and I as parents must give an account of our lives. Did we live so that our children were influenced for good? Did we instruct them in what we would like to have them do and then we continued to live any old way? Look at your child this moment, are you a real parent to him? Are you a Christian?

Wierwille, V.P.-Study Be Diligent

Study: Be Diligent

Another Study in Abundant Living by VICTOR PAUL WIERWILLE This book is in the public domain. For more teachings by V. P. Wierwille, E. W. Bullinger and others, go to: www.eternallyblessed.org The Scripture used throughout this study is quoted from the King James Version unless otherwise noted. Any explanatory insertions by the author within a Scripture verse are enclosed in brackets []. In this booklet we are primarily concerned not with a whole chapter or even a verse of Scripture, but with one specific word. The word used for this example is from a well-known verse used in the foundational class on Power for Abundant Living.

II Timothy 2:15:

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. The word "study" in the Greek is spoudason which can be elucidated and understood vividly by further research. Spoudason is a form of the word spoudaz■. Using spoudaz■ we can trace other related Greek words to determine which are derivatives and which is the root word — the word from which all others are derived. Spoudaz■ is a derivative of speud■ which is the root. Another term for "root word" could be the "least common denominator" or the "stem" — the word in its simplest form, that which is common to all other words derived from it. This study demonstrates a basic principle of The Way Biblical Research Center in Biblical Greek research which can lead to greater understanding of the Word of God.

There is no word from which speud■ was derived, and therefore it can be considered the least common denominator, the stem, the root. Let us first examine all of the verses of Scripture where the word speud■ is used, for we must start with the foundation upon which the related words or derivatives are built.

Luke 2:16: And they came with haste [speud■], and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. When the angels informed the shepherds that they should go to Bethlehem, they didn't let any grass grow under their feet. They went immediately, right away, pronto. Time was involved. That is the essence of the word speud■. Time and the brevity of the time involved is emphasized in this usage of speud■.

Luke 19:5,6: And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up [into a tree], and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste [speud■], and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house. And he [Zacchaeus] made haste [speud■], and came down, and received him [Jesus] joyfully.

Jesus did more than simply tell Zacchaeus to get down from the tree. Jesus told him to act immediately, with speed. And Zacchaeus did just that. He "made haste."

Acts 20:16: For Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus, because he would not spend the time in Asia: for he hastened [speud■], if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost.

Time was involved and "he hasted." He even bypassed Ephesus to save time.

Acts 22:18: And saw him saying unto me, Make haste [speud■], and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me.

God told Paul to leave Jerusalem immediately. Using the slang words of today God was actually saying, "Hot foot it out of that place! Run like crazy! Move out!"

II Peter 3:12:

Looking for and hasting unto [speud■] the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

Now let us examine the usages of spoudaz■, a derivative of speud■.

Ephesians 4:3:

Endeavouring [spoudaz■] to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

I Thessalonians 2:17: But we, brethren, being taken from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavoured [spoudaz■] the more abundantly to see your face with great desire.

II Peter 1:15:

Moreover I will endeavour [spoudaz■] that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance. In each of the above usages of the word spoudaz■ the meaning is exerting an effort. There is an earnest attempt to achieve or accomplish some goal.

II Timothy 4:9, 21a: Do thy diligence [spoudaz■] to come shortly unto me. Do thy diligence [spoudaz■] to come before winter.

Titus 3:12: When I shall send Artemas unto thee, or Tychicus, be diligent [spoudaz■] to come unto me to Nicopolis: for I have determined there to winter.

Paul was asking Timothy and Titus to make an earnest attempt to visit him, to put forth special effort.

II Peter 1:10:

Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence [spoudaz■] to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall.

Christians should exert every effort necessary to make their calling and election sure.

II Peter 3:14:

Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent [spoudaz■] that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless. As you look for this new heaven and earth, be diligent, exert an effort "...that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless."

Hebrews 4:11:

Let us labour [spoudaz■] therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

Again the word spoudaz■ means to exert an effort. The final usage of spoudaz■ is in Galatians 2:10:

Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward [spoudaz■] to do.

Here the word spoudaz■ is translated "forward." From the other usages already examined it can easily be seen that here, too, the meaning is to exert an effort.

We have taken the word spoudason and traced it as a form of spoudaz■ which is a derivative of the word speud■. Following through the progression of the meaning of these words, we arrive at a more comprehensive understanding of the word "study" in II Timothy 2:15. It means to "be active" and "watchfully diligent." We could translate it "to be earnest about" or "earnestly diligent." Another good translation would be "striving earnestly." Summing up everything, the depth of the meaning of "study" is to expend an effort diligently, with the brevity of time in mind. In other words, "You give it everything you've got." God is telling us to exert an effort earnestly and diligently, utilizing our time wisely. Applying this to the rest of the verse we are to exert the effort to show ourselves approved unto God, rightly dividing the Word of truth. It should be obvious that the only way to rightly divide the Word of God is to study it. Thus we are in reality being told in II Timothy 2:15 to "study earnestly, diligently, exerting an effort, utilizing our time wisely." Many people exert an effort, but waste too much time. Others expend time, but little effort. We are told to exert the effort and utilize time wisely. At football games I often marvel at how many touchdowns the players can make in the last two minutes of the game. Logic says that if they can make that many touchdowns during the last two minutes, they can make that many for sixty minutes, if they are geared properly. There must be something that they do during the last two minutes that they fail to do the other fifty-eight minutes. That something they are doing is putting forth with diligence and watchfulness extra effort because they know time is running out. This is like the word spoudason in II Timothy 2:15, "Study to show thyself approved unto God." How should we study? We study by putting forth the effort diligently and utilizing our time wisely.

II Timothy 2:15:

Study [exert an effort diligently, strive earnestly, and do it without wasting time] to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. This study is a good example of a type of research that can be done in the Word of God. Often many more words are introduced and the quest becomes more complicated, but the principle remains the same and can be followed by anyone. This type of research speaks loudly for the depth of the accuracy of the Word of God.

Other Related Words II Corinthians 8:22: And we have sent with them our brother, whom we have oftentimes proved diligent [spoudai■s, adjective] in many things, but now much more diligent [spoudai■s the comparative of the adjective], upon the great confidence which I have in you.

Paul said one of the brothers whom he sent with Titus had "proved diligent," he had exerted effort for the cause, but now he had put forth even more effort. He had "put his shoulder to the wheel."

Luke 7:4: And when they came to Jesus, they besought him instantly [spoudai■s, adverb], saying, That he was worthy for whom he should do this. The word "besought" is a clue to the meaning of

spoudai■s. They did more than just ask Jesus. They "besought" Him; they put forth effort. A more preferable translation of spoudai■s would be "diligently."

Titus 3:13:

Bring Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their journey diligently [spoudai■s, adverb] that nothing be wanting unto them.

Paul was instructing Titus to bring Zenas and Apollos on their journey. He especially said to put forth some effort for their needs.

Philippians 2:28:

I sent him therefore the more carefully [spoudaioteros, adverb, comparative of spoudai■s, Luke 7:4 and Titus 3:13], that, when ye see him again, ye may rejoice, and that I may be the less sorrowful. To be careful or watchful of anything requires effort. The word "diligently" could also be used here accurately.

Romans 12:8: Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence [spoud■, noun, dative case] he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

He that rules is to put forth some effort in his position. It is not just a position of honor.

Romans 12:11: Not slothful in business [spoud■, noun, dative case]; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord. The word "slothful" is "wasting time." A more consistent translation of business (spoud■) would be "diligence." Do not delay or waste time in putting forth effort in whatever is your function in serving the Lord.

II Corinthians 8:7:

Therefore, as ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence [spoud■, noun, dative case], and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also.

Paul said the Corinthians abounded in everything including diligence in their effort for the ministry.

II Corinthians 7:11, 12: For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness [spoud■, noun, accusative case] it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.

Wherefore, though I wrote unto you, I did it not for his cause that had done the wrong, nor for his cause that suffered wrong, but that our care [spoud■, noun, accusative case] for you in the sight of God might appear unto you.

II Corinthians 8:16: But thanks be to God, which put the same earnest care [spoud■, noun, accusative case] into the heart of Titus for you.

Hebrews 6:11: And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence [spoud■, noun, accusative case] to the full assurance of hope unto the end.

II Peter 1:5: And beside this, giving all diligence [spoud■, noun, accusative case], add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge.

Jude 3:

Beloved, when I gave all diligence [spoud■, noun, accusative case] to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. The above verses all use the same Greek word in exactly the same form. Though it has been translated carefulness, care and diligence, the emphasis is still on effort expended.

II Corinthians 8:8:

I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness [spoud■, noun, genitive case] of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love. The word "by" is the word dia, meaning "on account of," and the words "the occasion of the forwardness" are the one Greek word spoud■. Paul says, I speak not by commandment, but on account of the effort of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love.

Mark 6:25: And she came in straightway with haste [spoud■, noun, genitive case] unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou give me by and by in a charger the head of John the Baptist.

Luke 1:39: And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste [spoud■, noun, genitive case], into a city of Juda.

Here the emphasis is on the brevity of the time expended. This work covers all the references where the root word spoud■ is used and also all of its derivatives.

Wierwille, V.P.-The Answer-A Study of I John

The Answer — A Study of I John Dr. Victor Paul Wierwille This book is in the public domain. For more teachings by V. P. Wierwille, E. W. Bullinger and others, go to: www.eternallyblessed.org The Church of Grace was founded on the day of Pentecost, and with its founding began a new administration. John addressed his first epistle to those newly born into the fellowship to inform them of their position, rights, and responsibilities in the sight of God. When the words "from the beginning" are used in the first verse, it does not refer to the "in the beginning" as in Genesis 1:1. "The beginning" is found in seven verses in this epistle; in six it refers to the beginning of this administration, the period of the Church of Grace; once it refers to the time of beginning when iniquity was found in the Devil.

I John 1:1: That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life;

Hearing, seeing, and handling are in the realm of the five senses. The word can be known to the natural man through his five senses—he has no other way by which to become knowledgeable.

Verse 2:

(For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) John is informing the people that he is going to make known his revelation concerning this "Word of life."

Verse 3: That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. A child cannot have fellowship in an earthly family until after his birth. This is true of God's spiritual family also. We must be born again of God before we can have fellowship with God in His family. John is writing not to the unbelievers but to those who are sons, to those who are born again, so that they may have fellowship with God and with the other believers.

Verse 4: And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.

Joy is also a fruit of the spirit as mentioned in Galatians 5:22 where it says. But the fruit of the Spirit is Joy.... The fruit of the spirit does not include happiness. A man may have happiness from the material things around him; an abundance of things may make him happy. But joy is an inside job. Joy is a spiritual quality. The revelation in I John is written that the born-again believer may not only have joy within, but that his renewed-mind joy may be full.

I John 1:5: This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

If God is Light, then there can be no darkness in Him. Everything negative, evil, harmful, sinful, and death-provoking must be from a source other than the true God of light.

Verse 6:

If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:

After a person is a son in the household of God, he, can have fellowship in the family as he follows the Word as his guidebook. If we as sons say that we have fellowship with God and yet do not follow the rule book and walk ungodly, we lie. When we stray outside the guidelines, we are out of fellowship, yet we remain sons in the household. We must clearly note the difference between fellowship and sonship. To "walk in darkness" does not break the Father-son relationship; it breaks the fellowship.

Verse 7: But if we walk in the light, as he [God] is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

Walking in the light gives us fellowship with God. When we are out of fellowship, we walk in darkness, which is sin, since all broken fellowship is sin. However, when we confess our broken fellowship, the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us, makes us without blemish. "The blood" is a figure of speech referring to Jesus Christ's giving his life. It is the figure metalepsis which includes synecdoche. "Blood" is put by the figure synecdoche for "blood-shedding" indicating the death of Jesus Christ as distinct from his life. Then it goes beyond his death as an act, indicating the merits he accomplished for us which he effected by his death and are thus logically associated with it. The word "cleanseth" denotes cleansing through and through, leaving no imperfection or impurity.

Verses 8-10:

If we say that we have no sin [broken fellowship], we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

If we confess our sins [broken fellowship], he [God] is faithful and just to forgive us our sins [broken fellowship], and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

If we say that we have not sinned [broken fellowship], we make him [God] a liar, and his [God's] word is not in us [in our minds]. No man can live in fellowship with God if he lives according to any other principles than those of God's Word. When we walk in other paths, we sin, which is unrighteousness. If, when we are out of fellowship, we confess our sins to God, God is true to His promise to provide legal justice. God is able to absolve us of all broken fellowship, a sin of which all sons are guilty.

I John 2: I and 2: My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not [that you do not break fellowship]. And [but] if any man sin [breaks fellowship], we have an advocate [a defense attorney] with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he [Jesus Christ] is the propitiation [payment] for our sins [broken fellowship]: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

Jesus Christ is the propitiation for our sins, meaning that he not only paid for them but he also wins us back into favor with God when we break fellowship. Our confession of sin brings forgiveness of our broken fellowship. God can remit our sin only once, and that is at the time of salvation. Remission of sins is for the unsaved sinner; forgiveness of sin is for the saved sinner who is out of fellowship with God.

Verse 3: And hereby we do know that we know him [God], if we keep his [God's] commandments.

We are to prove to ourselves that we know God. The two Greek forms for "know" in verse 3 are used with precision as follows: "We do know [present tense—by being well acquainted personally] that we know [perfect tense—by an initial meeting, salvation, with God]...." What are His commandments? To do those things which He has just instructed—to walk in the light. We are to hold forth the Word after our minds have been illuminated by it.

Verse 4:

He [the man] that saith, I know [by a personal acquaintance] him [God], and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him [the man].

If a person is not born again, the truth is not in him spiritually. But if a born-again believer says that he knows God intimately and does not observe the commandment to walk in the light, the truth of the Word is not in that man's mind. The truth remains in the believer's spiritual being, but that person has not put on the truth in his mind.

Verse 5: But whoso keepeth his [God's] word, in him [the man] verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him [God by Jesus Christ]. To keep God's Word is to live according to His will. We do the keeping of His Word, and in the keeping of it, the love of God is perfected in us. Love, agap■ in Greek, comes with spiritual birth. "Love [agap■] of God" is outwardly manifested when we walk in the light. Having the spirit from God in us plus walking in His love makes possible the perfect fellowship.

Verse 6:

He [the man] that saith he abideth in him [God by Christ Jesus] ought himself also so to walk, even as he [Jesus Christ] walked.

Anyone who says that he is abiding or continuing in the presence of God must have his mind renewed according to the Word and walk with this renewed mind as Jesus Christ did. The born-again believer can, because of freedom of will, choose to live according to this world; but to be in fellowship, a believer must choose to renew his mind and act according to the Word of God.

Verses 7 and 8:

Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning.

Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing [entire transaction of word and deed] is true in him [God] and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth. A newly made precept is now given. The whole transaction of God was made genuine and applicable, and therefore is, and can be, manifested in the senses world. The darkness is past because God in Christ in us is light. This light cannot be seen by others, however, unless we manifest it, show it forth by our walk.

Verse 9:

He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now.

Hate is possible only when someone is born of the seed of the Devil, just as agap love is possible only when someone is born of God's seed. The two Greek words indicating "hate," *mise* and *stug*tos, must be understood by their usage in the context. They may mean "dislike," or "dislike issuing in the absolute hate of the Devil." This hate, the opposite of agap, is a spiritual quality brought into a person when he is born of the seed of the serpent.

Verses 10 and 11:

He [the man] that loveth his brother abideth in the light [walking in the renewed mind according to the Word], and there is none occasion of stumbling in him [the man]. But he that hateth [dislikes] his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.

If we keep our minds renewed on God's Word, the love of God is perfected in our minds, and we give no opportunity to the flesh to dislike or slight a brother in Christ. He who slights or dislikes his brother has not renewed his mind on God's Word. Satan constantly tries to dissuade us from walking in the truth of the light and thus causes us to walk in darkness. In order to continue steadfast in the light, a believer must have a knowledge of God's Word. Without such knowledge, a believer is uprooted and is easily swayed into darkness because of ignorance.

Verse 12:

I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his [God's] name's sake. A person cannot be a child of God until he is born again of God's seed. A man's sin, broken fellowship, is forgiven on account of God's name's sake, because the man is in God's family. Literally, all sins were laid on Jesus Christ when he made his sacrifice.

Verses 13 and 14:

I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one [Satan]. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father.

I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him [God] that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one [Satan]. The Word of God can only dwell in men after they are born again and have eternal life. Believers abide in the Word as they renew their minds according to that Word. This is the only way to overcome the wicked one.

Verse 15:

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

If the love of the Father is not in a person, that person does not have eternal life. If a man truly loves the things of the world (which refers to Satan, who rules and legally owns the world), the love of the Father cannot be in him.

Verse 16: For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

Lust (desire for more than one needs), possessive desires ("lust of the eyes"), and boastings ("pride") are all qualities of men in whom the Word does not abide.

Verses 17 and 18: And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth [practices] the will of God abideth for ever.

Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.

Any person who is born of the seed of the serpent is called "antichrist" because he is in opposition to Christ.

Verse 19:

They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us. The antichrists, those born into the household of the Devil, wanted to separate themselves from the believers, those of the household of the true God.

Verses 20-24: But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things [because we have His written Word].

I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth. Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.

Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: [but] he that acknowledged the Son hath the Father also.

Let that therefore abide in you [in your mind], which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you [in your mind], ye also shall continue [to walk] in the Son, and in the Father.

If that which we have heard from the beginning, eternal life, is in us spiritually and we walk in fellowship by renewing our minds, we shall continue in the Father. Renewing our mind takes three steps: (1) know the Word of God, (2) put it into our mind, and (3) manifest it in actions. Salvation gives us sonship; the renewed mind gives us perfect fellowship with the Father.

Verses 25-27: And this is the promise that he [God] hath promised us, even eternal life.

These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you [cause you to doubt]. But the anointing [the new birth] which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you [instruct you]: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him [God]. The anointing which we have from God is the anointing of holy spirit. It is receiving the fullness of the gift from the Holy Spirit Who is God. We need no man to teach us because we have the Word and the power and manifestations of the holy spirit.

Verse 28: And now, little children, abide in him [in God through Christ Jesus]; that, when he [Christ] shall appear, we may have confidence [boldness], and not be ashamed before him [God]

at his [Christ's] coming. At the return of Christ, we are going to be judged and rewarded for our walk with God. If we live with the renewed mind in manifestation and are in fellowship with God, we will not be ashamed or feel dishonorable. Rather, we shall have confidence.

Verse 29:

If ye know that He [God] is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of Him [God].

"Doeth" is the key word. It means to practice a skill such as a professional surgeon, painter, or musician. We are to practice in the senses realm that which we have received in the spirit. We are righteous because God made us righteous; but our righteousness is manifested to the world as we practice the will of God, and the will of God is known only from the Word of God.

I John 3:1:

Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him [God] not. The world will never understand our being "sons of God." Salvation is an internal, spiritual working, and natural men cannot understand spiritual matters. The world does not know God, for as I Corinthians 2:14 explains, "...the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they [spiritual matters] are spiritually discerned."

I John 3:2:

Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and [but] it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he [Christ] shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

Starting with the words "and it doth not yet appear" in verse 2 through verse 4 is a parenthetical section dealing with Christ. Then in verse 5 we return to the subject, God. To be like him (Christ) is to be as he will be in his resurrected body at his return. When Christ returns, we shall be like him because we are joint heirs with Christ* and Sons of the same Father.

* Romans 8:17:

"And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."

Verse 3: And every man that hath this hope [Christ's return] in him purifieth himself, even as he [Christ] is pure.

We have hope for Christ's second coming. Thus, we who have this hope should purify ourselves by renewing the mind. Our minds should be made as pure by us as our spirits are pure, the gift from God.

Verse 4:

Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. The phrase "transgression of the law" is the Greek word anomia, "lawlessness. One who practices illegalities, thereby not observing the law, is a transgressor. To fulfill the law, man must follow the instructions given in Galatians 6:2 where it says, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the

law of Christ."

I John 3:5 and 6: And ye know that He [God] was manifested [in Christ and shown to the world] to take away our sins; and in Him [God] is no sin.

Whosoever abideth in Him [God] sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen Him [God], neither known [beyond initial acquaintance] Him [God].

Verse 6 is speaking of a believer abiding in God (fellowship), not God abiding in a believer (salvation). A believer sins by breaking fellowship with God, not in the spiritual life which he received when he was born again, for that life is perfect and cannot sin. If one has a perfectly renewed mind, he does not sin because he does not break fellowship.

Verse 7:

Little children, let no man deceive you: he [the man] that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as He [God in Christ in you] is righteous. No one can do righteousness until the person himself is righteous. Righteousness is of God and is therefore included in the gift, spirit. Righteousness is God in Christ within, which makes it possible to manifest righteousness without.

Verse 8:

He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he [Jesus Christ] might destroy the works of the devil.

Every sin is due to the influence of Satan over the person committing the sin. Jesus Christ was manifested that he might break the power of Satan. In his first coming he did defeat the Devil's work; however, the total destruction is yet to take place with Christ's second coming. The Son of God has defeated Satan for those who are born again and have renewed their minds according to the Word. If a person does not renew his mind, Satan is not defeated in that person's life. In such a case, Satan thwarts this person with diseases, worries, fears, and other satanic negatives. The words "from the beginning" in verse 8 refer to the beginning of iniquity found in Lucifer, the Devil. Note Ezekiel 28:15: "Thou [both Adam and the Devil] wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee."

I John 3:9:

Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin [in the spirit]; for his [God's] seed [Christ] remaineth in him [the man]; and he cannot sin [in that of which he is born, the seed of God, Christ in him], because he is born of God. In this seed of which a man is born again, he cannot sin. It is perfect spiritual seed.

Verse 10: In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.

Note the sharp line of demarcation between the two spiritual seeds. The children follow the pattern of their respective fathers.

Verses 11 and 12: For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew

he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.

Cain was "of that wicked one"; he was born of the seed of the serpent and manifested the Devil's hate and evil works.

Verses 13 and 14:

Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.

We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. The word "brethren" has the connotation of "saints" as sons of God. We know that we have passed from death unto life when our deeds are motivated by the love of God. Our salvation is manifested to ourselves and to the other saints as we love with the love of God in our renewed minds. No one has this agap[■] love until he is born again of God. The natural man at best can only have philia, human love. In the last part of verse 14 the words "his brother" are not in the oldest texts. "He that loveth not" refers to the unsaved man. The unsaved person cannot love with agap[■] love and remains in darkness.

Verse 15:

Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.

Some churches have taught that anyone who commits murder, one who actually takes another's life, does not have eternal life abiding in him. The Word of God does not say this. "Whosoever hateth [hate is of the Devil, and only the Devil's children can have it] his brother [in the flesh] is a murderer...." The brother is not killed, but the man who hates, who is born of the seed of the serpent, is causing his own death. "...No murderer [who causes his own death because he is born of the seed of the serpent] hath eternal life abiding in him." He cannot have eternal life; he is born of the serpent.

Verse 16:

Hereby perceive [understand] we the love of God, because he [Jesus Christ] laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren [saints].

We ought to lay down our lives, put our selfish desires in subjection to our spirit, to help our fellow believers.

Verse 17: But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother [saint] have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

We have frequently been taught that we are to help the unsaved who are starving. This scripture tells us that our primary responsibility is to our brothers in Christ.* *Galatians 6:10:

"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."

Verses 18-22 My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth [Let us love and not just talk about it]. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him [God]. For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart,

and knoweth all things.

Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him [God], because we keep [in our minds] His [God's] commandments, and do [in our actions] those things that are pleasing in His [God's] sight.

If our hearts are condemning us, we are out of fellowship with God. We have sinned by not walking in the renewed mind. When we are out of fellowship, we have no confidence toward God, and we cannot get our prayers answered.

Verse 23: And this is his [God's] commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he [God in Christ Jesus] gave us commandment.

We can stake our very lives on the goodness which God has provided for us if we practice His will. Here we have a command, not a demand; we should believe on the name of His Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus, the firstborn, and we, his brethren, are to manifest the love from the Father within His family.

