

What Do You Know

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Charles William Whipple

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Scripture References

As Biblical quotes appear in-line with Mr. Whipple's text, and may have no reference stated, it is sometimes difficult to determine whether something is a Biblical quote or not. Therefore the use of *italics* is employed as an aid in separating them from the text. References to many quotes were not added to the text as they would tend to distract the reader. Quotes are taken from a 1933 Bible edition translated by George M. Lamsa and published by the A.J. Holman Company of Philadelphia. This translation is based on Peshitta manuscripts written in Aramaic, the spoken language of the common people during the time of Christ. In many instances this translation appears to correct what may be mistakes in the Greek text. For example, in Matthew 19:24, the text *Again I say to you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle*, the word 'camel' is replaced with the word 'rope'. These two words are written the same in Aramaic. This and other differences hint at the possibility of the original New Testament manuscripts being first written in Aramaic and later translated to Greek. The Lamsa translation includes both the Old and New Testaments. For study proposes, the reader may wish to compare the Lamsa text with the more readily available King James version.

Although Baptism and immersion are used interchangeably, Mr. Whipple stresses immersion, as the Bible says immersion is required for the new birth while baptism is sometimes associated with sprinkling or affusion.

Lawrence W. Fowler Ph.D.

Introduction

This book is the recording in permanent form of many years of study and research. I have been searching for spiritual truths and the evidence to substantiate them. Since a child I have had the experience of my spirit visiting in Heaven for various periods of time. After my early childhood passed, I realized that no one would believe me without evidence. What I would relate did not fit into the pattern of knowledge which others had acquired and without proof which was acceptable to them they gave no particular attention to it. These attempts to produce the evidence I felt necessary took various forms. One idea that occurred to me was to put it into writing, and a great number of pages accumulated over the years.

I very naturally sought aid first through the Church, as that represented itself as dealing in spiritual truths. I took a course in Bible study, Sunday School and Church work, was ordained as a minister, preached for a number of years and attempted to accomplish my aims through the established religious channels. In this I failed utterly as the Church in our day is not so much interested in truth as it is in supporting socially accepted beliefs and compromised positions acceptable to each particular church with which they are connected. I met opposition at every contact with the organizations and finally abandoned the attempt.

In May of 1931 I put some of my experiences into a book which I named 'Seven Heavens.' The main idea behind this book was to put into definite form the truth about Heaven so that it might be read and, if desired, reread and studied as definitely stated facts. When talking to people they do not seem to understand what I am saying. There seems to be a tendency for them to regard my statements as just my opinion or belief about things, and as their opinion is of course just as good as mine they naturally pass up the whole matter and I am left about where I started.

This book didn't seem to be the solution. There seemed to be something still lacking. I started another book relating more Heavenly experiences. As I worked on this second volume I began to tire of giving my experiences, disbelieved by some, doubted by most and just accepted by near friends or my family, so I laid it aside and wrote a third. book in September 1932, 'Heavenly Days', which contained, not my experiences or thoughts about Heaven, but forty-four addresses which I heard in Heaven. My idea behind this third book was that people would. believe these speakers when they would not believe me. This attempt also failed. and for a number of years I wrote out my ideas at various times as I had the opportunity. I accumulated. hundreds of pages of material, much of which was lost when our residence partially burned.

In the summer of 1950 a little eight page tract with information regarding the 'Numeric Bible,' came to me enclosed in a business letter from the 'Nobel Research Foundation' of Azusa, California. My hopes were once more raised. and I began work immediately on the present volume which I have called, 'What Do You Know?' Here I have assembled. a number of articles which have been written over the years since 1932.

I asked my daughter, Eleanor, to help me in correcting and arranging the material. A small group, including my daughter, Eleanor Whipple, Roy and. Oletia York and John and Linda Stanley met weekly most of the time until December 1957 and considered the various articles in detail. From Oletia York I received especial help in arranging the material in its final book form.

After discovering the 'Numeric Bible', I immediately began another book, combining in one some of the many truths which were now provided with absolute scientific proof which no one can deny or disprove. I had found the proof I needed. at last, and this new book, 'The Realization of Heaven' was finished on January 6, 1958.

The group that was helping me discovered that there was a second book of experiences which I had commenced in 1932 and urged me to complete it and put it into permanent form. This I hesitated to do because of the work on the other books. On May 5, 1951 my son Donald Kerr,

who had been in Heaven forty-seven years, gave me a most wonderful birthday experience by conducting me, on my seventy-first birthday, to my permanent home in Heaven in the beautiful Homestead region of the Conservatory of Beauty. I included. This late experience which I have called, 'My Heavenly Home' and completed this second volume of experiences on October 21, 1955, and called it 'Heavenly Things.' I here express appreciation to the group already mentioned for the help given me on this second book.