Verse 24: And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him [God], and he [God] in him. And hereby we know that he [God] abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us. The person who keeps the commandments not only has sonship but also fellowship. We can know that God in Christ dwells in us by manifesting the spirit which He has given to us.

I John 4:1-3:

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

We are not to believe every supernatural manifestation but are to test the spirits whether they be from the true God. To do this we need to operate the manifestation of discerning of spirits. The spirit of a false prophet will not be able to confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. The same is antichrist but not the Antichrist.

Verse 4:

Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he [God in Christ] that is in you, than he [the Devil and his devil spirits] that is in the world.

God in Christ in us, the holy spirit, is greater than the spirits of the Devil in the world. When we believers begin to practice our legal sonship rights with the use of the name of Jesus Christ, we will truly live with power and will overcome the forces of Satan in our lives.

Verses 5-12:

They [antichrists] are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them.

We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth [God], and the spirit of error [a devil spirit].

Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.

He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation [payment] for our sins.

Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another [with the renewed mind]. No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. No man has ever seen God, for God is Spirit. God's love is perfected in our walk as our minds are renewed.

Verses 13-15:

Hereby know we that we dwell in him [God], and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit [His gift, holy spirit]. And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.

Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. When God dwells in a man, he has received a new creation, eternal life. When a man dwells in God, the man is walking in fellowship in the renewed mind.

Verse 16: And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love [agap■]; and he that dwelleth in love [agap■] dwelleth in God, and God in him.

God's love is perfected in our minds to the extent that we dwell in God and thereby manifest His gift to the world.

Verse 17:

Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he [God] is, so are we in this world. As God is, so are we who are born again and who demonstrate love. We then have boldness and power in a time of crisis, for we have put on the armor of God.

Verses 18 and 19:

There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: Because fear hath torment He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

We love him, because he first loved us.

God first loved us and gave us eternal life which made it possible for us to love (agap■). Now we ought to renew our minds according to the Spirit, God, and walk before Him in love.

Verses 20 and 21:

If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen ? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.

"To hate," as in this scripture, is "not to love." The proof to ourselves and others that we love God is to manifest the love of God to the saints.

I John 5:1:

Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him [God] that begat loveth him [Christ and the brethren] also that is begotten of him.

Everyone who loves God in the renewed mind loves the brethren, for it is impossible to have the love of God in the renewed mind without loving the brethren. Both Christ and we are begotten of God. Christ is our brother, and we are all, along with him, God's children.

Verse 2: By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments.

We keep His commandments by renewing our minds according to His Word. As we walk in this light, we prove to ourselves that we are the children of God.

Verses 3 and 4: For this is the love of God, that we keep his [God's] commandments: and his commandments are not grievous [burdensome]. For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world [Satan], even our Faith. The word "world" refers to Satan throughout this epistle. The world includes all of Satan's realm and the things in it. We have the God-given ability to overcome all oppression because "greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." Our victory comes with (1) our believing in the Word of God and (2) renewing our minds according to it.

Verse 5: Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?

Jesus overcame the world, and the same power belongs to us as we minister and operate the manifestations of the spirit.* *John 14:12:

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father."

Verses 6-8: This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness [with our spirit, the inner man], because the Spirit is truth. For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.**

**According to the critical Greek text, the following words were first added in verses 7 and 8 in the sixteenth century: "...in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth...."

According to verse 6, Jesus Christ came by water and blood. We know that Jesus was conceived in Mary by the Holy Spirit. At the time of Jesus' birth, the amniotic sac surrounding the fetus was

broken and therefore water came forth. Blood also comes forth at birth with the mother's delivery of the child. Thus Jesus "came by water and blood," just as all of us do.

I, too, by natural birth, was born of water and blood. But the spirit within me, which came at the time of my spiritual birth, indicates that I am no longer just a natural man, for I have eternal life which is spirit. These three—water, blood, and spirit—witness to the same God who was witnessed to when Jesus was born.

Verses 9-12:

If we receive the witness of men [regarding our birth of blood and water], the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son.

He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him [God] a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. When we believed on the Son of God, we received the witness of eternal life within. "He that hath the Son hath life," according to the text. We do not earn this life given to us by God; we do not beg for it; we cannot steal it: and we cannot lose it, because God gave it to us as seed.

Verses 13 and 14:

These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God. And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us.

However, by the same token, if we ask anything which is not God's will, we will receive nothing. We must know His will in order to know what properly and rightfully to ask for.

Verse 15: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have [present tense] the petitions that we desired [past tense] of him.

We have our requests before we have the manifestation of them. This is tremendous. Why? The Bible is the Word of God, and the Word of God is the will of God. Therefore, if we know the Word of God, we know the will of God. If the Word says, "Pray for the sick," then we know that we are to pray for the sick; we are doing God's will. We need no longer pray the pitiful "If it be Thy will." Only someone unlearned or ignorant of the Word of God will pray "If it be Thy will." The man who knows the Word of God knows what is God's will.

Verse 16:

If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it. The "sin unto death" is the unforgivable sin. (See "The Unforgivable Sin," The Words' Way, Chapter 4.) If a man commits this sin, prayer will avail nothing, for that man is born of the seed of the serpent. However, if a brother in the flesh has not committed the unforgivable sin, God will give that brother eternal life if we ask. The word "brother" in verse 16 specifically refers to a brother by birth. We can pray for salvation for a family member who wills to hear and believe God's promise. Praying for

eternal life for a relative, brother or sister, who has not committed the unforgivable sin is a key which we can lay hold on for members of our families who are not saved.

Verse 17:

All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death.

Anything in thought, word, or deed which is not in harmony with God's Word is unrighteousness. The unrighteousness of those who are born again is not unto death because God has promised forgiveness.

Verse 18:

We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not [in the spirit, inner man]; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.

If this verse were translated, "We know that that which is born of God within the believer sinneth not," people could understand more easily. "Whosoever is born of God" remains in fellowship with God by renewing his mind. The believer with a renewed mind cannot be touched by the wicked one. The key to keeping ourselves is in living according to God's Word. By positive action we will allow no opportunity for Satan to interfere in our lives. As Ephesians 4:27 admonishes, "Neither give place to the devil."

I John 5:19 and 20: And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness. And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life. The whole world lies, not walks or stands but lies, helpless as a babe or a dead body, before the wicked one, Satan. He is the prince of this world, according to John 14:30, and the god of this world, according to II Corinthians 4:4. However, we who are born again have been enlightened, for we know God who is true.

I John 5:21:

Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.

"Little children" is a term of endearment, as to students from a concerned and loving teacher. To "keep from idols" means to seek no help, guidance, or instruction from any source other than our heavenly Father, who is the true and living God. We should not be swayed from keeping our minds on God and His Word. Our victorious living, after receiving sonship, comes in direct proportion with our remaining in fellowship by thinking and acting according to the will of God, which can only be known by the Word of God.

Wierwille, V.P.-The Believer's Opportunity

The Believer's Opportunity

Another Study in Abundant Living by VICTOR PAUL WIERWILLE This book is in the public domain. For more teachings by V. P. Wierwille, E. W. Bullinger and others, go to: www.eternallyblessed.org The Scripture used throughout this study is quoted from the King James Version unless otherwise noted. Any explanatory insertions by the author within a Scripture verse are enclosed in brackets [].

I want to share with you your opportunities as a believer, your responsibility as a believer, and what you are doing when you believe God. That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world: Holding forth the word of life;...

Philippians 2 :15 ,16 a. This is addressed to the Church, the saints. Believers have the opportunity to live a blameless and harmless life because they are the sons of God. (That which is born within by the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit, is referred to, in the Bible, in the masculine gender; therefore, all believers are sons of God, both men and women.)

If you are a son of God now, it is because Christ is living within you. You have power, you have the ability to do certain things that the world cannot understand with a natural mind. When a man is converted, born again, the nature of God is living in him and he has eternal life. Until that experience, he is dead in trespasses and sins. The nature of God cannot sin and it cannot die. It is eternal life once God has performed the miracle of rebirth in a believer's heart and that believer can never lose that birth. John 10:28.

God says that the sons of God are where? "...in the midst of a crooked and perverted nation, ..." Have you ever considered yourself as a hub of a wheel? If the hub is centrally perfect and the spokes properly aligned, the perimeter of the wheel will roll along smoothly. But if the center is out of alignment what happens? Have you noticed where God put us? As believers we are right in the middle, set like a jewel, with every opportunity "...in the midst of a crooked and perverted nation,..." I am indicating to you the Word of God in this study in abundant living, that you may apply it and go forth believing, while all about us are many who do not believe.

"...among whom ye shine as lights in the world:" I wonder how many of us know the Bible so that our light has been shining. As a believer you will be called on to give an account of this passage of Scripture when you appear before the throne of God. John 12:46 states, I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.

We are to be lights in the world holding forth the Word of Life. He was that light and now, He says, we are as shining lights holding the Word of God forth as it is in truth the Word of Life. You need not ask a person if he is saved. Only do what the Word says, hold forth the Word of Life that they may see. Think of the privilege that is ours just to reach one person in a life time with the Gospel,

even just one. The person we reach maybe a key person in a community or in a whole area. The person you have reached for Christ may be the one person who will win hundreds of thousands. Someone once won the great religious saints of all times, yes, someone who was holding forth the Word of Life. It is a believer's opportunity and it is a believer's responsibility, to hold forth the Word of Life. In II Corinthians 5:17 we read, Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

I was taught to believe that this passage of Scripture meant that when Christ came and lived within a man then that person was a new creature. Please read the verse again and note very carefully, "Therefore if any man be in Christ (IN CHRIST)..." This verse does not say anything about CHRIST being IN this man. Compare Colossians 1:27, ...Christ in you (IN YOU), the hope of glory:

II Corinthians chapter five verse seventeen is talking about a man being IN Christ. The miracle of the new birth means CHRIST IN you to stay. He is continuously there. However, Christ in your heart does not automatically put Him in your mind. Romans 12:2 states, ...be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind,...

Philippians 2:5 stipulates, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:" II Corinthians 5 :17 is speaking about the believer who has renewed his mind, who has been transformed by the renewing of his mind according to the Christ who lives within. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature:..." It is one thing for God to abide IN YOU, it is quite another thing for you to abide IN CHRIST.

If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. John 15:7.

You are a new creature in your mind as you renew the mind according to the Word. "...old things (in the mind) are passed away;..." Old desires, old longings, and old temptations disappear, "...behold, all things are become new."

II Corinthians 5:18 goes on to state, And all things are (ARE) of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ,...

Thus, we are reconciled to God by Jesus Christ. We lost our spiritual connection with God by way of Adam and Eve, and thereby the sin passed on to all men, for all are dead in trespasses and sin.

Jesus came and repaired the broken line, Jesus made the proper connection again.

...all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Christ Jesus and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation. II Corinthians 5:18b.

We were reconciled to God by Jesus Christ and now He has given to the sons of God the ministry of reconciliation. What then is your job as a believer? He has given you the ministry of reconciliation. What does the word "reconcile" mean? The word "reconcile" means to bring back together. That which has been separated is reconciled when it is brought back together. He has given to you, as a believer, the ministry of reconciling. All you have to do is to witness to the great opportunity every man has in Christ Jesus. Do not criticize anyone , do not find fault with anyone. We show forth the love of God, show people that Jesus Christ died for them over nineteen hundred years ago. We must show the power of God, show what a believer has in Christ, show

how great Christ is. That is the ministry of reconciliation. What a ministry we have! To wit, (namely) that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them (Oh, wonderful!) and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. II Corinthians 5:19. The Spirit of Christ abides in your heart, therefore, you have the ministry of taking His Word and reconciling people to God.

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. Isaiah 53:6. When a sheep has gone astray, what is the difficulty? It is lost. "All we like sheep have gone astray..." Everybody is lost. Reason: "...we have turned every one to his own way:..." Every man has turned to his own way. We lost the way, because we turned to our own way. God had to do something about it, so He reconciled us to Himself in Christ Jesus. How? by "...laying on him (Jesus) the iniquity of us all." God laid all our iniquity and all the iniquities of every person on Jesus. The usual difficulty with the teaching on salvation is due to so many doctrinal differences in the denominations. Some have made it seem so hard while others teach that you just grow into it like mushrooms. Neither one of them is true. You must be born again from above, which is easy because of what Jesus did. God laid on Jesus the iniquity of us all — the sin of us all. Its literal meaning is that you were laid upon Jesus. When we understand that the iniquity of us all was laid upon Jesus, we can begin to comprehend why Jesus cried, "My God, my God, for this was I spared." The devil will try to talk you out of your power, and say to you, "It is not so important that you believe this. You just cannot do it." The devil will have more arguments than you can "shake a stick at." Quote him the Word. He cannot stand the Word. When Jesus was tempted in the wilderness how did Jesus defeat Satan? Jesus quoted Scripture to him.

I would like for you to begin to see in this study that the believer's high opportunity is a ministry as a son of God, a ministry of reconciliation — putting back together that which has been broken or separated between God and man. Then you will be able to also understand that passage of Scripture in Matthew 16:19,

...whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Why is this so? Because you are a son of God.

Wierwille, V.P.-The Bondage of the Sabbath Day

The Bondage of the Sabbath Day

Another Study in Abundant Living by VICTOR PAUL WIERWILLE This book is in the public domain. For more teachings by V. P. Wierwille, E. W. Bullinger and others, go to: www.eternallyblessed.org The Scripture used throughout this study is quoted from the King James Version unless otherwise noted. Any explanatory insertions by the author within a Scripture verse are enclosed in brackets [].

Sabbath Day advocates and adherents err in that they fail to heed the biblical position of "rightly dividing the word of truth." II Timothy 2:15. If tradition is more important than the Word of Truth or the right dividing thereof the unconvinced will remain so. "But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant." I Corinthians 14:33. The Word of Truth and rightly dividing it will in no manner convince those who will to remain unconvinced.

Since the laws of the Sabbath were given TO Israel their interpretation is FOR Israel. Since these laws were never given TO the Nations or TO the Church their interpretation can not be FOR them. The Sabbath laws were applied TO and FOR Israel and as such never altered, changed, abrogated or transferred to any other day. The folly of it is for a Christian, born again of the Spirit of Christ, to try to make himself believe he can and has to live under a law or laws which no longer exist and NEVER were written or addressed to him. It is impossible to live under a law if the law is no longer in effect. A stop sign which has been officially removed is no longer in effect. You may continue to stop, but that is no longer the law, for the stop sign is gone. The Scriptures clearly state that we as born again sons of God "Are not under law but grace!" Then the law has no control over us, for how could it possibly have power over us who are dead to it? "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ;..." Romans 7:4.

People trying to live under a law which does not exist for them is nothing new in Christian experience. Paul had such in the Church at Galatia. "Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?..." "...Mount Sinai which gendereth to bondage,..." "But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all." "So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free. Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." Galatians 4:21, 24:26, 31; 5:1.

How can we be under something that no longer exists? It is impossible. "But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, (including the law) whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain." Galatians 4:9-11. "One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and

giveth God thanks." Romans 14:5,6. "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days." Colossians 2:16.

If we wrongly divide the Word of Truth and interpret that which was given TO and FOR Israel as applying TO and FOR the Church, we produce nothing but confusion in our minds and unnecessary conflicts between Christians. Since Christ is "The Lord of the Sabbath" and we are under His New commandments it is basically a matter of each one being fully persuaded in His own mind that he is not "under law but grace", nor under the judgment and dictates of fellow believers.

Other Days

SunDAY is the 1st day of our week. Because Jesus Christ appeared in His resurrected body to Mary and others on Sunday and because the vast majority of born again believers assemble themselves together in worship on Sunday, therefore, the Church as a whole has been keeping the first day of the week. We do not keep Sunday because we are under law and have to, but we keep it because we are under grace and will to do so. Jesus Christ is Lord of the Sabbath. Under the Church age, in our day, every day is sacred according to the Word of God and not one day more so than any other day, even though the bulk of Christendom has set aside Sunday as a day of rest and special worship.

Man's DAY is now for this is the age of grace. Man today passes judgment and sentence, he directs the policy. In the King James Version (I Corinthians 4:3) the word day is translated "judgment." In essence this word "judgment" expresses the truth that in man's day, man sits in judgment but man's day is brief.

Christ's DAY is coming. That day is for His Church when He will gather together the "dead in Christ," and those who believe in Him and are alive. Philippians 1:6, 10; 2:16. The Lord's DAY or the Day of the Lord is not a day of the week as has been commonly believed. It is not Sunday. But, the Lord's Day is His day on earth, when the Lord Himself shall rule in righteousness and power and glory. John was shown this day in the distant future. Rev. 1:10. That day will not overtake us, as born again believers, as a thief, for we are not in darkness but we are the children of light. I Thessalonians 5:2-5.

Thus, when we "rightly divide" the Word of Truth we clear the atmosphere of the wrong teaching regarding the Sabbath and the other days mentioned in the Bible and the Word fits like it should, perfectly, without any "private interpretation." After all, the Word of God is the will of God, and how could God deny Himself and still be true in His Word?

Wierwille, V.P.-The Burial of Jesus

The Burial of Jesus

Another Study in Abundant Living by VICTOR PAUL WIERWILLE This book is in the public domain. For more teachings by V. P. Wierwille, E. W. Bullinger and others, go to: www.eternallyblessed.org The Scripture used throughout this study is quoted from the King James Version unless otherwise noted. Any explanatory insertions by the author within a Scripture verse are enclosed in brackets []. No one has made such an impact upon humanity as our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ; yet, He left no written records, He owned no material things and His death was like that of a criminal. The Word of God does not give one indication in all of its records of either the Apostles or the relatives of Jesus making any preparation whatsoever for the Master's burial. Perhaps they were stunned, or perhaps the tenseness of those days caused them to desist; or was it because of the time of the Passover or just plain unbelief? Even the beloved John or the boisterous Peter or the half-brothers of Jesus were not concerned about the burial. This neglect on the part of the Apostles, the beloved relatives and a few friends has always seemed cruel to me. That even His mother, His half-brothers or half-sisters took no account of the necessary arrangements whatsoever for the burial of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, is almost unbelievable. The Word of God informs us that this last rite to the body of Jesus was performed by two believers, Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus. Joseph of Arimathea knew and believed that Jesus was going to die. Nicodemus, certainly knew it from the conversations he had with Jesus, according to the record in the Gospel of John, chapter three. But, did they believe that Jesus was going to rise from the dead?

Joseph of Arimathea is not spoken of anywhere in the Word of God apart from this instance of the relationship with the burial of Jesus.

Nicodemus, however, to the contrary, is spoken of in other Scriptures. According to the third chapter of the Gospel of John, this Nicodemus came to Jesus by night. In John chapter seven we have the record of a meeting of the Sanhedrin and the discussion about those who were believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. They said, "Have any of the rulers...believed on him?" "Nicodemus saith unto them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them,) Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth?" Certainly this type of statement made Nicodemus most unpopular before the Sanhedrin.

Here are some thoughtful questions regarding the burial of Jesus. Why did the women come to the tomb early the first day of the week? They most certainly did not expect to find that God had raised Jesus from the dead, for they would not have brought their spices and ointments. Not one of them, not even the Apostles, expected Jesus Christ to rise. "For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead." John 20:9.

Mark 16:1 tells us that the women went to the tomb for the purpose of anointing Him. Why did they go to anoint Him when John 19:39,40 says that Nicodemus had done this? The answer lies in the

fact that what John tells in his Gospel account of the burial is not identical to what Matthew, Mark and Luke tell. Yet, there is no contradiction in the Gospel records, if we rightly divide The Word and note very carefully to whom it is addressed, when and where. (See "A Harmony of the Burial of Jesus" on pages 16 and 17).

Another interesting question is, why did the Apostles go to the grave after Jesus had risen? The women had returned from the grave on the first day of the week and told the Apostles that Jesus was not in the sepulchre so they had to see for themselves. In Matthew 27:57-61 we will note some very interesting truths. When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple: Matthew 27:57. The word "even" establishes the time. We know from the biblical record in Matthew 27:46, 50 as well as the other Gospels, that Jesus died at the ninth hour which corresponds to three o'clock in the afternoon our time. But there are two "evens" referred to in the Scriptures. One "even" is from 3 o'clock in the afternoon until sundown, the other "even" is after sundown. This "even" of Matthew 27:57 is between 3 P.M. and sunset. The words "a rich man" are enlightening. Literally the word "rich" as used here means "abounding in riches." He was what we would call a multi-millionaire, a very wealthy man. Joseph lived in Arimathea, approximately 25 miles from Jerusalem. He was "Jesus' disciple." Technically, he was discipled to Jesus, a pupil of Jesus, a student, convinced because of his own research and questing.

He (Joseph of Arimathea) went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered. Matthew 27:58.

Joseph's association with Jesus must have made him most unpopular for he was a just man from a Jewish city. Pilate was a gentile. Entering into the court of a gentile to request the body of Jesus made Joseph ceremonially unclean to eat the Passover. The record in John 18:28 tells of the presence of the rulers of the synagogue when Jesus was led into the judgment hall. "Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves (these rulers, scribes and pharisees) went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover."

Joseph begged Pilate for the body of Jesus. Note carefully that Joseph begged for the body, he craved the body of Jesus. Logically, who would have wanted the body of Jesus as it seemed a criminal's body. No person would beg for a criminal's body but would simply try to get rid of it as soon as possible, even without touching it, if at all possible. Yet Joseph went to Pilate's Hall and he did not just say, "Pilate, may I have the body of Jesus," but he said, "Please, Pilate, let me have the body of Jesus." How Joseph must have loved Him. And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, Matthew 27:59.

I want you to notice carefully that it says nothing about Nicodemus aiding Joseph in any way. It was Joseph of Arimathea who, after Pilate commanded the body to be delivered, took the body of Jesus and wrapped it in a clean cloth. The words "wrapped it" means "rolled it up in," it does not mean that he "put it on Him." The word for "linen cloth" is the Greek word *sindon*. This clean "linen cloth" was not the regular grave wrapping, as we shall see later that an entirely different word is used; but, it was a sheet of material which was wrapped around a body, not necessarily a dead body. The same word *sindon* is used in Mark 14:51 which you might find interesting to note. The word "had" in verse 59 is uniquely interesting, as it is used in the active past perfect tense,

because it indicates that Joseph himself personally took the body. And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed. Matthew 27:60. The first question one would naturally have is, why should Joseph of Arimathea have a tomb or a sepulchre in Jerusalem and that right next to the place where criminals would be executed? This just does not make sense unless we realize that this particular sepulchre was a memorial specifically prepared by Joseph of Arimathea at this location that it might be the burying place or tomb for Jesus. Joseph had his men to hew out of the rock, a tomb which being a memorial was also referred to as a sepulchre. Every sepulchre could be a tomb, but not every tomb was a sepulchre; because, to be a sepulchre it had to have distinctive carvings and markings making it a memorial. The word "had" in verse 60 is in the past passive tense, indicating that Joseph had it hewn out by somebody else and not that he hewed it out himself. Also, note that in the usage here in verse 60 it was Joseph who rolled the "great stone" to the door of the sepulchre and departed. This indicates that after Joseph had done exactly what The Word says he did, he closed the sepulchre and left; but, we need to note that there was no anointing, there were no spices used, there were no wrappings of grave clothes. And there was Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre. Matthew 27:61. The word "against" means "on the opposite side of," or "away from," or "in front of" just as though you would be sitting in front of a fireplace, then the fireplace would be "over against." The women who were present observed everything that was done by Joseph of Arimathea and, of course, they noted that Joseph did not properly bury Jesus according to Jewish custom.

Why did Joseph not anoint Him with spices and wrap Him in the burial clothing? I am confident that all of the actions of Joseph of Arimathea indicated that it was unnecessary, for he believed that Jesus Christ would rise again. The word "disciple," which we discussed earlier, does not mean that he was simply a casual pupil or student of Jesus, but that he was a great follower; not just a follower, but one who took the words of Jesus literally.

Perhaps before we leave this one section we ought to note this Scripture: "For as yet they knew not the scriptures, that he must rise again from the dead." John 20:9. This is speaking specifically regarding the Apostles and disciples, but not regarding Joseph of Arimathea as you can see from the context. The next record in the Bible regarding the burial of Jesus is recorded in Mark 15:42-47. And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath, Mark 15:42. The word "even" is the same word as we discussed in Matthew 27:57, meaning the period of time between 3 o'clock in the afternoon and sunset. In this verse we are specifically informed that this day when Christ died was the Day of Preparation, the day before the Passover. The Passover was always on the 15th of Abib or Nisan. The day before the Passover therefore, is the 14th of Nisan which was the Day of Preparation, which was "the day before the Sabbath." This Sabbath was not the weekly Sabbath, but the Passover Sabbath which was the "high day" of John 19:31, which was a special Sabbath always observed on the 15th of Nisan.*

* Read "The Day Jesus Christ Died" for a detailed study of this particular phase of the death of Jesus Christ.

Joseph of Arimathea, an honourable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus. Mark 15:43. This record tells us a

little more about Joseph, namely, that he was "an honourable counsellor," that is, he was a member of the council, the Sanhedrin, the ruling body of the Jews in Jerusalem, waiting for the kingdom of the Messiah. The word "craved" in this verse is the same as the word "begged" which we discussed from the Gospel of Matthew. And Pilate marvelled if he were already dead: and calling unto him the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead. Mark 15:44.

Pilate was not about to take the word of Joseph so he asked the Centurion if it was true. In every record I am deeply impressed with the boldness of Joseph of Arimathea. The record in Mark 14:50 says regarding the Apostles, "And they all forsook him, and fled." Yet, Joseph who was not one of the twelve Apostles, but one who really believed Jesus was bold. The Apostles may have been in close association with Jesus during His earthly life, but when the pressure was on they fled, yet Joseph was bold when Jesus was dead. And when he (Pilate) knew it of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph. And he (Joseph) bought fine linen, and took him down, and wrapped him in the linen, and laid him in a sepulchre which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre. Mark 15:45,46.

I want you to note that Joseph "bought," deliberately purchased for this person who was very special to him, a new wrapping or sheet which here again is called "fine linen," the same word as used in Matthew, namely, a *sindon*.

Here it also specifically says that he (Joseph) took Him (Jesus) down from the cross. The words "wrapped him" is the same word as used in Matthew; namely, "rolled him up in" the linen material. And Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus beheld where he was laid. Mark 15:47.

Again, I want you to note there is no mention whatsoever, in this Gospel of Nicodemus' presence. It also states that the women stayed around while Joseph of Arimathea was burying Jesus to see what was actually happening. There was no anointing with oil or spices for burial according to the proper method of a Jewish burial. The next record is in Luke 23:52b, 53.

And, behold, there was a man named Joseph, a counsellor; and he was a good man, and a just: Luke 23:50. The word "good" used here means that he was worthy to be admired, a person to be looked up to.

(The same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them;) he was of Arimathea, a city of the Jews: who also himself waited for the kingdom of God. Luke 23:51. This verse gives more information regarding Joseph than we had in the Gospels of Matthew or Mark. It informs us that He was a member of the Council, the Sanhedrin, but that he did not consent to the majority rule and the deeds carried out by that Council. This man went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid. Luke 23:52,53.

Note very specifically that Joseph took the body down and "wrapped" the body in "linen." *sindon*, the same description as in the other Gospels. I want to just make a notation here for us to remember that the word "wrapped" is not the same as the word "wound." This verse also gives us the information concerning this special memorial place being a sepulchre hewn out of stone specifically for Jesus. And that day was the preparation, and the sabbath drew on. Luke 23:54. The day was the 14th of Nisan, the Day of Preparation. The Passover occurred on the 15th, which was a Sabbath, not the weekly Sabbath, but the "high day Sabbath" of John 19:31. And the

women also, which came after him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid. Luke 23:55.

These women can be identified from Mark 15:40, 41 where we read, "There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome; (Who also, when he was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered unto him;) and many other women which came up with him unto Jerusalem."

These women came from Galilee and beheld the sepulchre and "how his body was laid." In other words, they observed exactly what Joseph of Arimathea did, namely, that he simply wrapped Jesus in a *sindon* but did not properly anoint His body with spices and oils according to Jewish burial customs. Because of what the women saw, when Joseph of Arimathea rolled the stone to the door and left, this record follows: And they (the women) returned (to Jerusalem), and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath day (both the high day of John 19:31 and the weekly sabbath) according to the commandment. Luke 23:56. This is all there is to this record of the Gospel of Luke. Again you see that Matthew, Mark and Luke all concur regarding the great truth that it was Joseph of Arimathea who took the body of Jesus down from the cross after Pilate had given him permission to do so, wrapped it in a linen cloth, a *sindon*, and laid the body in his own sepulchre without giving Jesus any proper burial attention.

Turning to John 19:38-42, we now will find some very interesting added truths which do not contradict, but which simply enlarge upon that which we have been told in the three synoptic Gospels. And after this Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought (asked of) Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus. John 19:38.

"And after this..." After this what? After what the record in John has been saying, namely, pertaining to that which the soldiers did, how they came and broke the legs of the thief and of the malefactor, but when they came to Jesus they saw that He was dead already so they did not break His legs.

"And after this Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple (being a student) of Jesus,..." Up to this point we have the same information as recorded by the other synoptic writers, but now we have a statement which we did not have in the other Gospels, namely, "...but secretly for fear of the Jews,..." The word "secretly" would lead one to think that he was afraid of what would happen to him if they found out about him, because he was a secret disciple. I believe that this is what most of us have believed or do believe. But, the word translated "secretly" is a verb in the Greek text and it should read, "after this Joseph of Arimathea, being a pupil, an earnest student or disciple of Jesus, but hidden away for fear of the Jews,..." "Secreted" is what the word actually is. He was hidden away. The Greek word is *kruptō* which means "concealed," "hidden away" or "having hidden." The word *kruptō* has been transliterated into English into our word "crypt."

According to this record Joseph of Arimathea had hidden away, concealed in a crypt for fear of the Jews, yet, in Mark 15:43 we noted earlier that He came boldly unto Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. This looks like a contradiction or is it speaking of something different? Joseph of Arimathea was not afraid of what might happen to him eventually, but he was concealed during the operation of the crucifixion, because he wanted to be sure not only to be able to see what was

going on but to be alive, to boldly claim the body of Jesus for he knew and believed that Jesus was going to die. Joseph of Arimathea bought a garden in which He had a sepulchre hewed out of the rock. This was near to the place of the crucifixion. Certainly Joseph would never have done this had he not believed what Jesus told him concerning His own death. And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight. John 19:39. This verse gives us an added thought, because up until this time Nicodemus has not been mentioned at all, but in verse 39 we read "And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night,..." This identifies Nicodemus with the record in John three and John seven as being the same man. ...and (he) brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight." This is the first occasion in any of the Gospels that these spices used for proper burial of Jewish believers are mentioned.

Then took they (he) the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. John 19:40. The first word in verse 40 gives us the time after all this which has been done by Joseph of Arimathea, "then." The word "they" in the King James has left the impression that it was Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, but this cannot be true from the records given in the other three Gospels. In the Aramaic text the word "they" is the word "he." If it is "they" it must be Nicodemus and his helpers, excluding Joseph of Arimathea.

Here for the first time in the Gospels we have the word "wound" used. It is not the same word as "wrapped" used in the other Gospels where it said that Joseph wrapped him in a sindon. In this verse we are informed that Nicodemus "wound" Jesus with the spices in linen clothes. Here the Greek word for "linen clothes" is othonion meaning "bandages or wrappings, grave clothes." These are striking truths.

Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in this garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. John 19:41. This is the same garden where Mary Magdalene saw Joseph of Arimathea place the body and where Mary Magdalene met Jesus after His resurrection.

There laid they ("he," the same as inverse 40) Jesus therefore (after he had properly anointed the body and wrapped it for Jewish burial) because of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand. John 19:42. This specifically informs us that the tomb was near by. May I just say, that according to biblical usage every sepulchre maybe a tomb but not every tomb is a sepulchre. The word for sepulchre is mnemeion meaning "monument;" while the word for tomb is taphos meaning "a place where one is buried.

Putting all the truth together from the four Gospels, we note that Joseph of Arimathea, after receiving permission from Pilate, took the body of Jesus, rolled it in a sindon and put it in his own sepulchre, which he had prepared for the occasion, rolled the stone to the door of the sepulchre and departed. The women who had been sitting a short distance from the sepulchre noted all that happened when Jesus was placed in this tomb. So the women returned to Jerusalem to prepare the spices and ointment for proper burial. They returned to Jerusalem without having any knowledge of what Nicodemus would do. Nicodemus came to the sepulchre and properly wrapped the body in spices with grave clothes and buried Jesus according to the Jewish custom.

Another note of interest to me is the word "because" in verse 42, which is the Greek word dia. This seems to clearly stipulate that Nicodemus quickly laid Jesus back in this sepulchre; since the time

was running out before the Jewish Passover began, which of course, would occur at sunset. Thus it is quite well documented here that it was close to sunset when Nicodemus came to anoint the body properly.

According to John 20:5 John the Apostle, on the first day of the week came to the sepulchre and it says, "he stooping down,...saw the linen clothes..." In verse 6 we are informed that Simon Peter entered in the sepulchre and he "seeth the linen clothes lie,..." The word for "linen clothes" here again is not *sindon* but *othonion* meaning "wrapping." And he stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in. Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie, And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself. John 20:5, 6, 7. A HARMONY OF THE BURIAL OF JESUS Matthew 27:57-61 When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple: He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered. And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed. And there was Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre.

Mark 15:42-47 And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath. Joseph of Arimathea, an honourable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus. And Pilate marvelled if he were already dead: and calling unto him the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead. And when he knew it of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph. And he bought fine linen, and took him down, and wrapped him in the linen, and laid him in a sepulchre, which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre. And Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses beheld where he was laid.

Luke 23:50-56a

And, behold, there was a man named Joseph, a counsellor; and he was a good man, and a just: (The same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them;) he was of Arimathea, a city of the Jews: who also himself waited for the kingdom of God. This man went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid. And that day was the preparation, and the sabbath drew on. And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid. And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments;

John 19:38-42 And after this Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus. And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight. Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand.

Wierwille, V.P.-The Christians Joy and Crown

The Christian's Joy and Crown

Another Study in Abundant Living by VICTOR PAUL WIERWILLE This book is in the public domain. For more teachings by V. P. Wierwille, E. W. Bullinger and others, go to: www.eternallyblessed.org The Scripture used throughout this study is quoted from the King James Version unless otherwise noted. Any explanatory insertions by the author within a Scripture verse are enclosed in brackets []. The first word in Philippians, chapter 4, indicates that something has gone before. "Therefore" is a conjunction, and in order to get the impact of what the author is endeavouring to say, we must start with verse 20 of chapter 3. For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Philippians 3:20. The word "conversation" is the Greek word politeuma meaning "seat of government." 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. Philippians 3:21.

Now we can see how it fits together. "For our seat of government is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour..." When the Saviour comes, we will also have our bodies changed, fashioned like His glorious body. If we read I Thessalonians, chapter 4; with this in mind, it will fit like a hand in a glove; for it tells us that the dead in Christ shall rise first, and we which are alive shall be changed.

Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved. Philippians 4:1.

Because our seat of government is in heaven, "Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord..."

Men and women should want to stand fast in the Lord because of what Christ has done for them, and because He is coming back.

We know that we are saved by grace. If we do not know it we ought to learn it, because we can never be saved by good works. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. Ephesians 2:8, 9.

After we are saved, we should do good works here upon earth. When the Father sends His Son back from heaven, then, we are going to be judged, (rewarded). There are two words for the word "judgment" in the New Testament: one is the seat of judgment where AWARDS are presented, and the other is the seat of judgment of CONDEMNATIONS. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God. Romans 14:12. Of what are we going to give an account? This account is only of what we have done for Him AFTER we have been saved. Every time we stand fast for the Lord, it is accounted unto us; it is set to our account. When we are born again of God's Spirit, we are going to be in heaven; but, the thing we should be concerned with now is to DO the things here upon earth which will be laid to our account for awards. Why should we want only to get

"inside of the door of heaven" when we can go into the "living room of heaven."

"Therefore, my brethren," Paul says, "dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown..." Who is the joy and crown of the Apostle Paul? The ones to whom he taught the Word of God; the ones whom he saw saved, healed, etc. He said "you are my joy and crown; you stand fast."

Look at I Thessalonians, chapter 2, For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy. I Thessalonians 2:19, 20. With the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, those whom Paul taught and those who were his hope, joy and crown, will appear before the Father. "...even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?"

"...so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved." The word "stand fast" used here in Philippians 4:1, is the same usage as in Philippians 1:27, ...that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith*(family faith) of the gospel;

* The "common" faith of Romans 10:17 and the "household" of faith in Galatians 6:10 make what is called "family" faith because Christianity is a family affair. The Father with His family, His children; God is our Father, we are His children.

"...that ye stand fast..." This word literally is "strong" in the text. When we stand together we are strong. If, I am strong in the Lord, and you are strong in the Lord, and so, together we move ahead. This is tremendous because of certain things that happened in the ministry of the Apostle Paul. He said that these people were his joy and crown, and that they were to be strong in the Lord together. 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. 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. And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks. Acts 19:8-10.

It was simply tremendous how the Word of God was spread throughout the country. Yet, if you will notice in II Timothy 1:15, all Asia forsook Paul. This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me;...

How do you think the Apostle Paul felt, knowing that his joy and crown were the believers, and that as they would stand strong in the Lord the ministry would move? But, before the death of the Apostle Paul, the greatness of the revelation, which God had given to him, had already been lost. For the most part this knowledge is still lost today, very few people know about it. The Word says that all Asia heard the Word of the Lord Jesus, yet later, all Asia had left him. It reminds one of the Lord Jesus Christ, when He was here upon earth doing signs, miracles and wonders, and when multitudes followed Him. When you read the Word of God, however, you notice that when it was time for Him to be crucified, all fled, and the rabble cried, "Crucify him! Crucify him!"

According to the prophecy in Zechariah 13:7, also quoted in Matthew 26:31 and Mark 14:27;

...smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered;...

Toward the close of his life, when Paul writes to his friend Timothy, Asia had already turned away from the Word of God, back to the enslavements, in which they had been engulfed and engrossed before they were set free by the Gospel.

Why do men and women want to go back to the "flesh pots of Egypt" when the Lord has set a table of abundance before them? Why do they want to go back to "building bricks without straw?" (Exodus 5:7.) It is just a trick of Satan endeavouring to defeat God's people. Satan does this by trying to drive people away from the greatness of God's Word, back to the works that have basically nothing to do with The Word. This has been so well explained by a man of God, who said, "When we come to ask ourselves and say, 'Where did I learn this?' it is astonishing to find how much we have imbibed from man and from tradition, and not directly from the Word of God." All that we have learned from our youth must be tested and proved by the Word of God. Where we find it is true we affirm it by reason of God's Word. Where we find it is not true and does not stand the test of The Word we must not only be content but also thankful to give it up, and receive divine revelation in the place of man's imagination. In Philippians 4:2 Paul says, I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord. The word beseech is a very good word in the dictionary. It literally means "implore."

Paul says, "I implore you two to be of the same mind in the Lord." What had happened was that one person said one thing, and the other said something else. That is why they were not strong in the Lord. If we are strong in the Lord we cannot have two opinions regarding truth. There are no two opinions possible regarding truth. Truth is truth, whether we believe it or not. We can have two opinions regarding facts, but not regarding truth. The moment we begin having an opinion, we are already wrong. Truth is truth; it is "thus saith the Lord," and that settles it. What we think does not make any difference. Here were these two fellows with different minds. It is much like in this day and age; everybody has opinions, and all are worthless. The reason we have opinions is that we do not "rightly divide" The Word. If the Word of God is rightly divided, we have The true Word; when it is wrongly divided, we have error. When we wrongly divide (misquote) we are working in Satan's field. Wherever it is The true Word, it again means, "thus saith the Lord."

Paul implored them and said, "Euodias and Syntyche, if you want to stand fast in the Lord, you must be of the same mind." One cannot be pulling one way and another the other way, and expect to be strong in the Lord.

Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Philippians 2:2.

Paul's joy was fulfilled when they walked in the same mind. To have the same mind is to be of one accord, to have unity of purpose. The word "one accord" means "unity of purpose." And I entreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellow labourers, whose names are in the book of life. Philippians 4:3.

I believe we understand the word "yokefellow" from its usage. This is the only place in the Bible where it is used.

"...help those women which laboured with me in the gospel..." The women also must have worked with the Apostle Paul in the gospel. Why, then, should people say that women have no right to preach, teach or share The Word? The Word says, "whose names are in the book of life." The

book of life is a living, spiritual record of events which belongs to God. Those who have been born of God's Spirit have their names in the book of life. (Revelation 13:8) We frequently use the term "life is an open book." We live another page in that book every day. We are able to live because, of our birth. Our parents did not need a paper book to write our names down in order for them to know that we belonged to their book of life, neither do we need a book to keep record of our children's names and works. Just living is the record. So also are we in the mind of God, for The Word says that he knew us from before the foundation of the world. God knew who would believe on His Son and are therefore, born into His family.

Rejoice in the Lord alway; and again I say, Rejoice. Philippians 4 :4 .

"Rejoice...", this is terrific! If we know what we have in Christ, then we should rejoice in Him; "live on top of the heap."

Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Philippians 4:5. The word "moderation" means "forbearance ," meaning patience in self-control. "Let your moderation (forbearance) be known unto all men..." The word "known" is a very unique word. There are five different Greek words for "known," and it is these little shades of meaning that make all the difference in the accuracy of The Word. The word here is "to know by having learned or experienced." When you read "Let your moderation be known unto all men...", it does not fit into The Word, Why should our moderation be known to all men? It should be nobody else's business. No man should be judged in meat, in drink or in respect of an holy day. No man is to be our judge. "Let your moderation (forbearance) be known (learned)...," "...let us learn to forbear by experience." When you work The Word it will fit.

"...The Lord is at hand," These words mean "The Lord is always at hand." Commentaries say it means, "time for the Lord to come." He is in us, so let us learn forbearance, the Lord is here; the Lord is at hand. He is watching over us, so let us be mindful of this. Be careful for nothing;... Philippians 4:6 .

These words cannot fit into The Word in the way that they are phrased. The word "careful" is the word "anxious." Literally it means, "Do not be filled with anxiety regarding anything." We should be careful when it comes to the Word of God. Many times we have not been careful to handle the Word of God, we have tried to force it upon people.

...but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. Philippians 4:6b. The word "request" is "special petition." The word "known" is the word exegeomai – "declared." The essence of "prayer and supplication" is, to be specific regarding your need and want. "Specifically, let your needs be declared unto God with thanksgiving," that your mind may be renewed in what you have in Him. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall (absolutely) keep your hearts and minds (thoughts) through (in) Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:7. The word "mind" is the word "thoughts." When we declare our requests with thanksgiving, the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep our hearts and minds (thoughts) through (in) Christ Jesus. "Through" is the preposition "in." Isn't this a wonderful verse: There are two things in this verse: the one is salvation and the other is our walk. "The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall (absolutely) keep your hearts..." It is the seat of your spiritual life God is going to keep, because this is seed; this is eternal life. Therefore; because this

is true, We keep our thoughts in Christ Jesus and we are of one mind walking according to the Word of God. Paul says, "then you are my joy; my crown."

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Philippians 4:8.

Think! What we think we are going to manifest. We never rise beyond what we think. The reason some people can always say negative things is due to the fact that they are always thinking negatively. We are more prone to find fault than to find good in people. The moment we start thinking about that fault, it will magnify itself, and before we know it, that person will appear to us in the way we think. The Word of God says that our thoughts are to be in Christ Jesus. If our thoughts are in Christ Jesus, then we think that which is pure, honest and good. It is just as easy to think good as it is to think evil. We live in the kind of world where so many people always want us to think negatively. We must make up our minds whether we are going to think as The Word says, or think as the world says.

Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, (you) do: and (if you do) the God of peace shall be with you. But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care (thinking) of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, (mindful, in text) but ye lacked opportunity. Philippians 4:9, 10. When we work The Word minutely and accurately, the word "care" is a matter of "thinking." Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. Philippians 4:11.

"For I learned, in whatsoever state I am, to be content." When used in this way, these words do not fit with the context of The Word. The text reads literally: "I learned in whatsoever state I am, I am self adequate." Christ in you, makes you self adequate. Are you lacking anything according to the Word of God? The Word says, "Ye are complete in Him." If we are complete, we are complete; we cannot lack anything. "Therefore, in every situation we are more than conquerors, we are self adequate."

I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound; every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. Philippians 4:12.

"...everywhere and in all things...", whether he had little or an abundance he was still self adequate. Isn't that wonderful!

"...I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need." "I am instructed" – These three words literally, in the text, are translated "initiated into the secret;" (myst~~er~~on, from which the English word "mystery" is derived). The meaning of the word "instructed," in the text, is "to be initiated into the secret," (and this is a secret) how to be self contained or self adequate, whether we lack or whether we have an abundance. Paul has been "initiated into the secret" of how to live. Because some people have been initiated only into the secret of poverty, they want to stay there all the time. If they ever had an abundance, they wouldn't know what to do with it. We might paraphrase Paul's statement thus, "I have been initiated into the secret. When it comes to having physical or material needs, I move on; when I abound in material and physical possessions I move on also. In every situation, I am self adequate.

I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. Philippians 4:13. The words "can do" literally mean "I am strong." Most people quote this verse out of context. Paul is talking about how to live with an abundance, and how to live with a minimum amount, and in every situation to be self adequate. "Therefore," he says, "I am strong; I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." This is a verse of Scripture many use regarding giving up chewing tobacco, smoking, etc. This verse has nothing to do with such matters. It deals specifically with having or not having a sufficiency in material or physical matters.

Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction. Philippians 4:14. The words "that ye did communicate," mean "having had fellowship with." "Ye have well done, having had fellowship with my affliction."

Most people believe that "affliction" is "sickness." The accuracy of the word "affliction" is explained in the last word of verse 16, "necessity." "...even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity." Paul said, "...ye have well done, having had fellowship with my necessity." This verse cannot be understood unless we ourselves have been in the same situation. If we have always had an abundance of material things, and never suffered need, we have not experienced "the fellowship of necessities." Paul is saying they have had fellowship with him, because they themselves had at one time suffered lack and another time they had an abundance.

Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. Philippians 4:15 ,16. The words "once and again," mean twice. "Ye sent twice unto my necessity." Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account. Philippians 4:17. The word "desire" is the same as the word "seek." Not that he was seeking a gift from them, because he did not ask them for material things; he desired that fruit might abound to their account. Every time these people communicated with the necessity of the Apostle Paul, God set the communication(good works) to their account. But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God. Philippians 4:18.

All they did was to communicate with the necessity of the Apostle Paul, and Paul said that this was "well pleasing and acceptable to God, and was set to their account." This has nothing to do with their salvation, but everything to do with their walk and reward. But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:19.

Now you will understand this in context. This verse literally refers to material things, not to spiritual things. They had given of their material things to the Apostle Paul; ministered to his necessity. Paul is saying, "Now that you have communicated towards me, God also now will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." There is a law that as you give, you will receive. This law works with a mathematical exactness and scientific precision. God shall supply your need materially, according to His riches in glory, by Christ Jesus. The word "glory" is the same as in II Corinthians 12:5. Here it says, "...my God shall supply all your need according to HIS foreknowledge." He knows our need before we ask.

Now unto God and our Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen. Philippians 4:20.

"Glory" in this verse refers to OUR real knowledge of Him. Again, it is the same word used in II Corinthians 12:5.

Salute every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren which are with me greet you. Philippians 4:21.

Salute means "to greet." Notice it says "...in Christ Jesus..." It never says that you are in Jesus. This would not be accurate, because the name "Jesus" is always associated with His humility. Whenever people wanted to humiliate Him they called Him "Jesus." The devil spirits never called Him "Christ" in The Word, they always called Him "Jesus." The word "Christ" means "anointed" or "anointing." In John 1:41 we find the word "'Messias' which is, being interpreted, the Christ;" the promised anointed one. According to Acts 2:36, "...God hath made that same Jesus,...(the humiliated one) both Lord and Christ." According to Acts 10:38 God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost." This anointing made Jesus the Christ, the promised anointed one (Messias) to Israel. When you are born again of God's Spirit, it is "Christ in you," and at that moment you are "in Christ," not "in Jesus."