Charles W. Whipple

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*Reality, Reason
and Relationships*

What Do You Know

What do you know? Do you know anything? If you do, how did you find out about it? What was the source of your knowledge? Do you have proof of that, whatever it is? Would that something that you consider proof be proof for anyone else beside yourself? Do you know anything which has a proof that is acceptable to everyone? Is there anything that is accepted by all people as being the truth? If so, what? Is there any truth?

We have discovered that all the elements of the physical world are composed of atoms, for many years thought to be the smallest particle of matter. We have now broken down the atoms of these elements into smaller parts, neutrons, electrons, protons, etc. and tentatively at least assigned a definite quantity of each to the various elements. There are also associated with these atomic divisions forces such as electricity, magnetism, attraction, adhesion, cohesion, motion, light, heat, space, weight and time. Now we are venturing even further and are delving into whatever it is that underlies the several divisions of these items.

With the newer microscopes we have seen minute life, individual, independent; so small that it would seem as if it were a flea on a flea. Even more remarkable, we have seen smaller fleas upon these small fleas, which in turn have fleas on them. It might be reasonable to presume that with more powerful microscopes we would find even smaller living units.

Do we know any of these things or are they just figments of the imagination? Is everything of a questionable nature with no reality of any kind to substantiate it? Is it possible for one individual to know that atoms are made up of smaller portions, and for another individual to know that an atom is the smallest division of matter, the extreme limit? Can two individuals know as a fact two somethings which are

diametrically opposite to each other? Is one a fact and the other an error, both errors or both facts?

Could an individual know something as a fact to him which another individual could know the exact opposite as a fact to him? Is there such a thing as fact, or simply, is it possible for a person to know anything? If so, what? What one person knows can someone else know? Or, is each individual a law, judge and executioner for himself alone? Can one discover facts for someone else?

Practically speaking, what should one doubt or have a question about, or what should one accept as a fact or a truth, or should one do either? It is just possible that all individuals come face to face with these contradictions at some time or another. Is there anything that one can do about it? Or should one try?

This is exactly the position in which I found myself when I was a very young boy. The way out of the predicament has been a life problem with me. From the time I first remember distinctly, at about three or three and a half years of age until seventy, until the present time, this has been my problem, for I just now have found the final link in the chain. Now I know and have the proof. At last everything makes sense to me. What is this all about? It is the basic truth underlying the spiritual aspects of the universe. It is really just a sort of preface to this narrative. Plenty of material is available to any person who wishes to know more about the various matters mentioned.

Material Bodies and Spiritual Bodies

There is a material body and there is a spiritual body. We might call this stumbling block number one. Why do I make this statement? When I was a little tot, as far back as I can remember, at least to three or three and a half years of age, my spiritual body would detach itself from my material body and venture alone away from the place where my material body was left.

At first my parents knew nothing about this. In fact neither did I. I would go someplace and play in my spiritual body and later mention

things which my parents did not know about, or places which my parents knew I had not visited. As I grew older my narratives became more realistic. What my parents thought was purely imaginative became sources of difference, then irritation, finally stories, fibs, and at least intentionally manufactured lies, so they called them.

Then followed punishments which I soon learned to avoid by leaving. While my material body suffered my spiritual body would be having a good time playing somewhere else. I would learn upon returning that my material body had been severely punished. I learned the hard way to keep my information to myself, also to stay and take the punishment instead of running away, for if I stayed I could better show an attitude of submission, and thus escape the more severe whippings. At about twelve years of age my mother and I had our last decisive battle. She whipped me until she was about worn out, but I would not change my story, nor admit it as a lie. I never told her another experience.

Having these experiences continuously I learned a great many things. My spiritual body that left always acted just as I was accustomed to act, dressed just as I was, seeing, hearing, feeling whatever I encountered but I did not know what my material body was doing, saying or feeling while I was away. When I returned to my physical body I felt then the sensations of the body and had a memory of what happened, though not as clear a memory as I had of what had happened spiritually. So I learned by actual experience that there is a material body and there is a spiritual body. Stumbling block number one became understandable.

Heaven

When I was born my father and mother were Christians, my father a deacon. In his early manhood he had wanted to become a minister and had studied the Bible quite seriously with that purpose in view. My mother remained a Christian all her life, but when I was about four years old, my father became an infidel and remained so until his death. During my early childhood he called himself a free thinker. He spent much time and thought in reasoning on difficult, obscure or controversial subjects.

As a background he had an excellent knowledge of law and religion. He grew up on his father's farm, learned at home including blacksmithing, quarrying, stone masonry, brick masonry and plastering. When I was in my late teens he taught me the mason trades and we worked much together.