All the saints salute you, chiefly (especially) they that are of Caesar's household. Philippians 4:22. The Word of God must have reached into government circles in the early days, because it reached into Caesar's household. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen. Philippians 4:23. In order to understand Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ which (who)strengtheneth me." and Philippians 4:19, "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus," we should read Galatians 6:6-10. Here Paul is speaking regarding many of these things.

Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. Galatians 6:6. In other words, Paul is saying, "I taught you the Word of God, now you communicate, you share in all good things (materially) with me, because I taught you these things." Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. Galatians 6:7, 8. This verse should be specifically noted in context. Paul is talking about the people to whom he ministered the Word of God. He is saying that if they did not stand with him but turned against him, as they did according to II Timothy, that they "Be not deceived, God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, (in this relationship) that shall he also reap." "For he that soweth to his flesh (and that is exactly what happened under Paul's ministry. He taught them the Word of God, but because of intimidations by the Jews, they went back to the flesh), shall of (in) the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to (unto) the Spirit (God) (to sow to the Spirit is to stand fast with one mind on the Word of God, manifesting the power of God which is to lay up for yourself rewards), shall of the Spirit (God) reap life everlasting." This is to reap in active life now and in the future age. It is literally life more abundant. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him...And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons. Colossians 3:17,23-25. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. Galatians 6:9. The word "season" means "time." The word "shall," means absolutely." We shall absolutely reap, if we do not become weary. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do

good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith. Galatians 6:10. The word "men," is in italics; therefore it should be deleted. We should be good especially to those who are of the household of faith. That is what the Word of God says. When Christians have trouble among themselves they are no longer walking in the light. We are to walk in the light as He is the light, and we will be doing good to those in the household of faith, for which we shall also be rewarded. The joy of every Christian is to "stand fast in the Lord" in our day by day walk. The crown is the reward which in its greatest sense will be ours at His return, but in a literal sense it is ours even now, for as we walk we have the joy and peace found in the "one mind," we have the physical and material blessings needed for the more abundant life now. For we do have "all sufficiency for all things," and as sons of God we are in every situation, "self adequate."

Wierwille, V.P.-The Conception of Jesus Christ

The Conception of Jesus Christ

Another Study in Abundant Living by VICTOR PAUL WIERWILLE This book is in the public domain. For more teachings by V. P. Wierwille, E. W. Bullinger and others, go to: www.eternallyblessed.org The Scripture used throughout this study is quoted from the King James Version unless otherwise noted. Any explanatory insertions by the author within a Scripture verse are enclosed in brackets [].

Many people both inside and outside the Church reject the divine conception of Jesus Christ. They have even suggested that the statement in the Apostle's Creed, "Conceived by the Holy Ghost," be deleted. It was not without reason that the Church of the early centuries included this clause in the creed. The record of the conception and birth of Jesus Christ is clearly set forth in the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 1.

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.

Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying,

Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS. Matthew 1:18-25.

There is no question about the Bible teaching the divine conception. The question is only of the accuracy of the Bible. Is the Bible accurate when it states that Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit, God, and born of Mary who was a virgin at conception, but not when Jesus Christ was born? This study on the accuracy of the Bible should prove beyond any question and doubt that Jesus the Saviour could be born in no other way than the way the Bible describes. The Bible teaches that Jesus was a sinless man. Other parts of the Bible teach that all men from Adam on are born "dead in trespasses and sin." How can we account for the sinlessness of Jesus? Hebrews 2:14 gives the answer: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same." The children of Adam, and all children are of Adam, partake of Adam's flesh and blood. The word "partake" is the Greek word *koinone* and means to share fully. So all of Adam's descendants share fully in his flesh and blood and the

sinfulness imparted to all Adam's children. When we read that Jesus "took part" of the same, the Greek word is *metech* which means to take only a part, not all. Jesus took some part, but not all. Ordinarily all children share fully in Adam's flesh and blood, but Jesus shared only in Adam's flesh. According to the flesh He was like Adam, but the life in the blood of Jesus came by way of the supernatural conception of the Holy Spirit, God.

If Jesus had been conceived in the ordinary human way in which children are conceived, He would have been as sinful as any other child that is born of the seed of Adam, and would have shared fully in Adam's flesh and blood. But, since soul life is in the blood and not in the flesh, and comes with and in the male sperm, Jesus had a body born of the flesh of Mary but no sin, for His soul life was from God. The soul life in the blood of Jesus came to Him not through Mary but by way of the creation of soul life by the Holy Spirit, God.

Natural life, which is called soul life, is in the blood. "The life of the flesh is in the blood" (Lev. 17:11). "For the life of all flesh is the blood thereof (Lev. 17:14). Sin is transmitted through the blood and not through the flesh. The soul life in the blood of an unborn baby's arteries and veins is not derived from the mother, but is produced by the introduction of the male sperm. The mother's blood does not enter into the unborn child's arteries or veins. The blood is produced within the embryo itself and that only after the ovum has been fertilized by the sperm. The mother provides the unborn, developing infant with the nutritive elements for the building of that little body within her. The placenta forming the union between mother and child is so constructed that although all the nutritive elements and even antibodies pass freely from mother to child, and the waste products of the child's metabolism are passed back to the mother, normally no actual interchange of blood occurs. All the blood which is in that child is produced within the child itself.

Howell's Textbook on Physiology, second edition, pages 885 and 886, "The foetal and maternal blood do not come into actual contact. They are separated from each other by the walls of the foetal blood vessels and the epithelial layers of the chorionic villae." In the third edition, page 133, of William's Practice of Obstetrics, "The foetal blood in the vessels of the chorionic villae at no time gains access to the maternal blood in the intervillous spaces being separated from one another by the double layer of chorionic epithelium."

Page 136 of the same recognized text book: "Normally there is no communication between the foetal blood and the maternal blood." From the Nurses Handbook of Obstetrics by Louise Zabriskie, R.N., fifth edition, page 75, "When the circulation of the blood begins in the embryo it remains separate and distinct from that of the mother." On page 82 of the same standard text book it sums it all up saying, "In other words, no maternal blood actually flows to the foetus, nor is there any direct foetal blood flow to the mother."

How wonderfully God prepared for the birth of His Son, Jesus Christ from the beginning. When He formed and made woman He made her so that no blood should pass directly from her to her offspring.

Adam is the head of all the races of men on earth, and Jesus had to be of the line of Adam. God, in order to produce a sinless man and yet be of Adam, had to provide a way that Jesus would have a human body derived from Adam and yet not have soul life from Adam's sinful blood.* Jesus was sinless because He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, God. Therefore, Jesus had no sin in Him,

yet was born of Mary with a body of flesh, as all mankind.

* God created soul life in the sperm that impregnated the ovum (egg) of Mary in the Fallopian tube. This created sperm carried only dominant characteristics and did what ordinarily any sperm would do to an egg.

Conception by the Holy Spirit was the only way Jesus Christ could be conceived. Mary contributed the body of Jesus and He became the seed of Adam and David according to the flesh. The Holy Spirit contributed the soul life in the blood of Jesus by way of the sperm. In His arteries and veins there was sinless blood. When Judas betrayed Jesus he confessed according to Matthew 27:4, "I have betrayed the innocent blood." Sin made the original human blood corruptible. The original sin of Adam and Eve was a blood poisoning and since we are partakers of the flesh and blood of Adam and Eve our lives are contaminated to the extent that there is no hope without a Saviour who had sinless blood; Jesus Christ purchased us with His own blood, who in Himself was deathless until He took the sin of others upon Himself and died their death.

All of this because He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of Mary. The teaching of the divine conception of our blessed Lord and Redeemer through the power of the Holy Spirit can be substantiated in fields of scientific accuracy.

Having conceived by the Holy Spirit, Mary was taken to wife by Joseph and lived with him as a wife during her pregnancy with Jesus. Joseph had intercourse with her, but Mary did not conceive by him until after the Lord Jesus Christ had been born. In Luke we read: And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, To a virgin espoused to a man [an ■r — husband] whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. Luke 1:26, 27. The word "virgin" means unmarried woman of marriageable age, while "espoused" may mean "wife," or it may mean "committed" Luke 2:5 says that Mary was Joseph's "espoused wife." The word "espoused" applies to the first day of the ten days of the wedding and continues to include the whole first year of marriage. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.

And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.

He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? Luke 1:28-34. The reason Mary had not known a man was that Joseph and Mary had not yet come together to have intercourse. The coming together was determined by the priest and elders of the city, taking into consideration the birth-dates of the bride and groom. This coming together would take place some period of time after the ten-day wedding ceremony according to the time previously set by the priest and elders. Logically we will have to admit that no father and mother would negotiate a marriage unless their son and daughter would be permitted to come together in a relatively short period of time after the ten days of wedding ceremonies. And the angel answered and said unto

her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. Luke 1:35. The word "overshadow" means to be covered: "the power of the Highest shall cover thee." In the animal kingdom we speak of a bull covering a cow, meaning the sexual relationship for conception. The same meaning is evident in human beings.

And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her. And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda. Luke 1:36-39.

We need to note in verse 39 that there is no implication Joseph did not go to the residence of Zachariah and Elisabeth.

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Matthew 1:18. The word "espoused" does not mean engaged in the sense we in the Western world think of it. Mary was Joseph's wife legally. "Before they came together" means before Joseph and Mary had their first intercourse. In the latter part of verse 20, the angel said to Joseph, "Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife." "To take unto thee" means to draw close or be intimate in sexual relationship. In verse 24, the last phrase says, "took unto him his wife," which means that Joseph had intercourse with Mary. They lived together as husband and wife, but Mary did not conceive by Joseph until after Jesus Christ was born. A pregnant woman can and does fulfill the role of a wife. The word "found" denotes finding without any action on the part of Joseph.

Joseph and Mary came together and had intercourse some time after the ten-day wedding period. It is significant that The Word says, "before they came together," and not, "before he knew her." If the word "knew" meant only intercourse, as almost everybody has usually thought of it, then it is singularly significant that it does not say "knew her" but "before they came together."

Then Joseph her husband [it says plainly that Joseph was her husband], being a just man [one desiring to obey the law], and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily [secretly]. But while he [Joseph] thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of [by] the Holy Ghost [Spirit]. Matthew 1:19, 20. The "take unto thee" literally means to take her as a wife, not just to take her and watch over her until the baby is born, pay the bills and get ready for the birth. "Take unto" means to live with her as a wife. Mary is already the wife of Joseph so the instruction to "take unto him" would mean something more; it means intercourse. It means the bringing together in that first sexual relationship. If the words in this verse said, "take unto thee, Mary, to be thy wife," it would be different. But it says, "take unto thee thy wife" — "Mary is thy wife."

How did Joseph know that Mary was pregnant? God told him or Mary did. If God could tell Mary, He could certainly tell her husband, Joseph. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying,

Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife. Matthew 1:21-24.

Joseph now carries out exactly what the angel told him. He "took unto him" simply means he had intercourse with her. And [but] knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS. Matthew 1:25. In verse 24 we are told Joseph took unto him his wife, according to what the angel had told him to do. We know that according to the Eastern custom and ceremony, Mary was already Joseph's wife because it says in verse 19 that Joseph was her husband. But even though Joseph took unto him his wife "he knew her not," which specifically has to do, not with sexual intercourse alone, but with sexual intercourse producing pregnancy. Even though Joseph had sexual relationships with Mary while she was pregnant with Jesus, Mary never conceived by Joseph until after Jesus Christ was born* (Matthew 13:55, 56).

* It is possible for a woman to be pregnant and become pregnant again during the early days of the first pregnancy. This verse contradicts this possibility even though Joseph did have intercourse with Mary she did not conceive by him until after the birth of Jesus Christ.

"Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel... had bidden him, and took unto him his wife." It was the night that they were supposed to "come together" after the ten-day wedding ceremony. If Joseph knew that Mary was with child and they had not come together, it would be a good reason why he could not take her unto himself, because the tokens of the marriage were not evident yet.* *Note Deuteronomy 22:15 and 24:1.

Joseph knew that Mary was pregnant and he would not take her unto himself. To "know" your wife is not just to have sexual intercourse with her, but to have sexual intercourse to the end of conception.

Some of the Eastern religions teach that Thomas Didymus was the twin brother of Jesus, that they looked enough alike to pass for each other, and that after Jesus Christ was crucified the apostles declared Thomas Didymus, his twin brother, as Jesus. The Word takes care of this point by saying "He took her" but "knew her not" until after Jesus Christ was born.

Matthew 1:23 says, "Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son." Some commentaries and theologians declare that Mary as a virgin brought forth the son. Mary brought forth Jesus, not as a virgin, but she was a virgin when she became pregnant according to verse 23: And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain. And Cain knew his wife; and she conceived and bare Enoch. And Adam knew his wife again [after the death of Abel, years later]; and she bare a son, and called his name Seth. Genesis 4:1, 17, 25.

If "to know" a wife is simply to have intercourse then these records are ridiculous. In Genesis 19 we read, And they called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where are the men which came in to thee this night? bring them out unto us, that we may know them. Behold now, I have two daughters which have not known man. And the firstborn said unto the younger, Our father is old, and there is

not a man in the earth to come in unto us after the manner of all the earth:

Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father. Genesis 19:5, 8, 31, 32.

These verses relate themselves specifically to the subject we are considering. In Genesis 19:5 it says, "that we may know them," meaning, homosexually, which is the wrong usage of sex, a perversion. But the men would not hearken to him: so the man took his concubine, and brought her forth unto them; and they knew her, and abused her all the night until the morning: and when the day began to spring, they let her go. Judges 19:25.

Here again we have a perverted usage of sex in the form of rape like we had homosexuality in Genesis. The first chapter of the book of Romans sets forth the greatest degradation mankind can sink into, men having relationships with men, and women with women. This is mankind reaching the lowest stage of life.

Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves. For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another, men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet. Romans 1:21, 24, 26, 27. In Genesis 19:8 it says, "I have two daughters which have not known man." The phrase "known man" again means that these daughters had not conceived. They were married and they had had intercourse.

It mentions two daughters in verse 8, and sons-in-law in verse 14, And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons in law, which married his daughters. But verse 8 says that these two daughters "had not known man." They had had intercourse but had not conceived. Thus we conclude that these two daughters are the same ones referred to in verses 31 and 36. The next reference we need to study is Genesis 24:16. And the damsel was very fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her: and she went down to the well, and filled her pitcher, and came up. Genesis 24:16. This usage of "virgin" and "known" emphasizes her purity. The word "know" again refers to not having been married to the end of having a child. In Genesis 38 we note the record of Judah who thought the woman which he went in unto was a harlot, but it was his own daughter-in-law.

What pledge [plight] shall I give thee? And she said, Thy signet, and thy bracelets, and thy staff that is in thine hand. And he gave it her, and came in unto her, and she conceived by him. And Judah acknowledged them, and said, She hath been more righteous than I; because that I gave her not to Shelah my son. And he [Judah] knew her again no more. Genesis 38:18, 26. To "come in unto" does not mean the same as "knowing" her. Judah did not "go in to her" for the purpose of "knowing" her but it turned out that way in this incident. The Word states, "He knew her again no more," meaning that Judah never had another child by this woman. That she called unto the men of her house, and spake unto them, saying, See, he hath brought in an Hebrew unto us to mock us; he came in unto me to lie with me, and I cried with a loud voice. Genesis 39:14.

"To lie with me" infers intercourse, with or without pregnancy. And she spake unto him according to these words, saying, The Hebrew servant, which thou hast brought unto us, came in unto me to mock me. Genesis 39:17. The queen accused him saying "he came in unto me," but it was not "to know," for she did not intend that type of relationship.

Now therefore kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman that hath known man [has conceived] by lying with him. But all the women children, that have not known [that have not conceived] a man by lying with him, keep alive for yourselves. Numbers 31:17, 18. The instruction, "to kill every woman that hath known man," means that at that time they were pregnant or had had children. It implies that you could lie with man without "knowing him." They had to be able to discriminate which women had or had not "known man."

If any man take a wife, and go in unto her, and hate her, And give occasions of speech against her, and bring up an evil name upon her, and say, I took this woman, and when I came to her, I found her not a maid:

Then shall the father of the damsel, and her mother, take and bring forth the tokens of the damsel's virginity unto the elders of the city in the gate. Deuteronomy 22:13-15. The primary purpose here again was not to have sexual intercourse, but to have sexual intercourse to the end of producing a child. And they found among the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead four hundred young virgins, that had known no man by lying with any male: and they brought them unto the camp to Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan. Judges 21:12.

"Four hundred young virgins, that had not known man" does not mean they had not had intercourse, but they had not had intercourse which resulted in pregnancy. This is the third time we have come across the words "had known no man by lying with any male" or words to that effect. Either these are redundant statements or they definitely fortify the truth that "known" means intercourse to the end of conception. And they rose up in the morning early, and worshipped before the Lord, and returned, and came to their house to Raman: and Elkanah knew Hannah his wife; and the Lord remembered her.

Wherefore it came to pass, when the time was come about after Hannah had conceived, that she bare a son, and called his name Samuel, saying, Because I have asked him of the Lord. I Samuel 1:19, 20. The implication is clear and plain that when "Elkanah knew Hannah his wife" she conceived. In Matthew 1:20 the angel says to Joseph "fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife." In verse 25 he "knew her not till she had brought forth her first born son." The priest and elders would know when they were supposed to come together, so the date was set to have their first intercourse. If Mary was pregnant before this time, the priest would know that the conception had taken place at the wrong time and Jesus was conceived in fornication (John 8:41) and thus demand that Jesus be taken to the Temple in his 12th year instead of the age of 13 (Luke 2:42).

Considering all the scriptures in the Bible dealing with the subject of "to know" we can only conclude that biblically "to know" means to have intercourse producing a pregnancy. A few important Scripture passages pertinent to this study: Genesis 9:4; Leviticus 17:11, 14; Acts 17:24-26; 20:28; Hebrews 9:22; Romans 3:25; 5:9; I Peter 1:19; I John 1:7; Revelation 1:5; 5:9; 7:14; 12:11.

Wierwille, V.P.-The Day Jesus Christ Died

The Day Jesus Christ Died The Month, the Day of the Month, and The Day of the Week Jesus Christ Died and Arose Again.

Another Study in Abundant Living by VICTOR PAUL WIERWILLE This book is in the public domain. For more teachings by V. P. Wierwille, E. W. Bullinger and others, go to: www.eternallyblessed.org The Scripture used throughout this study is quoted from the King James Version unless otherwise noted. Any explanatory insertions by the author within a Scripture verse are enclosed in brackets [].

"Good Friday" is commonly accepted as the day Jesus Christ was crucified.

It was a GOOD day when Jesus Christ died for our sins and our complete redemption, but it is wrong, Biblically speaking, to make Friday the day of the event. If Friday were the true day of His death then Jesus Christ rose from the dead after being in the grave but one night and one day. That Jesus would rise from the dead "the third day" is affirmed many times in the Word of God.*

*Matthew 16:21; 17:23; 20:19; 27:64. Mark 9:31; 10:34. Luke 9:22; 18:33; 24:7, 21, 46. Acts 10:40. I Corinthians 15:4.

Thus, you see, it becomes a serious matter to propagate error when we know truth. Since Jesus Christ specifically declared that He would be in the grave a complete period of three days and three nights, (Matthew 12:40) for people to continue to say that He died on Good Friday and arose on what we refer to as Easter Sunday morning, is doing great harm and damage to the integrity of God's Word and people's believing faith. The study we are now making will clarify beyond a shadow of a doubt the Biblical accuracy of the month, the day of the month and the day of the week of the death and resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The first observation we have to note with great alacrity and accuracy is that the FIRST DAY of the Feast of the Passover was always a HOLY CONVOCATION, a HIGH DAY, a SPECIAL SABBATH. "These are the feasts of the Lord, holy convocations (high day, special Sabbath),... In the first day ye shall have a holy convocation: ...in the seventh day is a holy convocation:..." (This was not the WEEKLY Sabbath, but if the Passover High Day or special Sabbath fell on the regular weekly Sabbath it would take precedence over it because it was a special Sabbath or a High Day called a Holy Convocation.) The first day of the Passover, the feast of unleavened bread, always came on the 15th day of the month of Abib, (Exodus 13:4) (Nisan, Esther 3:7; Nehemiah 2:1) which was a HOLY CONVOCATION, meaning SPECIAL Sabbath or HIGH DAY. (There is only one month of the Biblical year mentioned in the Bible, namely, Abib and it is listed as the first month of the year. The rest of the months are simply given numerically as the second, third, etc. The word Nisan replacing the name, Abib, of the first month of the year came after the Babylonian captivity and also at which time they used pagan names for the other months of the calendar year.) This HOLY CONVOCATION is called in John 19:31, "that sabbath" the "high day." This day that year was not the WEEKLY Sabbath, but the SPECIAL Sabbath which was the first day of the feast of

unleavened bread, namely, the 15th of Abib or Nisan. The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation (the day before the 15th of Abib or Nisan), that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,)...John 19:31.

Even in the King James Version the translators put the words "... (for that sabbath day was an high day,)..." in parenthesis so that no one would mistake it as the weekly Sabbath. The mistaking of this SPECIAL HIGH DAY Sabbath for the WEEKLY Sabbath and the failure to remember that the Jewish days started with sunset, has caused most of our misunderstanding of The Word regarding this important event.

All the synoptic Gospel records concur regarding the resurrection.

He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. Matthew 28:6. And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him. Mark 16:6.

He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee. Luke 24:6. In essence with careful reading you will note that all the Gospel writers give the following truth: that Jesus Christ HAD RISEN by the first day of the week (which we refer to as Sunday) before anyone came to the tomb early in the morning.

Matthew 12:40 and I Corinthians 15:4 pin point the time of the resurrection with a mathematical exactness and scientific precision. According to Matthew the record states, For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's (fishes) belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The record in I Corinthians states, And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: This pin points the time and truth of the resurrection for He would be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth, in the tomb, and in the sepulchre, yet would rise the third day.

All Biblical scholars know that according to Jewish reckoning a part of a day may be figured as a full day; but, how can anyone get "three days and three nights" out of Friday, Friday Night, Saturday, Saturday Night, and Sunday Morning? The most anyone can squeeze out of that type of reckoning is three days and two nights. So there is either a mistake in the Word of God, or the mistake is with our reasoning and understanding. "Three days" maybe an idiom in reckoning time, but when it mentions in connection with the days, "three nights," it becomes a literal truth, three complete days of twenty-four hours. The legal requirements necessitated that no one could be pronounced officially dead unless he had been dead a minimum of 72 hours. Jesus Christ fulfilled this law also, as He did every law of God. The error has been, in part, due to not properly understanding or reckoning time.

We reckon a day starting at 12 Midnight. The Hebrews reckoned their day from SUNSET, therefore, the night always preceded the daylight hours.

Jesus was crucified on the day of preparation, John 19:31, which was the day preceding the feast of unleavened bread. The Passover was eaten immediately after sunset on the 15th of Abib or Nisan; thus, Jesus was crucified on the 14th of Nisan. He died at the ninth hour, Jewish reckoning, which corresponds to the 3 P.M. hour of the day in our reckoning of time. Matthew 27:45ff. Mark 15:33ff; Luke 23:44ff.