In this religiously divided home I grew up. My mother consistently kept her family in church and Sunday school, with an open Bible at home and a mother's consideration for our Christian development. My father insisted upon his children knowing his side of the question and the detailed reasons why he was a free thinker. We thus had a very excellent environment for the study and investigation of the entire subject, with help from either, but with no positive insistence for either position.

Their reactions to my spiritual journeys were as different as their religious views. My mother never accepted, nor would she listen to nor discuss them. My father and I discussed every phase of the matter continuously, year after year. He did not change his views but he did accept my experiences and discuss with me thoroughly my growing knowledge of the places I visited. His knowledge of astronomy, time and mathematics did a great deal to help me keep on an even keel and to understand what was going on in my childish being.

By the time I was eight years old I was seriously studying the Bible. Upon returning home from Church, controversial or unusual statements by Sunday school teachers or minister were looked up in the Bible. I reaped a wonderful harvest of facts, good common sense, and logical reasoning. Among other things I learned that many deeply conscientious Sunday school teachers and ministers can have ideas which are absolutely false, contrary even to the Bible, and that they teach these falsehoods just as vigorously as they do the facts.

With my father's help I learned to screen the true from the false. I could not do this perfectly, for I found much that would not be settled with the evidence I had, or my ability to apply it. Here in this environment, with a spiritual experience peculiar to myself, grew up doubts about there being anything true or anybody being honest. What was a mere slip of a boy to do? What could I know? One thing I did know which

no argument, reasoning or Bible quotations could change. I made these spiritual journeys, I went, I came back, and I enjoyed myself more while away than I did while in my material body.

Another knowledge or fact, if there is such a thing as a fact, gradually became apparent to my childish mind and finally crystallized into a glorious reality. These various places to which I was going, where I was enjoying myself so much were not on this earth at all, but up and away from the earth entirely. As I grew older I realized that I was in Heaven; that these children I was playing with were spirits, the spirits of dead children. I played there with the spirit of a dead boy, with whom I had played while he was still alive. I saw him while he was sick, knew all about his death, and now I knew where he was, in Heaven.

Could any boy ever find a more absolutely certain proof of anything than that? I think not. There also were the spirits of grown people. I even became acquainted with families, father, mother and children. But many I met in Heaven were not the spirits of dead people. There were great numbers of angels and other spirits there also.

Thus another great stumbling block was surmounted. I had learned that Heaven is a real place, not just a fairy tale or a story like Santa Claus. And I had also learned that when people die they go to Heaven. At least those I met had. Whether everyone who died went to Heaven I did not know. There is a Heaven where people go when they die.

Church

My mother was a Christian and she kept us in Sunday school and church. My father told me not to join the church until I knew what I was doing. He said I should examine everything thoroughly first, and join the church because of a decision I myself made, not for sentiment, nor merely because the other boys do it. My father explained a church to me in about this manner.

A church is a body of people who have joined together for mutual benefits, all subscribing to the same creed, faith and procedures, and having very much the same objects in view. It might be Roman Catholic,

Greek Catholic, Lutheran, Methodist, Jew, Mohammedan, Buddhist, Quaker, etc. A single individual, several individuals or a large group of people decide upon a form of worship, god or kind of a god they will worship, who he is and what they expect him to do, how they will conduct themselves, both while in worship and at other times, whom they will allow or accept as members with them and how they will get rid of the undesirable ones who get into the organization. They decide upon a form of government, and what officers they will have. This is put into definite form, which is revised and worked over periodically to keep it up to date with the customs and ideas of those belonging to it. In many cases these matters are placed in the hands of a few, who mould the group according to their ideas. They pick a name which they like in order to keep their church from getting confused with some other church which has adopted some other kind of a creed. In some cases, after a church is organized and in running order for years they disagree upon some point or idea in their creed and split, one sect usually taking a new name and writing a new creed.

Is there any truth? What is true? Ought a person to belong to a church? If so, what church? Is a church necessary? Why be bothered with the subject at all? Why do people consider that it is so terrible not to belong to any church? Why are all the churches different? If they are all based on creeds how did the people find out what to put in the creeds? Is there a single one of the churches that is true? If so, which one? Truth, truth, truth. Why should a boy of ten be bothered with all these questions, doubts, uncertainties, creeds, names and churches? It certainly looked like a hopelessly jumbled mass of chaos to me then.

I read the Bible through from cover to cover. It seemed to me that from the time of creation right down through the story of the world people had not been bothered with a church. Why not? Why was it so necessary now? But over in Acts after Christ had been resurrected and returned to Heaven the subject of the church seemed to be important, a very important subject of various writers.

About this time my mother got a different New Testament. It was an English revision of the King James Bible. It seemed to me that they

attached a great deal of importance to it, enough to almost shelve the King James. But I did not find a single passage in the new Bible that changed any of the really important thoughts or ideas to any appreciable extent. Everything seemed to me to be the same as before the revision.

Was I too young to know about such things? Others thought that I was old enough to join the church, and if I was I was old enough to understand what I was doing, or whether I should not do it. My father also was busy. For him I read books by Thomas Paine, Huxley, Ingersoll and many others of like character as well as numerous books of civil government, relation of church to state, taxation, finances, single tax and many others, too many to remember now.

As I advanced into my teens, as a direct result of my extensive reading on the negative side of the subject, I began to read strictly religious matter, such as the Roman Catholic books, the Episcopalian prayer book, the book of Mormon, the Methodist discipline, Lutheran catechism and creeds of various other Protestant sects.

One idea seemed to be very popular in a great majority of the creeds examined. They claimed to derive their peculiar beliefs from the same source, the Bible. My next step was quite natural. If all agree upon the Bible, then one could search out which actually did agree with the Bible and join that church, if any. This I proceeded to do.

For several years I had been observing church practices in Heaven. Yes, they gather for worship regularly every seventh day for certain periods, just the reasons and the exact days I had not yet learned. But they did have a kind of church service and the churches were not called by different names, and I could detect no differences in them. Upon inquiry I learned that they had no special names at all, just the church. Also I learned through inquiry that there were people here worshipping in the same church from many different kinds of churches on earth.

At about this time my father was away from home for a year working in Montana, mining and blacksmithing. I was fifteen years old. I had exhausted most of the available subject matter. One by one I threw aside every creed that contained matter that was contrary to the Bible. Nothing was left to me but my old worn Bible. I had come a long way.

I still had my Bible and I still made my journeys to Heaven. Gradually unfolding before my eyes was the picture of the church in the Bible and the Church in Heaven. Happy was the day, early in 1896, when I finally decided definitely that the Church now worshipping in Heaven was the same or exactly like the Church pictured in the New Testament. A great and important landmark was reached.

But my own personal problem remained yet to be taken care of. I was still attending Sunday school, not just from force of habit but at least partially from the manner in which the Bible texts were being explained to me and the class of restless boys. I was slowly but surely undergoing a metamorphosis of some kind. At first it took the form of fear. What if I were giving credence to some of these man made ideas with their ungodly statements. I would surely have to get out of this quickly. But I should find out for certain just what was what before I dropped everything.

One evening after school in the spring time I walked into the minister's study. It was a large airy room with rows of important looking books and cozy furniture with a nice rug. He sat behind a flat top desk writing. I closed the door softly and stood with my cap in one hand and my leather hitch strap in the other. I had ridden Prince, but not finding where to tie him had left him standing in the alley. He would remain until I returned. I evidently did not make a very impressive sight; a short awkward country hayseed, just into town the fall before from the wide open spaces of Oklahoma.

He looked up without stopping and spoke saying something like this, "Is there something I could do for you young man." Among all the conflicting thoughts racing through my mind I fumbled and muttered something as I walked the short distance and stood pressing awkwardly with my overalls against the front of the desk. "I, just wanted to ask you a few questions." He stopped writing immediately, laid down his pen or pencil, cleared his writing material from the center of the desk with a single sweep of his arm and said, "Pull up a chair to the end of the table here and we can talk more comfortably." I pulled up the chair and sat down.

“Now just what did you want to ask me?” he said. “What is the name of this church? I mean the real, actual, true name?” I asked. “We do not have any special name, nothing fixed or definite,” he replied. “It is just the church, the church spoken about in the New Testament by Jesus and the apostles. Sometimes we call ourselves the Church of Christ, sometimes the Christian Church, or sometimes the Restored New Testament Church, but no one particular name at all.

“But it says, ‘First Christian Church’ on the sign board out in front.” I persisted. “Yes, it does,” he replied. “That is not the name of the church, but simply a designation so people will know what group this is. There are several churches here and we use these names to tell them apart or to refer to them. In reality there is only one Church, the Body of Christ, to which we all belong. A part of the members meet here to worship because it is more convenient than going all the way across the city.”

I still continued my questions, “But how can they all be one church when they are different people, different buildings with different names on them? Do you have a set of rules or directions to tell you what each one can do?”

He asked in return, “You are a member of Miss Carson’s Sunday school class are you not?” “Yes,” I replied. “I started last fall when we came here and I go to the Intermediate Endeavor Society also, but no one ever tells us about any of these things. I never heard you say anything about these things when you preach either. How do folks find out? Do you have a book or rules or something that explains it? Maybe I could borrow it.”