What day of the week did Jesus Christ die? Our Lord spoke of being in the GRAVE three days and three nights, and do not make the error of reckoning the "in the grave" from the time of His death at 3:00 P.M. on the 14th of Nisan, the Day of Preparation. Jesus Christ was buried sometime after His death at 3:00 P.M., yet before sunset on the 14th of Nisan. At sunset the next day, the 15th of Abib or Nisan, the Passover Night began. For Jesus Christ to fulfill the Scripture to be in the grave three days and three nights and still RISE on the third day, He had to be buried on the 14th of Nisan before sunset which would correspond to the day of the week we refer to as Wednesday. Then, from before sunset Wednesday to before sunset Thursday, the 15th of Nisan, would equal one period of 24 hours or a night and a day. Friday, the 16th of Nisan, before sunset would equal the second day. Saturday (the weekly Sabbath) the 17th of Nisan, before sunset, would be the completion of the three days and three nights. Jesus Christ said He would be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth and still rise on the third day, so He arose on the 17th day of Nisan before sunset to make it on the "third day." After sunset of that day, would begin the 18th of Nisan which would be the 4th day, beginning the first day of the week. No one knows the exact time He was placed in the grave, but it was between 3 P.M. and sunset of the Day of Preparation. It is remarkable that the Biblical date is so specific. He was in the grave three days and three nights and yet arose the third day. As we have seen, the day of His crucifixion and burial corresponds to our Wednesday. We see then that Jesus' body was in the grave one night, our Wednesday Night, the Special Sabbath Day or High Day having begun at sunset. This Sabbath daylight hours, our Thursday of the week, makes one day of Jesus' being in the grave. Our Thursday before sunset to our Friday before sunset makes the second night and day. Our Friday before sunset to our Saturday before sunset makes the third night and day of the entombment of Jesus. The time of three days and three nights being literally fulfilled, our Lord Jesus Christ arose from the dead before sunset on our Saturday. As we said earlier in this research, Jesus Christ was no longer in the tomb when Mary Magdalene came the next morning very early "...when it was yet dark..." (John 20:1).

Thus according to the Scripture the resurrection of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ took place on the third day. The month, Abib or Nisan, the day of the month, the Day of Preparation — the 14th of Abib or Nisan, and the day of the week, our Wednesday, as the time of His death and burial, are clearly set forth being fixed at both the beginning and the end, thus, placing it most assuredly and certainly. Only one whose personal knowledge is more sure than the revealed knowledge of the Word of God would dare to deny the accuracy of The Word.

In this research presentation I might just present for clarification the record in Luke 24:21 where we read of two disciples on the way to Emmaus, the first day of the week, saying to their risen Lord, "But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to day is the third day since these things were done." Perhaps even old English usage would cause us to understand the word "since" to mean that this is technically and officially the 4th day, because on this the 4th day, three days have gone by. But Moffatt's translation has it very clearly and accurately presented when he translates it, "and that is three days ago." The Aramaic has it as follows, "And lo, three days have passed since all these things." Our research ministry, in pointing out the great error that has commonly been taught and believed by Christians, namely, that Good Friday was the day of Christ's death, does not mean to propose an observance of Good Wednesday. According to Colossians 2:16,17 we are informed that we are not to be respectors of

holy days or new moons or sabbath days which only are a shadow of the things to come. The reality is to be in the body of Christ, born from above by God's Spirit, walking on His Word. The Word of God is the Will of God and it means what it says and says what it means regarding Jesus Christ's death and resurrection.

Wierwille, V.P.-The Effectiveness of Prayer

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PRAYER

Another Study in Abundant Living by VICTOR PAUL WIERWILLE This book is in the public domain. For more teachings by V. P. Wierwille, E. W. Bullinger and others, go to: www.eternallyblessed.org The Scripture used throughout this study is quoted from the King James Version unless otherwise noted. Any explanatory insertions by the author within a Scripture verse are enclosed in brackets []. A number of years ago, I developed what I call a "Mountaintop Check-book." It has ten blank checks in it. I want to preface this study by speaking of these ten checks which contain knowledge that will bless any individual. On each check it says "pay to the order of." On that line you can write your name. There is a place for the date above it. And all ten of these checks are already signed by Jesus Christ, who is "the same yesterday, today and forever." These checks symbolize the payment you can demand on ten promises made to you in God's Word.

Check number one demands payment on the promise given in Mark 11:24: "Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall [absolutely] have them."

Check number two demands payment on the promise recorded in John 11:22: "But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee." The third check is from Matthew 18:19: "...if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven."

Check number four, John 14:13: "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son."

Check number five, John 14:14: "If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it."

Check number six, John 15:16: "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you...that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you."

Check number seven, John 16:23: "...Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you."

Check number eight, I John 3:22: "And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight."

Check number nine is from I John 5:14: "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us." And finally, check number ten, I John 5:15: "And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him."

These are what I call ten "blank checks" in the Word of God. They promise "whatsoever" or "anything," and they are all guaranteed by God's wonderful Son, Jesus Christ.

Many years ago, I also picked up the following poem about God's bank, speaking of a checking account, which is now a part of this "Mountaintop Checkbook." The bank had closed; my earthly store had vanished from my hand I felt that there was no sadder one than I in all the land. My washerwoman, too, had lost Her little mite with mine, And she was singing as she hung the clothes upon the line.

'How can you be so gay?' I asked;

'Your loss don't you regret?'

'Yes, ma'm, but what's the use to fret?'

God's bank ain't busted yet!

I felt my burden lighter grow; her faith I seemed to share; In prayer I went to God's great throne, and laid my troubles there. The sun burst from behind the clouds, in golden splendor set;

I thanked God for her simple words:

'God's bank ain't busted yet!' And now I draw rich dividends, more than my hands can hold Of faith and love and hope and trust and peace of mind untold.

I thank the Giver of it all, but still I can't forget My washerwoman's simple words:

'God's bank ain't busted yet!'

Oh, weary ones upon life's road, when everything seems drear, And losses loom on every hand, and skies seem not too clear;

Throw back your shoulders, lift your head, and cease to chafe and fret, Your dividend will be declared:

'God's bank ain't busted yet!'

Few people understand the bond that prayer can be for God's people. To appreciate its depth, we first must recognize the greatness of God's promises, only ten of which are named on the above checks. The Word of God is still the same today as it was the first time God ever had a man to speak it or write it. One way to demand payment on God's promises is by prayer. Now, we know that there are two types of prayer. I Corinthians 14:15 instructs us about these two methods.

I Corinthians 14:15:

...I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the [my] understanding also....

It is this prayer with understanding which is that bond of prayer that we now want to study. First of all, God cares about our attitude when we speak to Him. In Matthew 6 Christ gives instruction about this.

Matthew 6:5: And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men....

Jesus called some people who prayed "hypocrites" because they wanted to be seen—they wanted to be recognized for their interest in God and for the many hours they spent in prayer. You know, "I

spent four hours in the prayer room today." Thus, they appear to be very devout, holy, righteous and, no doubt, in good standing with God.

Matthew 6:5 and 6:

...Verily I say unto you, They have their reward [namely, nothing] .But thou, when thou prayest enter into thy closet.... That means we should keep prayer within our hearts, our lives. Our prayers are just between each individual and his heavenly Father. In the Orient, the closet was where great, personal treasures were kept.

Matthew 6:6 and 7:

...shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly [the texts omit "openly"]. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions....

We are not to pray to be conspicuous. And we don't just sit around and read our prayer out of a book or from a piece of paper, saying the same prayers over and over and over again.

Matthew 6:7:

...use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking [for repeating the same prayers].

God doesn't suddenly wake up and hear a prayer the twelfth time it's repeated. He's not asleep or distracted. He's listening even before you're praying.

Matthew 6:8: Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him. So it's not a question of God's knowing our needs; it's a question of our getting ourselves attuned and lined up with the will of God. It is a question of my getting my believing in line with the Word so God can open the floodgates of heaven and pour into my life that which I have need of.

There are a number of prayers in the Word of God. Perhaps the best known prayer is called the "Lord's Prayer" which continues the record here in Matthew 6. First, let's read the corresponding record in Luke to find out to whom this instruction on prayer is given.

Luke 11:2: And he [Jesus] said unto them [his disciples], When ye [his disciples] pray.... This informs us that the Lord's Prayer is addressed to the apostles and the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ during his earthly ministry. It was not given to Gentiles or to the Christian Church which began on Pentecost. The Lord's Prayer was the prayer for Israel. It is called the Lord's Prayer because the Lord Jesus Christ taught it to his disciples who were Israelites.

Matthew 6:9-13:

After this manner therefore pray ye [you of Israel]: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts [our sins], as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not [let us not enter] into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen. This is the Lord's Prayer for Israel. You and I are not Israel because the Body of believers, the Body of the Church, is called out from both Jew and Gentile and is made a

new creation. This new Body took form on Pentecost following Christ's ascension. Nevertheless, the Lord's Prayer of Matthew 6 is a wonderful prayer; and if we were studying about Israel now, I would spend a lot of time analyzing that prayer for Israel. I just wanted you to see that Christ believed in and taught his followers to pray. But I want to move on to a prayer given in Acts 4, a record occurring after the day of Pentecost. This account tells about Peter and John, who had been imprisoned for bringing deliverance to a man who was over forty years old. For this, the religious leaders captured Peter and John, beat them, threatened them, and then let them return to their own company.

Acts 4:23 and 24: And being let go, they [Peter and John] went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them. And when they [the believers present] heard that, they lifted up their voice to God [and here is the prayer] with one accord [unity of purpose].... This "one accord" is one of the great keys of prayer. We see the principle in Matthew 18:19: "...if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father...." The word "agree" is "symphonize." If two are in harmony, symphonize, they shall see results. In a symphony all the instruments are blended. Otherwise, it wouldn't be a symphony, but rather discord, cacophony. The believers present as recorded in Acts 4:24 lifted up their voice to God in one symphony, in one unity of mind, as if one person.

Acts 4:24-29:

...and [they] said, Lord, thou art God, which [who] hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth against thy holy child [or servant] Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done [with God's knowledge]. And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word.

What a prayer! Peter and John had gotten into trouble with the religious authorities in the first place because of their boldness in speaking God's Word. It was the boldness of holding forth God's Word as they were out on the front line of Christian experience that stirred the ire of the religious leaders of that time. Yet, when these two apostles went to this first recorded prayer meeting after the day of Pentecost, the believers asked God for boldness to do more of the same which got them into trouble in the first place: "...that with all boldness they may speak thy word"—to speak God's Word and nothing but that Word. And what would God's Word do for those who heard and believed?

Acts 4:30: By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child [or servant] Jesus.

God's Word heals and it makes possible the performing of signs and wonders in the name and by the power of Jesus Christ by raising people's expectations in God's power.

Acts 4:31: And when they [the gathered believers] had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost [filled to overflowing with the holy spirit], and they spake the word of God with boldness. The believers received an immediate

answer to their prayer which they had made in unison of purpose, the bond of prayer among believers: (1) they were all filled with the holy spirit, and (2) they spoke the Word of God with boldness. These two steps working hand in hand bring about "Word Over the World": to be born again and filled with the holy spirit, and then to speak the Word with all boldness. What an answer to the believers' prayer!

Now I want you to observe a great prayer of the Church of the Body found in Ephesians 1.

Ephesians 1:16 and 17:

[I, Paul] Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him.

What a wonderful prayer. Paul is not praying, "Lord, give us a new automobile, a new business, give us more farms." Remember the request of Solomon in the Old Testament when God made him king of Israel after the death of his father, King David? Solomon asked God for wisdom. Paul asks that God through His Son Jesus Christ may give us the spirit of wisdom, that is, spiritual wisdom and revelation knowledge. What for?

Ephesians 1:18: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know [not question, not doubt] what is the hope of his calling, and [that ye may know] what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.

God's got an inheritance in you and me. Well, how are we spending His inheritance? How are we utilizing His inheritance in us? God has a stake in each of our lives. We are not our own; we have been purchased with the price of God's only begotten Son. God gave us His only begotten Son who laid down his life—who purchased us. We are not our own. No man can run off and say, "Well, now look, I am an adult. I can do as I please." That's contradictory to God's Word. You have been redeemed with the precious blood of God's only begotten Son. You and I have to so live and so speak and so walk and so hold forth God's Word that God's inheritance in us produces fruit. Our lives should produce interest on His investments, so to speak.

Most people's prayers are, "Oh, Lord, please take care of Maggie Muggins" or "Oh, Lord, I need more money" or "Oh, Lord, I need this." Wrong. You need your understanding enlightened, wisdom, knowledge of God and His Word.

Ephesians 1:19: And [that ye may know] what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe....

Those four verses, Ephesians 1:16-19, are the entire prayer. This great prayer asks that we may know, not question, not doubt, but to get to know "....what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward...who believe...."

There is another prayer in II Thessalonians 2 which I want to point out. I stand in utter amazement with great thanksgiving before our heavenly Father for the greatness of this prayer found in II Thessalonians, the book that tells of the return of Christ. In the context of this prayer in II Thessalonians, we are informed about the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to gather his people. Then we read about the antichrist and his appearance upon the earth. Next is revealed information

concerning Christ's coming with his saints to the earth. And in one verse of scripture before the prayer, God tells us what man's basic responsibility is since God carried out everything else. There are numerous verses before this explaining what God did; then in one verse He tells us what we are to do.

II Thessalonians 2:15:

Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.

That's all we have to do. We have to stand fast. And that word "stand fast" is not the defensive type of standing fast. It is the positive action of standing or staying continuously. I have a picture in my mind of a person having both feet set in hardened cement: an entire room covered with cement and he is standing in the middle of it with dried cement up to his ankles. That is "standing fast." It is not a defensive circumstance. It is just being rooted and grounded, as Ephesians says. A tree cannot reach out until it is rooted and grounded. The more it is rooted, the more it is grounded; consequently the more its limbs, its branches, its twigs, and its leaves can reach out. That is this "stand fast." After everything God has done in Christ Jesus, all He asks us to do is stand fast—be greater rooted and more grounded.

I don't have to die for you; Christ died for you. I don't have to bear your sin; he bore your sin. Christ Jesus is the complete savior who is able to save to the uttermost, and all we have to do is stand fast. Isn't that beautiful?

II Thessalonians 2:15 Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions....

There were Rabbinical traditions, there were heretical traditions, and there are true Biblical traditions. Jesus told the rabbi that the Rabbinical traditions were outdated. The heretical traditions were out too. But true traditions are in. The usage of "traditions" here in the Word is "delivery of truth." "...And hold the delivery of truth...." That would be a sound and excellent translation. To hold forth is outreach. No individual will reach out with stability unless he stands fast—it is as a tree's limbs and branches which will not extend very broadly unless the tree stands fast. That's why he says, "...hold [fast] the traditions [the truth you have been taught]...." It is interesting that this "hold fast" literally means to hold forth the truth, not half-heartedly, but "with exerted strength." We must put forth effort in the outreach of the truth.

II Thessalonians 2:15 ...stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.

It is by these two methods that the whole Word of God has moved: either by the epistle that is written or by God's Word that is spoken. The Word of God when it is spoken has the same effect as the Word of God when it is written. If you read John 3:16, it is no more God's Word than if I just spoke it to you. The Word of God which we know has either come to us because we heard someone speak it or we read it.

Following that great fifteenth verse of admonition, comes the prayer I want to get to.

II Thessalonians 2:16:

Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.

These two verses contain the great prayer of II Thessalonians. After all the oral and written truth we have been taught about the return of Christ to gather his Body, about his coming to the earth with the saints, about the antichrist and everything else—after all these truths, comes this prayer.

"Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself...." The word "himself" is the word autos, which is the emphatic word in the phrase. To put the emphasis accurately we would read it, "Now himself, our Lord Jesus Christ, and God, even our Father...." God is our Father through His wonderful Son Jesus Christ. For when you are born again, when you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus Christ, then it is Christ in you, the hope of glory. It is God in Christ in you. That is the new birth. God is our Father because He created within us His seed, which is Christ in us, the hope of glory. That is how He is our Father.

God, our Father, "which loved us and hath given us"—the words "hath given" are "gave." He loved us and He gave. All love is giving. When people talk about loving you, it's got to be giving. "God so loved that he gave his only begotten Son...."

Here it is again: "...Even our Father, which [who] hath loved us...." What else did He give us besides the new birth, besides the Christ in you, the hope of glory? Everlasting consolation. God so loved us that He gave us everlasting consolation from the moment we were born again. Consolation is comfort. Consolation means encouragement, entreating, or comfort alongside of Himself. That is the literal meaning of that word. God so loved that He gave us everlasting comfort, everlasting encouragement alongside of Himself. What a fantastic prayer! What a God that we should have encouragement set right alongside of Himself. We've got quite a Father. Not only have we been given everlasting consolation right now, but something else: "...and good hope...." Not only do we have everlasting consolation, but we also have been given the good hope. The good hope of what? The good hope of the return of the Lord Jesus Christ when he comes to gather his Church. All of this God gave: His love, His everlasting consolation, and His good hope. He did all of this through grace or by way of grace. Grace is divine favor, perpendicular, God to man. It is unmerited. Anything a person earns is not grace. God so loved that He gave. Salvation is of grace, not of works. We can't earn salvation. And this prayer of benediction, a prayer of blessing, which is the last prayer in II Thessalonians, tells us that all that has been given is ours through grace, unmerited favor.

II Thessalonians 2:17:

Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work. To comfort is "to lovingly and tenderly embrace to the end that it produces an effect." "Comfort your hearts...." The heart is the seat of the personal life, that which makes you, you. It is the innermost part of your being. Remember Romans 10:9 and 10, "...confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." These two verses tell us that a person who talks about God's Word a lot isn't necessarily saved. You've got to believe in your heart. That heart is not the physical pulsator. It is the innermost part of your being, the very fiber of your being. Here in II Thessalonians it says, "Comfort your hearts [the innermost part of your

being]..." What a tremendous prayer, a prayer that you and I can go forth with comforted hearts in the innermost part of our beings. With God as my Father and Jesus Christ, His Son, as my savior, why should I be upset, distraught within, when He has given comfort to the innermost part of my being? The only reason I might feel distraught and uncomforted is that I refuse to believe in my mind the truth of what God told me He did for me.

"Comfort your hearts, and stablish you...." That word "stablish" is terrific. It means to strengthen to the end that we do not vacillate, plus to increase our ability and capacity to maturity. "Comfort your hearts, and stablish you"—strengthen you that you do not vacillate, but rather, mature. To vacillate means one day we are hot for God and the next day we are cold as an ice cube. When we stand fast here, we can't waver. God can strengthen us, stablish us, so that we don't move. And having done all, we must stand. Don't vacillate on God's Word, people. "...[God can] strengthen you to the end that you do not vacillate." That's a prayer we ought to be praying—that we don't vacillate. "...And [God can] increase your ability and your capacity to its fullness" which brings us to the truth of Ephesians 1: "that the eyes of your understanding may be enlightened...." See how all those prayers mesh together. The second verse of Paul's benediction of II Thessalonians 2 says, "Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work." The Greek word for "word" is logos. The word for "work" is "deed." It is not just a matter of not vacillating on one segment, a sentence, or a statement of the Word. It tells us never to vacillate on the whole logos, the whole Word of God from Genesis 1:1 to Revelation 22:21. God can comfort our hearts, and we can establish ourselves in every good word and deed.

God would not only have us pray in the spirit, but He would have us to pray with our understanding. But when we pray with the understanding, prayers have to be in alignment and harmony with the Word of God that is addressed to us in order to be answered. We cannot pray the Lord's Prayer today, which is addressed to Israel, and expect God to fulfill it. However, we can pray prayers such as the ones in Ephesians 1 and II Thessalonians 2. God is still doing mighty things through prayer. He is still fulfilling His promise that whatever things we desire when we pray and believe that we shall receive them, we shall have them. Speak to the Father and know that your request has been answered.

Wierwille, V.P.-The First Century Church in the Twentieth

The First Century Church in the Twentieth

Another Study in Abundant Living by VICTOR PAUL WIERWILLE This book is in the public domain. For more teachings by V. P. Wierwille, E. W. Bullinger and others, go to: www.eternallyblessed.org The Scripture used throughout this study is quoted from the King James Version unless otherwise noted. Any explanatory insertions by the author within a Scripture verse are enclosed in brackets []. The First Century Church had tremendous power because Christians believed that when they were saved they received the power from the Holy Spirit and thus could operate the nine manifestations of the spirit: speaking in tongues, interpretation of tongues, prophecy, word of knowledge, word of wisdom, discerning of spirits, faith, miracles and healing.

I do not understand why men who say they love The Word do not study it. It is because men do not know The Word that we have different opinions. People come into The Way Fellowship loaded with opinions. Then I read the Word of God and they say, "Well, that is a new religion." No, it is not. It is the Word of God. The Word of God is the Will of God and The Word means what it says and says what it means. Sincerity is no guarantee for truth. Men may be as sincere as the devil himself and also be as wrong as he is. Truth is truth, and where can we go but to the Word of God if we are going to have truth? When I say, "Go back to the Word of God," I do not mean read a verse out of the context of Scripture, but, I mean that the verse must stand various tests. When we have finally put all these tests to The Word then we can again say that we have "rightly divided" it. Truth can not have two opinions. Truth is truth and there can be no opinions regarding it. There may be dozens of reactions to truth, but truth is still truth. The society in which we live, basically contradicts the accuracy of God's Word. When we as believers come to The Word to find God's Will, we must align ourselves with God's wonderful Word. The first century Church, as the record in the Book of Acts indicates, made tremendous progress. It moved with an anointing the like of which we have not seen in manifestation. This should not be, because God has not changed. When some people talk about God pouring out a special anointing in these last days, it simply is not true. The Word says that He sent His gift on the Day of Pentecost. It is here. Men's hearts failing them because of fear have in some instances turned their believing to God and thus they wrongly speak of a "special outpouring."

According to Acts Chapter 4 Peter and John had just performed the miracle of healing on the man who was more than forty years of age, for which they were imprisoned and "charged not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus." And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them. And when they heard that, (the chief priests and elders that had done this unto them and then had reported back to their people) they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a

truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done. And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word. Acts 4:23-30.

Isn't that a wonderful prayer? This is the first listed prayer of the early Church. The apostles had been incarcerated, humiliated, hurt and threatened for their teaching and for the way in which they ministered healing. Yet, when Peter and John returned to the group of believers, instead of asking for a vacation, instead of asking for an easier place to serve, they prayed, "Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word." Sense knowledge wise what would we have expected them to pray? "We had a big fight, Lord, we have been out here wrestling for you, teaching The Word, but now it is time we take it a little easier. If you don't mind, we'll go fishing for a week." But that is not what they prayed. They prayed to God saying, "...grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness we may speak thy word." Speaking The Word got them in trouble to begin with. The early Church always preached The Word and nothing but The Word; no private opinions. They spoke The Word with boldness and when they spoke The Word they got into trouble. It is not a question of whether we get into trouble; the question is, are we teaching The Word? When we really present the Word of God and walk in the light of the Word of God, we are going to get persecution here and there. This should not deter us. We should simply say, "Well, if Satan is trying so hard to obstruct this thing, it must be worth something, because if it wasn't worth anything Satan wouldn't obstruct it. He fights it because we are battling him."

I want you to notice that they prayed, "...grant unto thy servants,..." They were sons of God "vertically;" but, "horizontally" they ministered the Word of God as servants. And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost (pneuma hagion), and they spake the word of God with boldness." Acts 4:31. The early Church presented the Word of God. And the multitude (The text is "every one of them") of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul:... Acts 4:32a.

Isn't that something! Think of this in the early Church! Think of it in The Way Ministry! Every one born again of God's Spirit, and filled with the power from the Holy Spirit, being of one heart and of one soul. Isn't that wonderful! This is what gave the early Church power. They had The Word and they agreed on The Word.

...neither said any of them that aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. Acts 4:32b.

There are three words used in the critical Greek texts for the word "common." The word that is used here is "they had all things common," to the end that in their believing and in their action they were commonly united. None of the things (the plurality) which he possessed really were his own, but that the things (the plurality) that he possessed were common as far as need was concerned. When the early Church, which was of one heart and of one soul, began to move they had all the things (the plurality) that they possessed common among them, which meant that without asking for it, if they had a need, the plurality would be used to meet that need. And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace (divine favor) was upon them all. Acts 4:33.

Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors (plural) of lands (plural) or houses (plural) sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need. Acts 4:34,35.

Notice it does not say "greed." In II Thessalonians 3:10 it indicates that the lazy man who does not work is not supposed to eat. For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. II Thessalonians 3:10.

Perhaps we should apply this law of God in the United States today. This early Church did not give hand-outs, like a government aid program, haphazardly and irrespectively, just because somebody was sitting around twiddling his thumbs.

There were people in the Church who had more than their need of food, clothing, shelter, etc., therefore, they sold their plurality, that which they did not need, to help someone else in the Church who had a need. In the Christian Church not everybody can teach, or be an apostle; some have to be farmers, others business men or workers in a shop or factory, etc. Suppose there is a young couple in the Church dedicated to the Lord, who love His Word and want to start farming, that is a need. The Church helps that couple to get started.

Note the words "as many as were possessors" in verse 34 carefully. When they were born again, and if they were possessors of lands (plural), houses (plural), what did they do? They sold their plurality. They sold that which they did not need. Plurality is in the GREED category, not NEED. If we want the Church to move under the anointing of the power from the Holy Spirit as the early Church moved we must be obedient to the Word of God and conquer our greed.

God never asks a man at any place in the Bible to sell or dispose of that which he needs for his livelihood. They sold that which they did not need, their plurality, and brought the money to the apostles who were in charge of the distribution according to the need of the individual believer.

I know what you are going to say, "Well, who would you trust with it?" Who did they trust with it? The apostles! If you as a Christian do not have believing faith in the person or the group or organization to use your gift properly, you ought to give it somewhere else. That is right, somewhere and to someone in whom you do have believing faith, who will use it as it is supposed to be used. The apostles distributed it. The Way ministry, or any ministry for that matter if it is to be blessed and to be a blessing, must stay on The Word and live accordingly.

But, do we know the principles behind The Way ministry which will make it an outreaching power? The ministry of the early Church did not ask the believers to sell that which they NEEDED. A man has a farm as his livelihood. This is his "bread and butter." The farm is where he, his wife and children derive their income for their physical and material well being. God would not ask this farmer to sell his farm and give the money to missions etc. But if he owned a "second" farm, God would expect him to get rid of it and keep only what he would need. Need will vary. One man's need may be more than another. Every person must determine his NEED within himself, according to the renewing of his own mind, after he is born again. And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need. Acts 4:35. And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus, Having land, (singular) sold it, and brought the

money, and laid it at the apostles' feet. Acts 4:36, 37.

People have said that I do not know what I am talking about, because I just finished saying they sold their plurality only. Yet, here is a man who sold his land, singular. Why? He was a Levite. According to the Old Testament a Levite should not own any property. Joseph whose name was Barnabas from Cyprus, understanding and believing the teaching, was converted and saved. Therefore he sold his "singular" property, which he never should have owned, and brought the money thereof and laid it at the apostles' feet. (People laid gifts at the feet when the gift was of man's making, but when the gift was fruit or flowers they considered it God's creation and, therefore, would place it in the hand.) But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, (singular) And kept back part of the price, (that it brought) his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet. Acts 5:1,2. His wife knew what was going on. She was right in on the deal.

What is developing in this whole biblical situation? First of all, when believers were possessors in the early Church, they sold their plurality, that which they did not NEED. Secondly, there was a Levite, who had no business owning property, born again of God's Spirit, sold his singular property. Then Ananias and Sapphira saw what was going on, and wanting to impress everybody in the early Church with their dedication sold their single possession, something God did not ask them to do, and endeavored to make the apostles believe they were bringing in all the money for distribution by the apostles. Yet, they only "brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet." But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? Acts 5:3.

How do you think Peter knew that Ananias and his wife had arranged to "pull" this deal? God revealed this to Peter by word of knowledge, a revelation manifestation. I can picture the day that Ananias walked into the place where Peter was, and then laid the money "on the line" saying, "Peter, we sold our possession and we are so grateful for the privilege of giving it ALL to you for distribution among the more needy ones." By revelation Peter knew it was a lie so he said, "Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost,..."

While it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men but unto God. Acts 5:4.

It was Ananias' only possession, singular, he had a perfect right to it. Then what was the sin in it?

After Ananias sold it, he could have used that money and bought himself another farm, another property, or used it in any way he saw fit. What happened? Peter said, "Why did you bring part?" They said they brought it all when they only brought part and Peter pointed out to them that they were lying to God, not to men. This teaches exactly that the singular, the things we need, God never expects us to give away. And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: (He just dropped dead) and great fear (reverence, awe,) came on all them that heard these things. And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried him out, and buried him. And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in. And Peter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? And she said, "Yea, for so much. Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee

out. Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost: and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying her forth, buried her by her husband. And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things. And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people;... Acts 5:5-12.

Now do you see how the early Church operated? The believers sold their plurality and gave it to the Church and the Church used the money for the care of their needs.

I believe that Christian parents should not leave their children any appreciable amount of material things in their last will and testament. If you and I raise our children as the Bible says, in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and we supply their need; get them through school and started in their vocations, from there on they should have the ability to make their own way. If they then should fail to have sufficient believing and working ability to make a success of what they are doing, it is only a trick of Satan. Isn't God just as big for your child as He was for you? The more material things we leave to the children the more we smother them. In the early Church they kept what they needed and then they had everything in common as a need was presented. This method helped to move the early Church. This is the Word of God regarding our Christian responsibility and obligation regarding material things.

Tithing was under the law. The Church is not under the law but grace. Will grace do less than law? Certainly not! Therefore, when it comes to giving on what is called a donation basis, we never give as little as we can get away with, we give everything beyond our need. If we desire the Twentieth Century Church to move with power as did the First Century Church, every believer must get rid of his plurality and use the proceeds thereof for the need of the believer.

Wierwille, V.P.-The Genealogy of Jesus Christ

The Genealogy of Jesus Christ

Another Study in Abundant Living by VICTOR PAUL WIERWILLE This book is in the public domain. For more teachings by V. P. Wierwille, E. W. Bullinger and others, go to: www.eternallyblessed.org The Scripture used throughout this study is quoted from the King James Version unless otherwise noted. Any explanatory insertions by the author within a Scripture verse are enclosed in brackets []. The record of the birth of Christ is clearly given in the Word of God. Matthew chapter 1, verse 1 says, The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. The word "generation" is "offspring." Jesus was the offspring of David, the son of Abraham, the royal line of Mary. Was Abraham a Jew? No. He wasn't a Hebrew either. He was Gentile. The Hebrews and Judeans came much later. The record in Matthew gives the genealogy of believers preceding Mary. The legality of the claims for Jesus Christ are confirmed in Matthew because this Gospel presents the genealogy of Jesus Christ through Mary. She must be the direct descendant of the House of David, or Christ's claims fail on legal grounds. If Matthew 1:1 is true then its record must of necessity be that of Mary, who was the only human parent of Jesus Christ. At the close of the genealogical record Matthew gives the following explanation:

Matthew 1:22,23:

Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet [Isaiah], saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child...

Matthew very carefully records the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of Mary. Matthew cannot be giving the genealogy of Joseph, the husband of Mary, which theologians have maintained throughout the years, when this Gospel states so clearly that Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit (verse 20). The translation in Matthew 1:16 giving Joseph as the husband of Mary is an error, not on the part of the original writer, Matthew, but the subsequent translators. When we examine the Matthew record in detail it is evident that God placed a safeguard to enable us to avoid such a misunderstanding. Matthew numbered the genealogical lineage of Jesus Christ and divided it into three groups of 14 generations. This is the safeguard.

Matthew 1:17: So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations.

Counting carefully in the record of the Gospel of Matthew, we note that the first two groupings each contain fourteen generations, but the third group lists only thirteen generations because the King James Version states that Joseph was the husband of Mary. Furthermore, Luke 3:23 declares the father of Joseph to be Heli, while Matthew 1:16 declares the father of Joseph to be Jacob. How do you reconcile the apparent discrepancy? The two Josephs certainly cannot be the same if the Word of God is the will of God and means what it says and says what it means.

Comparing the records as given by Matthew and Luke, it is only logical and reasonable that they must be speaking of two different Josephs. The error in Matthew is due to the mistranslation of the Greek word andra as "husband," instead of "father." In Matthew 1:16 the Greek word andra is the accusative singular of the root word aner. Aner is a male person of full age and stature as opposed to a child or female.

I Corinthians 13:11: When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man [aner], I put away childish things.

Acts 1:16:

Men [aner] and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus.

I Corinthians 16:13:

Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men [aner], be strong.

I Peter 3:1:

Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands [aner]; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives.

Acts 17:5: But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows [aner] of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people.

Acts 7:26: And the next day he shewed himself unto them as they strove, and would have set them at one again, saying, Sirs [aner], ye are brethren; why do ye wrong one to another?

Luke 24:19: And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a [aner] prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people.

Acts 3:14: But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a [aner] murderer to be granted unto you.

Aner is used of an adult male person in various relations where the context must determine its true meaning. As indicated in the above verses the usage of aner in its relationship is as follows:

1. Man 4. Sir 2. Husband 5. A man as a prophet 3. Fellow 6. A man as a murderer

There is therefore no basis for translating aner "husband" in Matthew 1:16, and every reason from the genealogy to translate it "father." This is further authenticated from the Aramaic. Aner in Matthew 1:16 is gbra in Aramaic, meaning "mighty man." The Aramaic word for "husband" is b[ila], used in Matthew 1:19, "Joseph the husband [b[ila]] of Mary...."

Biblical and oriental customs further verify this truth. The father who is the head of the household is the "mighty man." The son, even though a husband, is always under subjection to the father, the "mighty man," who is the superior over the whole household, until he, the father, dies. Then the son, who is a husband and father, becomes the head of the household, the "mighty man." The son would never be referred to as the head of the household, the "mighty man," while his father is

alive. Thus according to Biblical and oriental customs, a husband, even though he may be a husband and father, can never be the "mighty man" while his father is living.

Matthew 1:16 should read, "And Jacob begat Joseph, the father of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ." This translation makes the Word of God in Matthew and Luke fit perfectly, and deprives every Bible critic of every argument relating to the subject.

It is certainly acceptable and easily understood that Mary could have a father having the same name as her husband, namely, Joseph. Working the Matthew record in detail from genealogy, the Greek word usage, the Aramaic word usage, and Biblical and oriental customs, we discover from all four conclusively that it must be translated "Joseph the father of Mary."

Luke 3:23 becomes a ringing reality in the light of the foregone conclusion: And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was the son* of Heli.

* The King James Version failed to include huios, the son, from the original text; a very grave oversight or deliberate omission. The purpose in setting Luke's genealogy of Joseph as the supposed father of Jesus as reckoned by Judean laws, was simply to establish Jesus, whom Joseph subsequently adopted in every legal way as his son, with complete legal standing in the House of David.

Nothing is so dynamically thrilling as the inherent accuracy of God's wonderful, matchless Word. How truly wonderful it is to know that the Bible is the inspired Word of God and, as originally given when holy men of God recorded it as moved by the Holy Spirit, is absolute truth. The Book of the Generation of Jesus Christ. Matthew 1:1-17. (The ancestral line of Mary the mother of Jesus.) Abraham to David (14 generations) 1. Abraham8. Aminadab 2. Isaac9. Naasson 3. Jacob10. Salmon 4. Judas11. Booz 5. Phares12. Obed 6. Esrom13. Jesse 7. Aram14. David (the King) David to Carrying away to Babylon (14 generations) 1. Solomon8. Joatham 2. Roboam9. Achaz 3. Abia10. Ezekias 4. Asa11. Manasses 5. Josaphat12. Amon 6. Joram13. Josias 7. Ozias14. Jechonias Carrying away to Babylon until Christ (14 generations) 1. Salathiel (born after8. Eliud carrying away)9. Eleazar 2. Zorobabel10. Matthan 2. Abiud11. Jacob 4. Eliakim12. Joseph (father 5. Azorof Mary) 6. Sadoc13. Mary 7. Achim14. Jesus The Genealogy of Joseph, the husband of Mary, Luke 3:23-38. (The ancestral line of Joseph – the legal male side.) God26. Esrom 1. Adam27. Aram 2. Seth28. Aminadab 3. Enos29. Naasson 4. Cainan30. Salmon 5. Maleleel31. Booz 6. Jared32. Obed 7. Enoch33. Jesse 8. Mathusala34. David (the King) 9. Lamech35. Nathan 10. Noe36. Mattatha 11. Sem37. Menan 12. Arphaxad38. Melea 13. Cainan39. Eliakim 14. Sala40. Jonan 15. Heber41. Joseph 16. Phalec42. Juda 17. Ragau43. Simeon 18. Saruch44. Levi 19. Nachor45. Matthat 20. Thara46. Jorim 21. Abraham47. Eliezer 22. Isaac48. Jose 23. Jacob49. Er 24. Juda50. Elmodam 25. Phares51. Cosam 52. Addi65. Esli 53. Melchi66. Naum 54. Neri67. Amos 55. Salathiel68. Mattathias 56. Zorobabel69. Joseph 57. Rhesa70. Janna 58. Joanna71. Melchi 59. Juda72. Levi 60. Joseph73. Matthat 61. Semei74. Heli (father of 62. MattathiasJoseph) 63. Maath75. Joseph (husband 64. Naggeof Mary)

Wierwille, V.P.-The Lords Brethren and Sons of God

The Lord's Brethren and Sons of God

Another Study in Abundant Living by VICTOR PAUL WIERWILLE This book is in the public domain. For more teachings by V. P. Wierwille, E. W. Bullinger and others, go to: www.eternallyblessed.org The Scripture used throughout this study is quoted from the King James Version unless otherwise noted. Any explanatory insertions by the author within a Scripture verse are enclosed in brackets [].

Before we study the minute accuracy of the Word of God regarding the Lord's Brethren I want to give you the historical background to the question. By 300 A.D. there were two great and influential schools in Western Christianity. By Western Christianity I mean that entire area West of the river Euphrates which was under Roman rulership. One school was in Antioch in Asia Minor where Aramaic was the language spoken, while the other school was in Alexandria, Egypt, where Greek was the language.

Nestorius was a graduate of the school at Antioch and he was appointed chaplain to the emperor in Constantinople. Nestorius with all Christendom of the East (East of the River Euphrates) who had the original Scriptures in Aramaic, believed that Mary was the mother of Jesus our Lord and not the mother of God.

Cyril, Bishop of Alexandria, proposed a new doctrine which appealed to pagans very much, namely, that Mary was the mother of God. The reason that this appealed to the pagans who became Christian is because their gods had mothers, fathers, sisters and some of them had wives and even concubines. This proposed doctrine that Mary was the mother of God became such a controversy in the Roman Empire because basically there was a political controversy as to which city, Constantinople or Alexandria, was the most prominent and influential. The Alexandrian Bishop argued that since no Apostle (of the original twelve) had ever gone to Constantinople, but that Philip had come to Alexandria, therefore, Alexandria should be considered the more authentic in matters dealing with spiritual truth.

Cyril, Bishop of Alexandria, was a pagan who became a Christian. In his background he had Isis, Osiris and Horus plus other gods.

Nestorius considered Cyril's doctrine that Mary was the mother of God, a dangerous heresy and the quarrel that ensued split the whole empire.

Because of this controversy the emperor called a general council of all bishops to meet in Ephesus in 431 A.D. The European bishops came by sea, they came by ships from Greece, Rome, Spain and Alexandria. The Eastern bishops, however, had to come by land and the roads were difficult so they arrived late for the meeting. Thus, before Nestorius' group of bishops arrived the other Bishops of the West had met and condemned Nestorius' position. So the Western empire was split.

I want you to remember that this controversy took place in the Roman empire, including everything West of the river Euphrates, not East of the Euphrates in the Persian empire. The Christians in Persia and those in Syria, Asia Minor, Antioch and Jerusalem continued to believe with Nestorius, even after the general council in 431 at Ephesus, that Mary was the mother of the Lord but not the mother of God. This controversy continued in the Eastern Roman empire until Justinian the emperor issued an ultimatum stating that any Christian who does not accept the virgin Mary as a goddess and the mother of God should be killed. Thousands of Christians were killed by order of the emperor and more thousands escaped to Iran where the Persian government was hospitable and gave them sanctuary. This controversy has never been reconciled even to this day and the position of Cyril, the Alexandrian bishop, was carried over into the Western World via the Roman Catholic Church for which this doctrinal teaching of Mary, the mother of God, was most fitting because of the pagan gods that were so influential in the Rome area. The matter of the Lord's brethren would never have been questioned in the Occident had it not been for the corruption which crept into Christian churches via the Roman Catholic teaching which challenged the authenticity of the Sacred Scripture records, namely, of elevating Mary from the position of "Handmaid of the Lord" Luke 1:38 to the exalted THEOTOKOS, mother of God. The Roman Catholic Church's position of authority is so divergent, from the Protestants, that an agreement is impossible. In the Roman Catholic faith the highest authority for its adherents is the Pope, next the tradition of the church and finally The Bible. For Protestants the only rule of faith and practice is the Bible. So each person must decide for himself if The Bible is the Word of God supreme, over and beyond all traditions and the voice of any man or not. If the Bible is the Word of God then it must of necessity be the will of God, and truth undeniable regarding the brethren of the Lord also.

It is the Egyptian pagan deity Isis who had a divine son known as Horus, IT was propounded, that as Isis was still a virgin after Horus was born so Mary was also a virgin after Jesus was born. Furthermore, it was advocated as a doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church that Mary had no children other than Jesus our Lord and that His brothers and sisters were the children of Joseph by a former wife or that they were the Lord's cousins, children of Mary the wife of Cleophas. That Joseph was an old man or married previously before he was married to Mary finds not one "iota" of substantiation in the sacred Scriptures. Had Joseph had older sons, by a former marriage, then the Lord Jesus' legal rights to the throne of David would have been invalidated. The Roman Catholic Prelate, Jerome, advocated and propounded the "cousin" theory. In reference to this theory, and please note it was only a theory, the word "brother" is used in The Bible in the following ways only:

1. As children of the same parent or parents.
2. As descents of the same common stock, (Abraham as forefather: Acts 7:23,25.) 3. As fellow-man. Matthew 7:3-5; 18 :15.
4. As spiritual children. Acts 9:17; Romans 8:29; Hebrews 2:11. In the Bible passages where "The Lord's Brethren" are referred to, Matthew 12:46,47; 13:55; Mark 3:31; Luke 8:19; John 7:3,5,10; Acts 1:14; I Corinthians 9:5; and Galatians 1:19, only number one above can be applied. Had these brothers and sisters been "cousins" only, the Greek word used would have been sungenes as it is used in Mark 6:4; Luke 1:36,58; 2:44; 14:12; 21:16; John 18:26; Acts 10:24; and Romans 9:3; 16:7,11,21, where it is translated "kinsman", "kinsfolk" or "kin" with the exception of Luke

1:36,58 where it is translated "cousin".

According to Matthew 13:55 our Lord Jesus Christ had four brothers, half brothers as we would call them—same mother but different father. Jesus Christ was the Son of God, by way of Mary, but conceived by The Holy Spirit. James, Joses, Simon and Judas. Furthermore, He had at least three sisters, "His sisters are they not all with us?" Had there been just two sisters the word used would have been both instead of all. The Lord Jesus was Mary's "firstborn" (Matthew 1:25; Luke 2:7), not "only born" or only "begotten". The word "firstborn" automatically implies "second born" or "later born" children. He was as the Scriptures clearly state the "firstborn" of Mary but the "only begotten of the Father". The word "first born" which in the Greek is PROTOKOS the meaning of which can be easily ascertained is used only in the above two passages and in Romans 8:29; Colossians 1:15,18; Hebrews 1:6; 11:28; and 12:23 and Revelation 1:5. Had Jesus Christ been Mary's only son the Greek word they would have used would have been MONOGENES which occurs in Luke 7:12; 8:42; 9:38; John 1:14,18; 3:16,18; I John 4:9; and Hebrews 11:17.

Thus when all the Biblical data is in hand we are left with a plain answer. The Word of God is the will of God, meaning what it says and saying what it means. Regarding the Lord's brethren we know that He had four — James, Joses, Simon and Judas and that He had at least three sisters, whose names are not given. Beyond this we know nothing but that which would be speculation or theorizing and that is not good enough when dealing with spiritual matters of eternal weight and glory.

SONS OF GOD and DAUGHTERS OF MEN The sons of God in Genesis 6 form the difficulty and are referred to by leading theologians and clergymen as being angels. The "daughters of men" being the daughters of human beings living upon the earth. Out of that cohabitation between angels and humans came the race of giants who are called in the Hebrew "Nephilim".

It is always an error on the part of man when he takes the Scripture and endeavours to read into it what he thinks because there is a very simple principle about the Word of God that no man need to be ignorant regarding the Bible. The Word of God was given by holy men of God who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost and no Scripture is of any private interpretation. When a person is cursed of God he is no longer in the fellowship of God. When a man is cursed of God he is an unbeliever, he is unrighteous before God, he is outside of the fold. In I John 3:12 it says that Cain was of the seed of the devil. That is why his offering was not accepted and he was accursed of God.

Look at Genesis 4:14, "Behold thou hast driven me (Cain talking) out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid;..." Cain was an unbeliever, one who was absolutely unrighteous. That is why he says "...and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth;..." Look at the 16th verse, "And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord,..." Thus Cain represents all the unbelievers in the Bible. (I am speaking now of Old Testament times.) He represents those who are God denying, God rejecting, God hating; those who, when they could, killed the men of God. In other words, Cain represents unsaved sinful man. On the other hand, Seth was the accepted of God. It says in Genesis 4:26, "And to Seth, to him also there was born a son; and he called his name Enos: then began men to call upon the name of the Lord. " Seth and his son Enos were God fearing men. Abel was righteous before God, but Abel had been killed by Cain, so the only line left in the world was the Cain line, the unbelievers, the devil's children by nature and life

until Seth was born.

Seth and Enos represent the believers, the called of God, the righteous ones. If you will follow through in your Bible the 5th chapter of Genesis, you will find that to Enos there was born a man by the name of Cainan and then to Cainan was born a man by the name of Mahalaleel. The next in line was a man by the name of Jared. These are all righteous men, all believers. Then there was born according to 5:24, a man by the name of Enoch, "And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him." What the principle of God was in taking him, nobody knows because the Bible doesn't tell. But we know that Enoch was a great man of God. He walked with God. To Enoch was born Methuselah, the oldest man that ever lived, and to Methuselah was born a man by the name of Lamech, and to Lamech was born a man by the name of Noah. It says in the 8th verse of the 6th chapter, "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." But before that scripture comes that first section of the 8th chapter, where it says, "And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose." The sons of God came out of the Seth line, the righteous ones, those whose offerings were accepted. The daughters of men came out of the line of Cain, the unbelievers, the God rejecting. So when people began to multiply upon the face of the earth; the sons and the daughters of Cain and the sons and the daughters of Seth (Enos, Cainan, Jared, Enoch, etc.), the sons of God (believers) got married to the daughters of men (unbelievers). There were no angels involved in it at all. One group was righteous before God because they believed God. The other group was unrighteous because they did not believe God. Cain and his line represent the unbelievers and Seth and his line represent the believers. The Seth descendants are called the sons of God, who got married to the Cain descendants who are called the daughters of men.

There are two ways of having a son in the world even today: You can have a son by adoption or you can have a son by birth. A son by adoption is one whom you adopt into your family. A son by birth is one who has your seed in him. In the Old Testament no one was a son of God with seed in him, because Christ Jesus, the Bible says in the New Testament, was the "firstborn among many brethren". To be born again is to have the seed of Christ born within you, the nature of God, eternal life spirit born within. In the Old Testament the sons of God refers to those whom God adopted. He adopted them, they didn't have any seed in them. God in His mercy and His grace saw their believing faith. "...Noah found grace in the sight of God." Noah found divine favor because he believed God. Turn to Romans 9:4, "Who are the 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;" To whom pertaineth the adoption? — to the Israelites. Turn to Hebrews the 11th chapter and begin reading with the 33rd verse. This chapter gives the believers blood line in the Old Testament. The word "faith" in Hebrews 11 must be changed to "believing". The type of "faith" in this 11th chapter was believing action. They believed the promise of God. They believed in God and to that extent they had so called, "faith". "Who through 'believing' subdued kingdoms, wrought righteous-ness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to fight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were

stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through 'believing' received not the promise:"

All these men, because of what they believed, accomplished these things we read about in the Bible, but they received not the promise. They could not receive Jesus Christ for Jesus Christ had not yet been given. They looked forward to the cross. Jesus said of David, "He saw my day". Even though David lived hundreds of years before Jesus came. He saw "the day", to the extent that he believed in the coming of the Holy One. So as they believed in what God promised they were accounted righteous. They were adopted as sons. God adopted them.