The minister asked another question, “Miss Carson was talking to me the other day about some of the boys in her class. You have not joined the church yet, have you?” “No,” I said, “Why should I? It would not be honest to join a church when you didn’t know anything about it, would it?” “No”, he admitted, “I would not want you to do that. I believe I have some tracts that will help you.” He went over to a cupboard and sorted out several tracts which he handed me. I looked them over and gave them back to him. I said, “I have read and studied all of these. I got them last fall when I first came.”

“Just what then do you want to know?” he asked. “Miss Carson said that you had studied your Bible and that you believed. What are you waiting for?” “Yes,” I answered, “Miss Carson was right. I have studied my Bible a great deal and I believe it too. But joining a church is an entirely different matter. I really came to find out whether this church is like the one in the New Testament, and if it is not I am not coming to this Sunday school any more. I thought you would know and could tell me.”

We were both standing, he with the tracts still in his hands, I with my cap and Prince’s halter strap ready to leave. He said, “Sit down; I want to talk to you a few minutes more before you go.” I sat down. He paced the floor a few moments then stood looking out the window down the street apparently seeing nothing. He replaced the tracts, slowly closed the cupboard door, sat down and picked up the papers on which he had been writing. He scanned them several seconds and then deliberately tearing them to bits dropped them in the waste paper basket.

“I am going to preach a different kind of sermon Sunday morning and Sunday night,” he told me, “and I would like for you to hear both of them. You do not need to quit Sunday school for I can assure you that this church is really and truly like the one in the New Testament. It will take quite a little time and work to prove that but I will explain a little to you now and go into more detail later.”

“This church is a New Testament church patterned just as accurately as possible after the one in the Bible. All the different congregations like this taken together make up the complete church. Each group or congregation in this church adheres just as closely as possible to the New Testament pattern, electing its own officers and conducting its own business as needs arise. They have no set of rules either written or implied to guide them. They have no man made creed nor book of discipline. Only one thing is required, faith. This is necessary because it is the one and only thing required in the New Testament. One must believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God and one’s Savior from sin. And they require each believer to be immersed in water as Christ was.”

Other matters are left to the desires of the individual congregations. They have no general organization and are free to act independently upon any and all matters. They may select and ordain ministers, missionaries or other workers at will. They recognize no difference in rank between a pastor, a deacon, an elder, or any member of their group. They are free to help any individual or group in any worthy cause and recognize no authority outside their own group and the Bible.

“This freedom is the reason why some congregations have organs, some pianos, some pipe organs, and some no instruments at all. Some have only congregational singing, some hire professional singers, and some have choirs. They are at liberty to use whatever literature they choose. Here we use papers and quarterlies from David C. Cook, the Standard Publishing Company and the Christian Publishing Company. (Not to be considered as a recommendation.) Each church is absolutely free in all things, chooses its own pastors and workers, builds and owns its own church building. When acquiring property it is a common practice for some member of the congregation to hold the property in their name for the church. There is a growing practice for the larger groups to form a corporation so they can hold the property in the name of the church. In this case they must decide upon some specific name for the corporation, but this does not make the corporation name the name of the church. The name remains free. Some churches have Sunday schools, some none. Some have baptisteries built into their building and some go to a river, lake or pond. But we always stay within the pattern given in the New Testament, allowing the same liberty to the other groups. I trust that this brief statement will answer your purpose for the present, but come to church and you will get a better and clearer explanation of all these things, for I think the church needs to hear them.”

Sunday morning he made good on his promise and started preaching sermons explaining the New Testament pattern of the church. He announced that in a few weeks there would be a series of meetings running for several weeks. An excellent evangelist was secured and an instructive and successful revival came as a result. Having found the solution I entered wholeheartedly into it and in the midst of the meetings

joined the church, small portions of which meet at various places here on earth and the great inseparable unit of which meets regularly in Heaven. Hurdle number three had been passed successfully.

God

God, gods and goddesses are seemingly favorite topics for writers. I was a deep student of the Bible and had a very definite idea of the God called Jehovah or Lord throughout that book. Also I read much that was not Bible but found no definite ideas of god elsewhere. Throughout the Greek myths and writing their gods are found to be of a nature which is entirely impossible to believe. We find them engaged in nearly all the grosser acts of human beings. Most of those gods are not as godly as humans themselves. There is nothing here to satisfy a hungry soul.