Now you and I as we look back and look at the cross we are made righteous, but our righteousness is not in the form of an adoption, it is in the form of the birth of the seed of Christ within. There is the difference. Now if you will take your Bibles and turn to Exodus 4:22 I will share some of these with you from the Word of God. "And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord, Israel is my son, even my firstborn:" Israel represents the believers in the Old Testament days. "...Israel", Jacob "is my son,..." The people represent the believers line — the sons of God. All unbelievers are represented by the daughters of men. Deuteronomy 14:1, 2, "Ye are the children of the Lord your God:... 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." Here he is talking to the children of Israel, the believers, those who represent Him and His will. Turn to Deuteronomy 32:8, 9, "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." God adopted them and that is why they are called "the sons of God" in the Old Testament. Every Israelite who believed in God, was adopted of Him.

Turn to II Samuel 7:14, talking about Solomon, God says, "I will be his father, and he shall be my son". Again, you all know, Solomon was in the blood line of believers. You will find this same reference in I Chronicles 17:13; 22:10.

Turn to Jeremiah 31:9, "They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them: I will cause them to walk on the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble: for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn." God was a father to Israel by adoption. That is why all the believers of the Old Testament represent the "sons of God".

If you will turn to Numbers the 33rd chapter you will find what God says His people are to do. Verses 50 to 55, "And the Lord spake unto Moses in the plains of Moab by Jordan near Jericho, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye are passed over Jordan into the land of Canaan; Then ye shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you, and destroy all their pictures, and destroy all their molten images, and quite pluck down all their high places: And ye shall dispossess the inhabitants of the land, and dwell therein: for I have given you the land to possess it. And ye shall divide the land by lot for an inheritance among your families: and to the more ye shall give the more inheritance, and to the fewer ye shall give the less inheritance: every man's inheritance shall be in the place where his lot falleth; according to the tribes of your fathers ye shall inherit." Why did he tell them to cast down their high idols? Why did

he tell them to do those things? Because they represented the unbelievers, and God's people were a peculiar people. They were the righteous ones and they were supposed to get rid of the things that belonged to the unbeliever. Verse 55, "But if ye will not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you; then it shall come to pass, that those which ye let remain of them shall be pricks in your eyes, and thorns in your sides, and shall vex you in the land wherein ye dwell".

If the believers would let any of the unbelieving people remain in the land, their believing sons would get married to daughters of the unbelievers. Thus they would have the same story over again; the sons of God marrying the daughters of men. The unbelievers would again be "pricks in their eyes and thorns in their sides". But you know, those people were just like so many people today, they wouldn't believe a thing God said and they got married to unbelievers any way. That is exactly what caused the down fall of the Children of Israel. But a few remained loyal like in the days of Noah — Noah and his wife and their three sons and their wives — eight of them. That is all that were saved. All the rest were unbelievers. Sometimes you may think you are hoeing a hard row, you are the only one who stands faithful. Think of the days of Noah! God did such an unusual thing — He told him to build a ship on dry land, there wasn't even a little old ripple in the creek next to the place. He told Noah to build a big old boat 562 feet and 6 inches long, around 98 feet and 6 inches wide and 56 feet and 3 inches high. How would you have felt to build a big ship like that on dry ground, far away from a body of water. What do you think the neighbors said? They laughed at Noah and everything he did, but Noah was obedient unto the Lord and he built the ship according to God's Word. Noah found grace in God's sight because he believed the Word and acted on it. There wasn't any sense in acting on it either, but Noah did it anyways. There are a lot of things in this Bible that do not make sense. But if you act on the Word, God will prove to you that the Word is true. But you see, people just don't act upon the Word of God. Noah was accounted righteous because He acted on the Word of God. It is believing in the Word of God that makes you righteous—believing the Word of God, acting on it.

Just a few more scriptures, II Corinthians 6:17, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you". I used to wonder where that Scripture passage fit. Then I began working on this message, and putting all these scriptures together. I found from the Old Testament that God said that His people, Israel, to whom He was a father, were a peculiar people unto him. They were a separated people unto Him. So in the New Testament we have discovered that those who are God's people are a separate people. You who are born again are a peculiar people to Him, because He has called you. In the Old Testament they were adopted as sons, but in the New Testament it is seed born within. It is eternal life, the nature of God that is born within and we are then sons of God, not by adoption, but by birth. And being sons by birth, we have a right to what the Father has promised us, even as the Old Testament saints looking forward to the Cross believed God and had a right to what God had promised them. In Galatians 4:7 it says, "Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." Now if the believers in the Old Testament days did what Hebrews 11 says they did, then you being a son of God, being born of His Spirit having eternal life, may certainly not do less than an adopted son did.

I John 3:2, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is". Now we are the sons of God by way of the spiritual birth, which is Christ in us the hope of glory. As God's

children we are the Lord's brethren, for He was the first born of many brethren (Romans 8:29) and therefore we are "heirs" of God and "joint-heirs" with Christ. (Romans 8:17).

Wierwille, V.P.-The Love Way

THE LOVE WAY

Another Study in Abundant Living by VICTOR PAUL WIERWILLE This book is in the public domain. For more teachings by V. P. Wierwille, E. W. Bullinger and others, go to: www.eternallyblessed.org The Scripture used throughout this study is quoted from the King James Version unless otherwise noted.

I want to teach in the field of love for a moment, because so little is understood and known about this great field which came specifically into concretion and reality with the new birth on the day of Pentecost. This new birth on the day of Pentecost brought a new kind of love, which had been made available to us, however, by Jesus Christ. As we understand this new kind of love, we come to the great realization that there really never was any love before the day of Pentecost, that the love that came with the day of Pentecost is a spiritual thing on the inside, and it only comes into concretion, in manifestation, as we put it on in our mind and manifest it forth.

There are three words, three Greek words, translated "love." It's the word *agapa*, the word *phile*, and the word *eros*. *Eros* is nothing more than just the kind of love that one animal would have for another, basically speaking. The word *phile* love is the kind of love where one person loves another because one person scratches your back you're gonna scratch the other fellow's back, so forth. It's the word from which we got the English word, for instance, Philadelphia, brotherly love. The other is the word *agapa*. *Agapa* is translated in the King James "charity" as well as "love." The word "charity" and "love" translation are way too weak for this word *agapa*. The word *agapa* literally means that it becomes yours when you're born again of God's spirit, when that eternal life which is Christ in you comes in at the time of the new birth. He brings with him many things, this new birth has many things, among which it has *agapa*, which is love of God. Then we have the love of God spiritually, but how do I get it into manifestation, into concretion? This I do by putting this love of God which I have received spiritually into my mind, and manifest it forth by my walk. This is why every place where the word *agapa*, or "charity," is used, it should be translated "the love of God in the renewed mind in manifestation."

Now with those basic truths set before you, again let me say that this new kind of love, the *agapa* love, was brought to the world by Jesus Christ. The thing that people have called "love" has been basically nothing more than sexual attraction, or brotherly love where you scratch my back, I scratch your back. If you do not do right to me, I'm not going to do right to you. But we'll get along good together in a brotherly fashion because it'll be profitable for me, it'll be profitable for you, therefore we just have this kind of love.

Both of these, the *phile* love and the sexual love of the *eros*, are relatively insignificant and never build a certainty within life or within the depth of the soul of a man which is lasting. This thing which we have called love has been basically nothing but sex attraction. You see, this sex attraction which we refer to as love is hardly any higher than that seen in the animal world which is nothing

but errors. But Jesus Christ brought a new thing. This word translated "charity" or "love" in our Bible should always be translated "the love of God in the renewed mind in manifestation." When we are born again we are born in love. God is love, and so the new birth is the impartation of the nature of the Father which is love. Then by birth spiritually we become children of love. This family to which you and I belong then is a love family because we are born into this family.

Paul speaking in Romans, chapter five, and I'll just read this to you, Romans chapter five, listen to this from the New Testament, Romans 5:5, and I just flip to it, "...And hope maketh not ashamed; because," listen, "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the holy ghost which is given unto us." The love of God, the agapa, is shed abroad in our hearts, within the spiritual part of man, by God who gave this unto us. So you see, the love of God has flooded us within, it's our spirit, it's on the inside. You don't feel, smell, taste, or touch spirit, but the Word says it's in there because when Christ came he brought it with him. This love nature which we now have spiritually is the great law of the new creation in Christ Jesus.

Remember in John 13, in verses 34 and 35, Jesus had declared, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love (agapa) one another; even as I have loved (agapa) you, that ye also love (agapa) one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love (agapa) one another." This love was to be the stamp, the brand if you please, that would differentiate the believer from the people of the world. The Apostle Paul declared, "...I bear, or I have branded on my body, the marks of the Lord Jesus." He meant that he had the scars and wounds that had been given to him due to persecutions, but the believer, the born-again believer, bears the marks, the brands, of the love of Christ upon his spirit. In Romans, chapter 12, verses 5 to 6, it says that every man when he comes into the family of God has the measure of faith given to him. This measure of faith is spiritual faith. Now in order to manifest this in the believing world, in the senses realm in the believing world, he must renew his mind. He has it spiritually but it comes into concretion into manifestation, when he believes with his mind what he has spiritually. He has to cultivate faith, spiritual faith, to make it manifest into the senses realm and develop it. Likewise, the same thing is true regarding this new kind of love which is given unto us when we are born into the family of God. That measure of love is given unto you and it comes with the new birth. This is the love nature. This love nature spiritually must be developed as you develop your faith life and manifest it forth by believing into the senses world. As you give love freedom to grow and act, it naturally will gain in ascendancy in your whole life, in your whole being. This love of God which is in the renewed mind in manifestation must be fed by the Word of God and then it will express itself in action as we operate it. Remember according to Matthew 4:4 Jesus declared, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." You see, the real man of whom I am speaking is your spirit. If you're born again of God's spirit that is the real man. Your spiritual hunger and your spirit needs are just as great as your mental or your physical needs. Your spirit must have the privilege of meditating in the Word. You must learn to feed upon this Word of God as Jeremiah did when he said he ate it, he ate the Word (Jeremiah 15:16).

You feed and exercise this new love that has come into you by practicing love. The exercise makes it strong, just as exercise makes your body strong. Colossians 3:16 says, "Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly...", gaining the ascendancy over all of your faculties. This agapa love, this love life, makes you gentle, makes you Jesus Christ-like, it makes you strong and vigorous like the Master. It makes you absolutely fearless in your walk with the Lord. You know, some people

have imprisoned love, and I recently heard of a father that locked up his boy in a room and kept him a prisoner until that child was nearly dead. How many have done that same thing to love? Instead of letting love have its perfect sway and control we have limited it. The greatest thing in the world today is the manifestation of the love of God in the renewed mind. To the end that we are born again of God's spirit and have renewed our mind on what we have in Christ Jesus, and we manifest forth this love of God, we really become new men and women in concretion in the senses realm. In the great chapter of I Corinthians 13, in the first verse of that chapter, we read: "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and that's tremendous, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal." The word "charity" is the word agapa. There are three words used, three different Greek words used, and translated "love." One is the word agapa, the other is phile and the other is eros. Both phile and eros were in the world practiced and operated before the day of Pentecost, and still are, but these basically are nothing more than sex love or sex attraction, or animal love, that's all. But the word agapa has a new connotation. It signifies and means the love of God in the renewed mind in manifestation. And though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, which you do when you speak in tongues, but if I do not have the love of God in the renewed mind in manifestation, there's nothing wrong with the speaking in tongues of men and of angels, but I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.

We have forgotten that love will make a man a success. It will put him over where nothing else will make him a victor. Love never fails, it is the Master's rule. It will lead a man out of selfishness, out of weakness and failure, into the very strength and ability of Christ. There is no force in the world that it cannot dominate. It makes us wanted, it makes us a blessing, it enables us to take the place of Jesus Christ here upon earth.

I have sometimes wondered what would happen if a man really desired to go all the way out to the limit of love. Some have neglected it, acting as though it did not exist, even in those who are born again of God's spirit. Utterly ignoring its very existence, and yet, somehow or other they want the Father's help in time of need. Ladies and gentlemen, love must be enthroned in our lives in manifestation. It must govern our lives. You know, Paul's friends had challenged him one day, saying that he was off his rocker. They accused him of being beside himself. But he wasn't. Why? Because the love of God had so set him on fire that he was an extension, a manifestation in the senses realm, of the man who goes all out with the love of Christ. His very being was saturated with the passion that sent Jesus to the cross.

You know, you can understand I Corinthians 10:24 where the Word of God declares, "Let no man seek his own, but each his neighbor's good." When love, the love of God in the renewed mind in manifestation, is at white heat, selfishness stops reigning. Selfishness, my friend, is a deadly poison. It is poison to the spirit, it is poison to the Body of Christ, it causes practically all the diseases in the human body. It is a strange thing how selfishness has never been feared by man. He fears it in another man, but he never fears it within himself. Selfishness is the cause of all the wars that have come, and of all the strikes, the battle between labor and capital, the strifes in politics, and in every other realm. The epistle of I John, chapter four, verse 16, was one of the most difficult verses of scripture that I ever had to face up to. It didn't seem to me that I could ever master it or understand it or bring it into concretion. This is what it says: "And we know and have believed the love which God has..." In our case, God is love, and he that abideth in love abideth in

God and God abideth in him. Here are some great truths. First I have come to believe in love. I believe that the love of God in the renewed mind in manifestation is the best there is to allow to govern my life. I have come to believe that the best method of ruling a home, a business, a government, is the love of God in the renewed mind. There are very, very few people who ever believe in love. They believe in force, they believe in intrigue, they believe in self and sense-knowledge judgments and arguments, but do they believe in love?

If in your heart, innermost part of your being manifested in the renewed mind, you believe that love is the way and that it is the best way, then you must act it. Not only is it best, but it is the only way. It is the way that you are going to walk regardless of how anyone else walks. You're going to walk the love way, if you renew your mind, and when you do, you discover that you are living in the love realm. Your home is in love. And whenever you step out of love, you step into darkness and unhappiness. And so you must learn to stay put, to live in the love way. You have found that living in love is actually living in the highest and sweetest fellowship with the Father, it is actually living with Him. He has come into your body to make it His home. And in I John 4:11, which is the verse following 16 which I read a moment ago, it says, "Herein is love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment, because as He is, even so are we in this world." Isn't that wonderful? What does that mean? It means that love is perfect in itself. But it also means that this love of God, the agapa, which is ours at the time of the new birth, must now be put on in our minds, and we have to walk in this newness of love, and it must gain the ascendancy in our life. When this love of God in the renewed mind becomes the rule of my life, I grow up into it until my life is dominated, it is ruled, it is governed by it, and that gives me a quiet fearlessness in His presence as well as in everybody else's.

You see, God is love and I am a love child if I'm born again by the spirit of God, and as I renew my mind I walk in the realm of love. I think in the terms of love. I act according to the rule of love, and my whole life is pitched to the key of love. Then you can understand that there is no fear in love. There is fear in everything else, but the love of God in the renewed mind in manifestation has no fear. And when you're out of love, everybody says and does things that they are basically afraid to face up to. You think things outside of love that you wouldn't want to become public property. But this perfect love in the renewed mind casts out all fear, because fear has punishment. You know, my friend, the Word of God says he that feareth is not made perfect in love. He's made perfect spiritually on the inside, this is a work of God, but not on the outside because this man has not put on the mind of Christ, he has not renewed his mind and manifested forth the greatness of this wonderful love of God. So you see, you can understand that if we walk the love way, and the love life, we will say nothing, we will do nothing, we will resolutely refuse to think anything outside of the love of God. Can't you see what a fearless life that would be? No matter what happens, you know you're walking in love. When you speak you know it is love. Ephesians 4:15 illustrates this great truth where we read, "But speaking truth in love, may grow up in all things unto him, who is the head, even Christ." Speaking out of love is speaking out of tune and off key. It breaks the harmony. It jars the ears of men and women who are walking and endeavoring to walk in love. So our whole life swings into the orbit of this new kind of love, this new creation life, when we manifest forth the greatness of the love of God which we have spiritually, in our walk, by renewing our minds and manifesting it forth as the love of God in the renewed mind in manifestation. This is why Christian workers, when they are born again of God's spirit, manifest forth the greatness of the

power of God, it just melts the men and women with whom they walk and talk and to whom they minister. What soul winners we are, what mighty men and women of God we are, when we manifest forth the greatness of the love of God in the renewed mind! This is the great walk, the great privilege of being so dynamically different and powerful in this our day and in our time. When a person is born again of God's spirit he receives the new nature. But he receives this spiritually and it doesn't do a thing for him in concretion, in manifestation in the senses realm, until he renews his mind and walks on that which he receives spiritually. A man may be born again of God's spirit, have the love of Christ within him, but you never see this love of Christ in manifestation unless he renews his mind. This is why the word "charity" in I Corinthians 13 should always be translated "the love of God in the renewed mind in manifestation". This new kind of love which is given to us when we're born again of God's spirit, if we renew our minds and put on the mind of Christ and manifest it, is so big that selfishness is utterly eliminated. You see, in the new creation we were given a new self, a new love. A self born of God, a self like Jesus Christ himself, that he had in his earth walk. We are not seeking our own. They cannot provoke us and we refuse to take any account of evil. We never rejoice in unrighteousness if we manifest the love of God in the renewed mind. We only rejoice in the truth, in the things that are real. The fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh verse of I Corinthians 13 are singly and dynamically significant. Charity, verse four, which is the love of God in the renewed mind in manifestation, suffereth long, and is kind. The love of God in the renewed mind envieth not itself. The love of God in the renewed mind vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, does not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoices not in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Verse eight says, the love of God in the renewed mind never fails. Isn't that tremendous?

You see, one of the translators translates the seventh verse, which really startled me, he translates it "covereth all things." The King James reads "beareth all things." Young translates it "covering closely," and someone else translated it "cover over with silence," I like that. Covers over with silence. What are they talking about? Oh, it's scandal for instance. It's something that has happened that is unseemly. Something that if it were known would injure perhaps a lot of people, might cause a division in the body of believers, might break up a family. What do we do if we have the love of God in the renewed mind in manifestation? We cover it closely with silence, we never mention it, and the thing dies there and no one is injured. Isn't that wonderful? It believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. And then the great climax, the love of God never faileth. We should remember this. The agapa, this new kind of love which is in our spirits which we have renewed our minds to in manifestation, this new kind of love never goes into bankruptcy. The red flag is never seen flying over its dwelling. Here is where love holds sway and rules. It's not just "queen for a day," it is queen for a lifetime because this has gained the ascendancy. In I John 4:4 we read, "Ye are of love, my little children, and greater is love in you than hatred and bitterness that is in the world." When I read this and I studied it and I worked it so it became manifested in the renewed mind, my spiritual life and my natural life in the senses realm entered a spiritual dynamic. I began to take a diagnosis of my heart life, I began to investigate love's realities and possibilities. I saw that I Corinthians 13:1-4 was a sort of resume of the failure of men walking with the renewed mind. "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels," which is the highest manifestation of the achievement of the born-again spirit of God as a man renews his mind and speaks in tongues, but he writes across it, "if I have not love (the love of God in the renewed mind in manifestation), I am

become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal." Nothing wrong with speaking by the spirit, speaking in tongues, speaking with tongues of men or of angels, nothing wrong with it. But it's me. I am become a sounding brass or a clanging or tinkling cymbal. My linguistic ability spiritually is but a noise, a jangling, unharmonious discord. Then if I have all knowledge and know all mysteries, and if I had all faith, believing, so that I could remove mountains, it would be tremendous, but if I have not love, nothing wrong with the manifestations of the spirit, but something wrong with me. I am nothing. And if I had all knowledge, so great that the universities would honor me with all the doctor degrees, and he says it softly and tenderly when he says, but have not love, I am nothing. This is God's clinic, ladies and gentlemen. This is the most heart searching thing that the human individual will ever have to face; He can get born again of God's spirit in a moment of time, in the twinkling of an eye, for as it declares in Romans 10:9-10, "If thou wilt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." The new birth occurs in a moment of time, the twinkling of an eye. But what about the walk? What about the manifestation of the love of God in the renewed mind in the senses realm? This is a lifetime. This is a walk of victory, this is a walk of glory. This is something you have to discipline yourself to, day after day and week after week. You see, this most heart searching thing that the human has to ever face is how to walk in love once he has the love of Christ. I simply stand amazed in the presence of the integrity and accuracy of God's Word here in I Corinthians 13. I can see now that scholasticism, culture, everything that modern facilities have given us, travel, music, art, all are of no value unless love, this new kind of love, the love of God in the renewed mind in manifestation, dominates my life. When at the end of the list, if that is all I have, without love, I go to my Maker empty handed. I am a failure.

You see, the new creation, the new birth in manifestation, is the only solution. This new creation, created in love, created in Christ Jesus, is the workmanship of God in Christ. God made the first man out of the dust of the earth. The second man He made out of Himself. The first man is of the earth, earthy. The last man that He made was created out of righteousness and true holiness and reality, out of the very nature of the Father Himself. You see, when this new creature, this Christ in you, is born in there, this is the greatest thing in the world. Why? Because it is God's nature imparted to us. It is God working in us. It is God doing that which is well-pleasing unto Himself. It is God building Himself within us, until His spirit within us dominates our sense-knowledge reason faculties, and brings them into harmony with the knowledge of the reality of His Word. Then when I manifest forth the greatness of the love of God in the renewed mind, it makes us more than well-pleasing. It gives to us love's creative genius that fills the very heart of the Father with joy. We become so Christ-like that the vine and the branches illustrate our union. We become a mirror in which the Father sees Himself, a Jesus Christ self. The old religion of fighting self and crucifying self is medieval. It doesn't belong to Christianity. It belongs to the religions of the East. We see man through the new eyes of the love of God in Christ Jesus.

It's this new kind of love that gives to us genuine eyesight. We can only see the good things. Remember that translation we mentioned about love, that love "beareth all things?" It literally covers closely or covers over with silence all that is unseemly. There is no scandal. There are no old sores to uncover.

Love can see only God in us and God can only see Himself in us. We see men's overloads in order that we may bear them. We see men's infirmities that we may share them with them. We see their weaknesses in order that we may give unto them our strength. We see their poverty in order that we may give unto them our abundance. We become Jesus Christ men and women. As a battery is charged with electricity, we are charged with the love of God in the renewed mind in manifestation. We stay in His presence feeding on the Word until our whole being is saturated with Him. Then we go out and we minister to people. We are lights, like luminaries, blazing a path in life where sin has no part and the misery that comes from sin can never enter. Now you understand what it means to walk in love, what it means to be in Christ. This is the nature of the Father, and this is that life which I speak of as the life which is more than abundant.

Wierwille, V.P.-The Word Speaks

The Word Speaks

Another Study in Abundant Living by VICTOR PAUL WIERWILLE This book is in the public domain. For more teachings by V. P. Wierwille, E. W. Bullinger and others, go to: www.eternallyblessed.org The Scripture used throughout this study is quoted from the King James Version unless otherwise noted. The usage of a word or words traced through different periods of time indicate many changes. Words like money are in constant use, and like money, words not only differ in value at different times between one country and another, but the value is changed at different times in the same country. So it is with words, therefore, the greatest possible care must be maintained when dealing with a word or "Words which the Holy Spirit teaches."

Many times we err in rightly dividing the Word of Truth because we fail in our understanding of the word or words in their usage at the time and place where they are employed in the Word. Thus the Holy Spirit's usage of a particular word at a particular place and time must be clearly understood if the interpretation of that given word, words, or section of The Word, is to be rightly divided.

Returning from a class session of Power for Abundant Living I said to one of our bible students, "Few of us realize the importance or greatness of The Word. We are so prone to magnify experience and minimize The Word." After all, experiences vary and fluctuate; experiences come and go, but it is the Word of God that liveth and abideth forever. Far too much value and weight is attached to individual experiences, sometimes even to the extent of an absolute contradiction of The Word of God. Fruit in a Christian's life is no guarantee of the right dividing of The Word, for there are many who are not Christians yet producing fruit. Therefore, there must be an explanation.

One of God's great works is His Word, which was incarnate in Jesus Christ, therefore, it must almost be a crime for anyone to magnify experience beyond The Word. The Word of God is composed of "Words which the Holy Spirit teaches," not, which man teaches. I Corinthians 2:13.

Recently a clergyman in my office said of his wife who died last fall, "She is absent from the body but present with the Lord." I asked myself how dare we pick out certain words from a verse and take it out of its context and frame these words into a thought pattern to substantiate our hopeful desired experience. His words were taken out of Verse 8 of II Corinthians Chapter 5 with the view of dispensing with the hope of the Resurrection, as if it is unnecessary and as though "the presence with the Lord" is obtainable now, immediately upon death without the Resurrection. Was sincerity manifested on this man's part? Indeed so, but is sincerity a guarantee of truth or of the right dividing of The Word? The teaching of tradition and the theology behind it can be nothing less than a perpetrated fraud to thus treat the "Words which the Holy Spirit teaches."

Thus, a verse is the key to a specific word. The context is the key to the words, and the whole section under consideration is the key to its particular context. Therefore, a single word or words must fit into the whole. Upon careful study of II Corinthians we see plainly that II Corinthians

3:1-6:10 makes up the larger context while 4:1-5:11 makes up the smaller specific context, the subject of which is "Our present affliction in the light of things eternal." Presence with the Lord is definitely not obtainable without the resurrection, which is the clear teaching of The Word and words used in their context. We must be "clothed upon" before we can be with Him.

We must never lose sight of the truth that if the external form of The Word is so perfect, how great must the inward truth be; if the setting is valuable how precious must be the jewel of The Word; if the literary order of The Word is divine, how solemn must be its teachings and warnings, how faithful the promises, how certain and sure the words of which The Word is made up. They are "Words which the Holy Spirit teaches," therefore, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." II Timothy 2:15.

Because the Word of God is the engrafted (implanted) Word (James 1:21) we are to receive it with meekness.

Because the Word of God is the faithful Word (Titus 1:9) we must by all means hold it fast.

Because the Word of God is the Word of Life (Philippians 2:16) we must hold it forth.

Because the Word of God is the Word of Truth, we must "RIGHTLY DIVIDE" the Word to have the true Word. II Timothy 2:15.

"...What God hath joined together (Matthew 19:6) let no man put asunder." Surely this truth would apply in the way of a corollary which would be "that which God hath separated let no man join together." Wherever the Word of God has specifically separated any subject matter we have no right to join it. Take the subject of "Jew, Gentile and Church of God," or "water baptism" before the revelation of the mystery was made known. Surely man dare not join what God has separated. We must be very careful in the "...right dividing..." of The Word. As a son of Abraham, Jesus Christ is Heir of the land. As a son of David, Jesus Christ is Heir of the throne. As the son of man, Jesus Christ is "...Heir of the world..." Romans 4:13.

Jesus Christ is "Heir of all things." Hebrews 1:2.

There is evolution, but it is never upward, but always downward.

There is progress but it is never progress upward, but always progress in deceit and corruption.

There is development, but it is development which tends toward inferiority.

Even like Daniel of old, who saw by divine revelation, (which was also made known unto Nebuchadnezzar, the first king) the world governments of the future. Look at the specific gravity of each one of these and see its downward trend: Gold—19.3; Silver—10.51; Brass—8.5; Iron—7.6; Clay—1.9. "...Thou art this head of gold. And after thee shall arise another kingdom INFERIOR to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bare rule over all the earth." Daniel 2:33, 39.

All governments and all the world is on a descending and declining "inferior" scale. Governments run down — down — down. This moral descent is not affected by the apparent glittering registration of the senses of man's advancement in economics, industry or nationalism of the general ascendancy of civilization.

Crimes may appear less revolting because they are more refined; sins less gross and glaring, being more polite. Robbery, less violent and turbulent but more subtle, instead of being done on the highway may now be done in the office or business.

Yes, even with men as individuals there has been a deterioration in every avenue and in every way. In the early ages they studied the stars and would trace their descent to the gods. Today men study geology and the earth and trace their evolution to the mud. The world is whisking on to its doom. The Tubal-Cains are working out the engines of destruction. At the same time the Jubals-Cains are lolling the world with pleasing but deceitful strains, to keep it from Christ and to blind its eyes. They cause men to think that the world is getting better and better and that with just a little more time, men will bring in the Kingdom of God on earth, and live peaceably together, that the lion and the lamb will be caused to lay in the same fold and swords will be hammered into plow shares. Deceit! Deceit! Deceit! The sentence is decided, the day of execution is nigh. Like Jericho the mold is "straightway shut up." The men on the battlements look down with reproach reviling those who sound the "ram's horn" of the Gospel.

Yet, there is a people in this world, though not of it. There is one house in it that stands and continues to stand while all else begins to topple. That is the house built on the "rock of ages." It is the house of the "living stones" sprinkled with the blood, giving it the protection of the scarlet cord, the only token of security from judgment and doom. Are you within this house? Are you sheltered in the "fold"? Is Christ your refuge and strength? "And as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed." Luke 17:26-30. No flood could come till Noah was safe in the ark. No fire and brimstone could fall till Lot was out of Sodom. No walls could crumble around Jericho until those to be saved were in the house. No mountains of water could fall till all believers were safe on the other side on dry ground. My friends, may we be "shut-in" as was Noah. May we be "taken out" as was Lot. May we be "taken in" as was Rahab and her household. May we thus be freed from all condemnation and be crowned with glory and honor, and may we by Him be "...presented faultless before the throne of His glory with exceeding joy." The Word of God will always continue to be the Will of God, for The Word is composed of "Words which the Holy Spirit teaches."

Wierwille, V.P.-Viewpoints-Gods-Mans

Viewpoints: God's – Man's

Another Study in Abundant Living by VICTOR PAUL WIERWILLE This book is in the public domain. For more teachings by V. P. Wierwille, E. W. Bullinger and others, go to: www.eternallyblessed.org The Scripture used throughout this study is quoted from the King James Version unless otherwise noted. Any explanatory insertions by the author within a Scripture verse are enclosed in brackets []. In studying the books of I and II Samuel, I and II Kings, and I and II Chronicles, one occasionally finds repeated accounts of the same man or incident. Careful research of these comparable records soon discloses a shift of viewpoint from one account to its counterpart in another Old Testament book. The books of Samuel and Kings are written from a human viewpoint, man's point of view. The books of Chronicles, on the other hand, are written from God's point of view, from the vantage point of spiritual power. The stories of two kings, Saul and Jehoshaphat, are clear examples of the changes of viewpoint from man's analysis to God's over-all view. Man's point of view will simplify life to apparent, overt actions, whereas God, understanding the spiritual forces at work in the world, points out the spiritual aspects which bring about man's fate.

Records of the death of Saul are found in I Samuel 31, from man's viewpoint, and in I Chronicles 10, from God's viewpoint. At the end of his life, Saul is once more battling the Philistines.

I Samuel 31:1-6:

Now the Philistines fought against Israel: and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell down slain in mount Gilboa. And the Philistines followed hard upon Saul and upon his sons; and the Philistines slew Jonathan, and Abinadab, and Malchishua, Saul's sons. And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers hit him; and he was sore wounded of the archers.

Then said Saul unto his armourbearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith; lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through, and abuse me. But his armourbearer would not; for he was sore afraid. Therefore Saul took a sword, and fell upon it. And when his armourbearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise upon his sword, and died with him. So Saul died, and his three sons, and his armour-bearer, and all his men, that same day together. The record in Samuel makes Saul's death seem like an act of stress brought on by the defeat of battle. Chronicles shows the spiritual forces which brought on Saul's wretched end.

I Chronicles 10:13,14: So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the Lord, even against the word of the Lord, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to inquire of it; And inquired not of the Lord: therefore he [the Lord] slew him [Saul], and turned the kingdom unto David the son of Jesse. From the record in Samuel we learned that the Philistines shot Saul with an arrow, and then Saul impaled himself on his own sword. According to Chronicles, the Lord slew him. How does one harmonize these apparent discrepancies?

Remember, the record in Samuel is from man's point of view. God looked beyond the arrow and the sword. From God's point of view, Saul died because of his transgressions which included his visit to the extrasensory perception sensitives to gain information.

Saul disobeyed God's law, and because of his own disobedience killed himself or was killed. God didn't literally take Saul's life. I Chronicles 10:14 doesn't mean that. There is a spiritual law founded by God by which many people bring destruction to themselves. Picture the law as a cement wall. When a person runs into it, he hurts himself. Saul knew that God's number one law said man should not pay tribute to idols or other gods. Saul knew that the first commandment admonished: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20:3). Later on Jesus Christ set forth the commandment: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength and with all thy mind" (Luke 10:27). God will bear many acts of unrighteousness from His people, but He will not tolerate the worshipping of other gods and other things.

Saul knew God's commandment, but nevertheless he willfully broke it. Saul, after breaking fellowship with the true God, began playing with spiritualistic power by having the woman of Endor try to conjure up the dead Samuel. By this act, Saul rushed head-first against the immovable wall, and thus brought destruction to himself. This is the spiritual point of view for Saul's death.

Another example of the two viewpoints, human and spiritual, is found in the account of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, in I Kings 22 and II Chronicles 20. Instead of just studying the varied viewpoints of one event in Jehoshaphat's life, let us look at the background leading up to this event. The biography of Jehoshaphat is a story of a frail, though sometimes great, human being, and an example of God's indulgence and faithfulness to His own.

II Chronicles 17:1: And Jehoshaphat his [Asa's] son reigned in his stead, and strengthened himself against Israel.

Jehoshaphat strengthened himself against Israel, which at that time was very wicked and ungodly. Jeroboam of Israel had been a wicked king setting up many high places (temples on hills) to worship pagan gods. And Ahab, Jeroboam's son, continued his father's idolatrous practices when he succeeded his father to the throne of Israel. Jeroboam suffered the loss of his captured cities of refuge at the hand of the king of Judah, Abijah. Abijah's son, Asa, followed in the footsteps of his father and kept the people of Judah from worshipping pagan gods. And Jehoshaphat, the son of Asa, "strengthened himself against Israel," meaning that Jehoshaphat continued the practice of Abijah, his grandfather and Asa, his father, and further ordered all idolatry, including all high places in the land, to be destroyed. In contrast to Jehoshaphat, King Ahab of Israel, following the pattern of his father Jeroboam, continued constructing many high places for pagan worship with all kinds of idols therein. The king of Israel and the king of Judah were spiritual opposites, and it temporarily appeared that they were going to remain very distant from each other. Not only did Jehoshaphat strengthen himself against Israel, but he also "placed forces in the fenced cities of Judah," the cities of refuge which had been captured from the wicked father of Ahab. Jehoshaphat did not want Ahab to recapture the fenced cities of Judah which were designed to harbor people who accidentally killed or injured someone. God was pleased with the actions of Jehoshaphat, and thus they established an alliance with each other. An alliance with God is always an asset.

II Chronicles 17:3-12: And the Lord was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the first ways of his father David, and sought not unto Baalim; But sought to the Lord God of his father, and walked in his commandments, and not after the doings of Israel.

Therefore the Lord stablished the kingdom in his hand; and all Judah brought to Jehoshaphat presents; and he had riches and honour in abundance. And his heart was lifted up in the ways of the Lord: moreover he took away the high places and groves out of Judah... And they [priests] taught in Judah, and had the book of the law of the Lord with them, and went about throughout all the cities of Judah, and taught the people [Jehoshaphat had the people of Judah taught the Word of God]. And the fear of the Lord fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that were round about Judah, so that they made no war against Jehoshaphat.

Also some of the Philistines brought Jehoshaphat presents, and tribute silver; and the Arabians brought him flocks, seven thousand and seven hundred rams, and seven thousand and seven hundred he goats. And Jehoshaphat waxed great exceedingly....

Jehoshaphat not only waxed great, he "waxed great exceedingly." Why? Because of his alliance with God.

II Chronicles 18:1:

Now Jehoshaphat had riches and honour in abundance, and joined affinity with Ahab.

Jehoshaphat, after strengthening himself against Israel, had great success in wealth and prestige. However, as time went on, Jehoshaphat developed a pride in his success which gave him a false sense of security and a feeling of superiority. This change in Jehoshaphat's life rerouted his future. Jehoshaphat overestimated his own ability, and instead of keeping his alliance singularly with God, he aligned himself with the idolatrous king of Israel, Ahab, against whom he had formerly strengthened himself. The alliance between Jehoshaphat and Ahab came in the form of an inter-family marriage. Jehoshaphat married his oldest son, Jehoram, to Ahab's daughter.

II Chronicles 21:3: And their father [Jehoshaphat] gave them [his oldest son and Ahab's daughter] great gifts of silver, and of gold, and of precious things, with fenced cities in Judah: but the kingdom gave he to Jehoram; because he was the firstborn. When Jehoshaphat joined affinity with Ahab, did the Lord forsake Jehoshaphat? No. Jehoshaphat forsook the Lord. With the marriage of Jehoshaphat's son to Ahab's daughter, Jehoshaphat was forced by proper etiquette to accept Ahab's hospitality.

Before the inter-family marriage took place, Ahab could never have gotten Jehoshaphat to go to the capital city of Israel. But once the marriage occurred, Jehoshaphat, the father-in-law, could hardly refuse the overtures of Ahab.

II Chronicles 18:2: And after certain years he [Jehoshaphat] went down to Ahab to Samaria [capital of Israel]. And Ahab killed sheep and oxen for him in abundance, and for the people that he had with him, and persuaded him to go up with him to Ramoth-gilead.

Ramoth-gilead was a city of refuge which originally belonged to Israel but the Syrians had captured it.

Verses 3, 4: And Ahab king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat king of Judah, Wilt thou go [to fight] with me to Ramoth-gilead? And he [Jehoshaphat] answered him, I am as thou art, and my people as thy people; and we will be with thee in the war. And Jehoshaphat said unto the king of Israel, Inquire, I pray thee, at the word of the Lord to day.

Although Jehoshaphat had an alliance with Ahab, still within himself he sensed that there was something wrong in trying to recapture Ramoth-gilead. Even though Ahab had made up his mind to recapture Ramoth-gilead and Jehoshaphat had given his word that he would go with Ahab, Jehoshaphat knew that all was not right. So before marching off to battle, Jehoshaphat requested that Ahab ask the Lord what He thought of their plan. This sounds a little bit like all of us. We make the decisions as to what we want to do, and then we ask God for His stamp of approval.

Verses 5, 6:

Therefore the king of Israel gathered together of prophets four hundred men, and said unto them, Shall we go to Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And they [the four hundred prophets] said, Go up; for God will deliver it into the king's hand. But Jehoshaphat said, [Ahab], Is there not here a prophet of the Lord besides [these four hundred], that we might inquire of him?

Jehoshaphat said to Ahab, "Is there possibly another prophet of the Lord that we could ask about our plans? I'm still not satisfied that we're doing the right thing." Four hundred had already told Ahab and Jehoshaphat that their plan was approved, but Jehoshaphat wanted to hold out for the confirmation from one more.

Verses 7-26: And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, There is yet one man, by whom we may inquire of the Lord: but I hate him; for he never prophesied [anything] good unto me, but always evil: the same is Micaiah the son of Imla. And Jehoshaphat said, Let not the king say so. And the king of Israel called for one of his officers, and said, Fetch quickly Micaiah the son of Imla. And the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah sat either of them on his throne, clothed in their robes, and they sat in a void place at the entering in of the gate of Samaria; and all the prophets prophesied before them. And Zedekiah [one of the four hundred] the son of Chenaanah had made him horns of iron, and said, Thus saith the Lord, With these thou shalt push Syria until they be consumed. And all the prophets prophesied so, saying, Go up to Ramoth-gilead, and prosper: for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king. And the messenger that went to call Micaiah spake to him, saying, Behold, the words of the prophets [the four hundred who have already spoken] declare good to the king with one assent; let thy word therefore, I pray thee, be like one of theirs, and [for once in your life] speak thou good. And Micaiah said, As the Lord liveth, even what my God saith, that will I speak. And when he [Micaiah] was come to the king, the king said unto him, Micaiah, shall we go to Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And he [Micaiah] said, Go ye up, and prosper, and they shall be delivered into your hand. And the king [Jehoshaphat] said to him, How many times shall I adjure thee that thou say nothing but the truth to me in the name of the Lord?

Then he [Micaiah] said, I did see all Israel scattered upon the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd: and the Lord said, These have no master; let them return therefore every man to his house in peace. And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, Did I not tell thee that he would not prophesy good unto me, but evil?

Again he [Micaiah] said, Therefore hear the word of the Lord; I saw the Lord sitting upon his throne, and all the host of heaven standing on his right hand and on his left. And the Lord said, Who shall entice Ahab king of Israel, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one spake saying after this manner, and another saying after that manner.

Then there came out a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said, I will entice him. And the Lord said unto him, Wherewith? And he [the spirit] said, I will go out, and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets [all four hundred]. And the Lord said, Thou shalt entice him, and thou shalt also prevail: go out, and do even so.

Now therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil against thee.

Then Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah came near, and smote Micaiah upon his cheek [To touch a man on the cheek is to disgrace him. When Jesus was smote on the cheek before being brought out for His crucifixion, Jesus was terribly disgraced], and said, Which way went the Spirit of the Lord from me to speak unto thee? And Micaiah said, Behold, thou [Zedekiah] shalt see on that day when thou shalt go into an inner chamber to hide thyself.

Then the king of Israel said, Take ye Micaiah, and carry him back to Amon the governor of the city, and to Joash the king's son; And say, Thus saith the king [Ahab], Put this fellow in the prison, and feed him with bread of affliction and with water of affliction, until I return in peace.

What a dilemma for Jehoshaphat! After his alliance with Ahab, he was asked by Ahab to go up to Ramoth-gilead and fight. Jehoshaphat sensed that something was amiss, even after the favorable prophecies of the four hundred prophets. Jehoshaphat recognized Micaiah as the true prophet of God. He knew that the other four hundred were false prophets, counterfeits, crystal-ball gazers, E.S.P. sensitives. Having committed himself to Ahab, Jehoshaphat must have been deeply hurt by the action of Ahab when he had the true prophet imprisoned and fed bread and water of affliction.

Verses 27, 28: And Micaiah said, If thou certainly return in peace, then hath not the Lord spoken by me. And he [Micaiah] said, Hearken, all ye people. So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went up to Ramoth-gilead.

Ahab bull-headedly proceeded with his plans — after all, the odds were four hundred to one.

Verse 29: And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, I will disguise myself, and will go to the battle; but put thou [Jehoshaphat] on thy robes. So the king of Israel disguised himself; and they went to the battle. This action is described from God's point of view. Note what is happening in the camp of the Syrians from this omniscient vantage point.

Verse 30:

Now the king of Syria had commanded the captains of the chariots that were with him, saying, Fight ye not with small or great, save only with the king of Israel. The Syrian king made it clear to his military men that he didn't want a great deal of blood shed; all he wanted was the death of the king of Israel.

Verse 31: And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, It is the king of Israel. Therefore they compassed about him to fight: but Jehoshaphat cried out, and the Lord helped him; and God moved them to depart from him.

Observe the usage of Lord and God in verse 31, "...the Lord helped him; and God moved them to depart from him." The Hebrew word for "Lord" is Jehovah, while "God" is the word Elohim. Jehovah helped Jehoshaphat, while Elohim moved the Syrians to depart.

Jehovah was the covenant God. Jehovah had a covenant with Jehoshaphat so that when Jehoshaphat cried to Him, Jehovah helped. But it was God as the creator, Elohim, that moved the Syrians to depart from Jehoshaphat. What Elohim did exactly to the Syrians is unknown.

Verses 32-34: For it came to pass, that, when the captains of the chariots perceived that it was not the king of Israel, they turned back again from pursuing him. And a certain man [a Syrian sharp-shooter] drew a bow at a venture, and smote the king of Israel between the joints of the harness: therefore he [Ahab] said to his chariot man, Turn thine hand, that thou mayest carry me out of the host; for I am wounded. And the battle increased that day: howbeit the king of Israel stayed himself up in his chariot against the Syrians until the even: and about the time of the sun going down he died.

One prophet had said that Ahab would die while four hundred said that he would be victorious. Micaiah proved to be the true prophet because his prophecy came to pass (Deuteronomy 18:22).

After the loss in battle at Ramoth-gilead, Jehoshaphat tried to collect himself. He had never known the taste of defeat until he aligned himself with Ahab and ignored the prophecy of Micaiah.

II Chronicles 19:1, 2: And Jehoshaphat the king of Judah returned to his house in peace to Jerusalem. And Jehu the son of Hanani the seer [the prophet] went out to meet him [Jehoshaphat], and said to king Jehoshaphat, Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the Lord.

Many Christians are constantly helping the ungodly who hate the true God. What a message of reproof not only to Jehoshaphat but to all who meddle in the affairs of the ungodly. God overlooks many things in the life of man, but idolatry, paganism, spiritualism, pendantism and "E.S.P. ism" are not overlooked or forgotten. Jehoshaphat was spared because he took away the groves out of Judah where idolatry had been practiced.

After his defeat at Ramoth-gilead, Jehoshaphat set about once more to put his house in order.

Verse 4: And Jehoshaphat dwelt at Jerusalem: and he went out again through the people from Beer-sheba to mount Ephraim, and brought them back unto the Lord God of their fathers.

II Chronicles 20:30: So the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet: for his God gave him rest round about. But unfortunately for Jehoshaphat, all did not remain restful because Jehoshaphat had not yet learned his lesson in making bad alliances. Later in II Chronicles 20 it is recorded that Jehoshaphat made another alliance — this time a commercial pact.

Verses 35-37: And after this did Jehoshaphat king of Judah join himself with Ahaziah king of Israel, who did very wickedly [Israel's new king after the battle death of Ahab was Ahaziah]: And

he joined himself with him to make ships to go to Tarshish: and they made the ships in Ezion-geber.

Then Eliezer the son of Dodavah of Mareshah prophesied against Jehoshaphat, saying, Because thou hast joined thyself with Ahaziah, the Lord hath broken thy works. And the ships were broken, that they were not able to go to Tarshish.

Jehoshaphat anticipated the wealth and comfort to be had from trade with Tarshish, a very rich city. But from God's point of view, the plan was not fit because of Jehoshaphat's alliance with the ungodly Ahaziah, and therefore Jehoshaphat did not succeed. A record of man's point of view of this commercial fiasco is found in I Kings 22:48:

Jehoshaphat made ships of Tharshish to go to Ophir for gold: but they went not; for the ships were broken at Ezion-geber.

II Chronicles states that "because thou hast joined thyself with Ahaziah, the Lord hath broken thy works," whereas I Kings gives the event to natural causes, "for the ships were broken at Ezion-geber."

Verse 49:

Then said Ahaziah the son of Ahab unto Jehoshaphat, Let my servants go with thy servants in the ships....

After the first ships were destroyed, the men rebuilt ships to go again. Wicked Ahaziah still tried to cajole Jehoshaphat with his commercial plans.

Verse 49b:

...But Jehoshaphat would not.

Jehoshaphat finally had learned his lesson. At a price he learned that an alliance with the ungodly in marriage didn't work; he learned that an alliance with the ungodly in military exploit didn't work; and lastly, he learned that an alliance with the ungodly in commercial enterprise didn't work. From man's point of view, it appeared that Jehoshaphat's prosperity and his later defeats came by natural causes. But from God's point of view, success or the lack of it varied directly with Jehoshaphat's obedience to God. When Jehoshaphat accommodated the ungodly, defeat ensued. When he aligned himself with God only, prosperity abounded.

Jehoshaphat never worshipped any other god, however, so his end was not a bloody one. But King Saul did break the first commandment in seeking aid from other gods, and in doing so, he ran head-first against the law of God and thereby suffered an inglorious death. From man's viewpoint appearances would say that Saul died of a sword sticking through his body; but from God's viewpoint, the spiritual, Saul died because of treason against God.

Man's point of view is always limited to appearances and a finite overview. God's point of view is comprehensive. The two accounts of Saul in I Samuel and I Chronicles and of Jehoshaphat in II Kings and I Chronicles are not contradictory. They simply contrast the two points of view – God's and man's.

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