Likewise the speculative writings of the philosophers, scientists, reformers and hundreds of religious cults yielded nothing substantial. Also trying to supplement or supplant the Bible statements regarding God were the great historical creeds of the churches. Unscriptural, unnatural, impossible inventions of men confronted one at every turn. Some were so contradictory as to be almost amusing. Some pictured a god as loving, considerate, beautiful, with supreme power, creator, sustainer from everlasting to everlasting, all without any parts. Did you ever see anything, or know of anything that had no parts? How could a being without a single part love, think, move, forgive, do or be anything? How could nothing be beautiful? How could nothing love you? A strange kind of love it would be. Then there were the great mass of cults and isms that pictured God to us as a sort of cosmos, combination of thought and emotion, or any one or more of the incorporeal manifestations of humans. What is truth? Surely mere speculation and inventive adventure into the unknown cannot come up with an enduring truth regarding the being of God.

In the Bible we get a picture of a God who sees, hears, feels, loves, creates, walks, talks, has a Son, has a Companion called the Holy Spirit; and is called Father many, many times over throughout the Bible. What

is a person to believe? Is there anything he can know as definite? How can a person believe anything there is in the Bible and not believe in God, the central cause and actor in it. Let us not be inconsistent about such obvious and definite descriptions. ***He who sees me has seen the Father. God created man in his own image, In the image of God he created him.*** God then is in the image of man and man is in the image of God. How can we dispute that? We have seen Jesus the Son of God. He is also the Son of Man. Is there any marked difference between them and man in looks, form and make up?

Why do people make such absurd speculations regarding the person of God? Of course I had always before me my father's contention that there was nothing spiritual; no god, no angels, no Heaven, no spirit within man, and because of my father, the ever present idea that man is just another animal. This idea of man being just another animal has a great weight of evidence to support it. Scientists attempt to show by widely accepted methods that man evolved from lower forms of life. If so, what difference does that make? One significant fact is extremely outstanding; they never present any evidence on the negative side. They show nothing to indicate when the change from a lower form to man took place, nothing to show that God did not do this creating, whatever the means.

Knowing by Bible study that Jehovah was Jesus' Father, that the Holy Spirit was His Mother, as was Mary also, knowing them personally year after year, but never seeing Jehovah, do you think you would know whether he was a person very similar to them, or just a chunk of cosmos or a nothingness without any parts.

I am now over seventy years old. I am still reading and studying the Bible. I am still going to Heaven every little while. I still meet and talk to Jesus, Mary, the Holy Spirit, my own father and mother, grandparents, relatives of every kind, friends and great saints without number. And I still know that Jehovah is a Heavenly Father, not just to me, but to every other spirit I meet in Heaven. I do not know very much about other gods. There is nothing to know, just speculation; because they are a creature of some one's imagination. But I know who God is, and I do mean I

know. Yes, it is possible to know some things absolutely and certainly. The evidences are absolute.

God is our Heavenly Father, and I have overcome stumbling block number four. There is a God.

Eternal Life

If a man dies shall he live again? This question was raised thousands of years ago. How long ago it was first voiced is lost in the haze and antiquity of early ancient history or pre-historic ages. Possibly it was asked by the first man and by many who have lived since, possibly by everyone. However that may be it is still a question of major importance to man. It might even be considered to be the most important, beyond man's questions regarding this present life.

We might even suggest that its implications affect even the present life that man is living. For, if there is to be further living after we die, then this present life is not the end, but merely the beginning of our existence. In that case we should order our lives along a different plan than we would follow if this life were to be a completed project, beginning and absolute end.

If such is the case and we advance into a period where years of time pass as a morning mist, then the few years of even a long life of seventy to eighty years will soon be left far behind and lose much of their original intrinsic value.

If his life is just the beginning of a life that is to be eternal, that is to keep right on indefinitely after we die, then we should give more attention to foundational things, principles, rules of procedure and connecting links than we should to the completed accomplishments of this life.

Also, the great mass of people all over the world, not just like a great herd of animals; yield a few, a very few of their animal instincts to customs and laws which do not exist in the animal world. They mate sexually with very little restraint, abandon their offspring, quarrel, fight and kill. Their brain power is greater than the other forms of animals, and

education increases its efficiency. But instead of using this added tool solely for their benefit, they employ it to enslave, conquer, mass murder, war, create economic servitude, overpower and control multitudes of people, just like an educated animal might do.

But the outstanding, single, important point to the entire situation is that practically everybody in the world accepts this idea of being just an animal, just as other animals do. They do nothing about it but accept their lot. Singularly enough too, this same attitude is sown by the most highly educated, even by those recognized as outstanding spiritual leaders. Our great church men embrace these ideas, fight each other for power and control, even go with armies to kill and cripple, and to pray for war, and then return after the killing as heroes, applauded by masses of the people. Here and there we find a few that are different from the common herd, but pitifully few.

What effect would you expect this to have on the mind, life and behavior of a young man growing up in his teens? The usual effect you see all around you; in the papers, in the jails, in the penitentiaries, in the insane asylums and the cemeteries.

So it is really necessary for every one to settle this problem for himself, that he may order his life accordingly. I was born in America, of Christian parents, with the Bible available to me from earliest childhood. I was kept in Sunday school regularly and learned as much and possibly more about it than other children. Furthermore I searched the Bible to see for myself if what I was being taught in class or from the pulpit was in accord with the printed word. I therefore knew about the promises of eternal life as offered to the obedient in the New Testament. I did not find any promise of eternal life in the Old Testament, although it was spoken about.

When old enough to really understand the thought of eternal life, as against just a limited earthly life, I began, as it were, to put two and two together. The New Testament promised resurrection from death and eternal life in Heaven afterward.

My early teens were spent away from the maddening crowds, where a boy could think from morning till night without much interruption, with

primitive nature all around him. While I was thirteen, fourteen and fifteen I broke out a quarter section of raw prairie land in Oklahoma, plowed, disced, harrowed and cultivated it into a workable farm, while my father worked away from home as a mason to support the family. At home on week ends he directed the work and was therefore accessible for counsel.

Freedom to visit Heaven day after day for hours at a time were afforded almost at will as I plowed and worked at routine tasks. I therefore spent month after month learning the wonderful things of Heaven first hand. Three months of public school in a sod school house one winter helped to review common school subjects. A small Presbyterian mission supplied an outlet for spiritual expression through Sunday school and a Junior Endeavor Society for part of one year. What I saw and experienced day after day, month after month, year after year in Heaven became a part of me, molded my thoughts, strengthened my reasoning and logic, and gave firmness to my will.

What I learned was entirely and completely spiritual, which was always in contrast to what I was seeing and hearing in my daily life. Over there everything was plain and open, nothing concealed, no doubts but just truth and happiness. I met Jesus and talked with him. I visited in His mother's home and became acquainted with Mary herself. In this home I occasionally met the Holy Spirit, Jesus' spiritual Mother, the Companion of Jehovah. I never did see Jehovah himself.

Could you by some stretch of your imagination put yourself in my position for a little while? A farmer boy, spending his days summer and winter walking behind a team of two, three or four horses, slipping away to play in the celestial beauty spot, visiting with other boys and girls, men and women; and seeing them every day in their homes in their regular life and activities? Could you come with me to Mary's home, see her, talk with her, play around the beautiful garden and house, meet Jesus and the Holy Spirit somewhere about the place, and exchange a few words possibly about some tree or duck casually as you played about. You would also meet other people, play at other homes, yards or gardens, eat delicious lunches and drink refreshing nectar as occasions would come.

In my journeys to Heaven I met the spirits of those who had died. Here they were as proof of the resurrection, thousands, yes millions upon millions of them. I saw the spirits of those who had died thousands of years ago and they were still enjoying life. This then must be the eternal life that was promised I told myself. Upon inquiry I learned that this was true. Here was Heaven, God's Promised Land; here was Jesus, the Holy Spirit, Mary, the apostles, prophets, and thousands of other saints living the eternal life that was promised. Stumbling block number five was removed.

Jesus Christ

Having been a regular consistent student of the Bible since early childhood, along lines, not only pursued by the common student, but for purposes peculiar to my own problems, I had become aware of much which is not perceived by other people.

The story of Jesus is fantastic as judged by the usual literary standards. He is pictured to us as a baby, born to a virgin, that is as far as human relations were concerned, but in reality not a virgin, because God substituted a miracle for the human relations which caused Mary to conceive. Although still a young woman and unwed she was no longer a virgin. In due course of time, the regular time required for the birth of other children she gave birth to Jesus. She was still not a wife biologically, although a mother and wed.

In this peculiar manner Jesus was born, His mother a human, His Father, God. Not only was this a peculiarity, never before claimed with so much proof offered, but Jesus grew up very much as other children in His neighborhood and social class. The records we have of His childhood do not picture Him as half man and half God as biological standards would claim. His mother, Mary, married to Joseph had several other children and Jesus grew to manhood in a regular human family, and the neighbors were dumbfounded when he claimed to be something more than they had observed throughout His childhood. They just could not and would not believe it. They had known Him so long, from a little

child to full and independent manhood, that they could not accept the peculiarities.

When people wondered at the miracles of Jesus He told them plainly that they were also able to do these and also greater things than they had ever seen Him do. That was true, but He was speaking of their spiritual being, not of their material powers or desires. He was absolutely right as I have observed in Heaven continuously for over half a century. What miracle that Jesus performed, even the raising of Lazarus, is as great as the miracle of resurrection to an eternal life that every human can perform for himself through obedience.

The Bible pictures God to us as a spirit and makes no difference in kind or quality between the spirits which are men, which are angels, which are cherubims or which are God, except that God is the Creator, Father and Sustainer.

Thus the Bible has man created in the image of God, male and female as God is male and female, same bodies, powers, rights and everything else, except God reserves the supreme creative and governing powers for himself.

Man, the human has a material body, life, thought, memory and complete existence as a member of the animal world. He also has a spiritual body, life, thought, memory and complete existence as a spiritual being. No science, philosophy, logic nor reasoning has yet been able to explain satisfactorily how these two; the material and the spiritual are united into one. The Bible says that God created man and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and he became a living soul.

From this point on he is very evidently a dual personality, one portion the material, reproduced by well known standards, but the spiritual portion still remains a deep mystery, which has no explanation except in God.

Jesus was a human with a Father and a Mother, not a biological monstrosity. God was His material Father, Jesus being His only begotten Son. But Jesus tells us that He existed before Abraham, yes, farther back than that. Jesus existed before the world on which man lives was even

created. Statements like this of course dumbfounded those who heard them because they could see only the human Jesus. Jesus, the real Jesus was the spiritual being the spiritual body, part of the dual being we see as the human being.

Here we find an incarnation, not a reincarnation as some teach today. Jesus was the son of God spiritually and had existed with God from the beginning. To give man a picture of God, and for many other reasons, God begets a human body of a chosen virgin, and Jesus, the spiritual Son of God becomes the spiritual portion of the human being we know as Jesus. Only as a human could God live with, teach and explain himself to man.

God lived from the beginning, then became a man in the person of Jesus, finished the work for which He came and returned again to the spirit world from which He came. He is alive and active in Heaven today as He has always been excepting for the short time that he was here on earth in the body, the being of Jesus. Even during His life on earth He consulted with Heaven, and those in power there, as recorded at least once, on the mount of transfiguration.

I see continuously, every time that I am in Heaven, many who have been there for thousands of years, long before the Son became man and went to the earth for a season. They have told me all about it and I have no reason to doubt their word. I see Jesus himself often, now almost two thousand years since His earthly visit. I have read the Bible accounts. I have talked with numerous eye-witnesses of the entire transaction, some of them my own ancestors, so I do not think that I am speculating or guessing when I say that I know that my Redeemer lives. John 14:2: ***In my Father's house are many mansions. If it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.*** I have seen these places that He has prepared for those who love him. My own father and mother and the rest are there. Also I have been there thousands of times. What is truth? Is the Christ true? Do I know anything? I know that my Redeemer lives. I heard Him talking today. Stumbling block number six has been removed from my path.

The Bible

God is a spirit, that is He exists in a spiritual body. The Holy Spirit also is a spirit and She exists in a spiritual body. Jesus Christ is their spiritual Son and He exists in a spiritual body the same as they do. Jesus existed in a material body only a few years. Spirits, spiritual beings, and spiritual bodies communicate with each other only by spiritual means. Spirits of the departed, angels and other spiritual bodies communicate with each other easily and directly.

Human beings, and other animals to a somewhat more limited extent, communicate with each other by material means, through the employment of material tools; spoken or written speech, motions and signs.

Man was a dual being both spiritual and material and when he refused to further accept the Lordship of God he brought death upon himself. Not the death of the material body or even the material being, not death of the spiritual body or spirit, but death of the spiritual being to the material being, or possibly more accurately speaking, the death of the material to the spiritual. Whichever way one wished to understand it the ensuing results are the same. Paul gives us a very vivid picture of the struggle going on between the two natures of the human being. You may read them for yourself first hand.

It is enough for this time to say that man of himself cannot by any possible means thwart the judgment of God and restore this relationship. The restoration of man to an understanding of spiritual matters is contingent upon his obedience or acceptance of the Lordship of God. While man is in this dead condition, spiritual matters, by their very nature cannot be comprehended by the material man. Neither can man draw up a release of himself from this condition. Man made rules and regulations are as useless now as they were when man first tried it and was condemned for it.

But God has a way, a plan, a condition, a method as it were, whereby man could overcome this spiritual deficiency through obedience, the reversal of the manner in which he lost it through disobedience. This

way was of no value to man unless he could find out about it. So through the instrumentality of chosen individuals God revealed what he wanted man to know. Possibly in the early ages of man's struggle within himself these revelations were preserved orally and passed from man to man. But the time came when the revelations were put in writing and in that way preserved. God exercised supervision over this revelation, to keep it true and accurate.

This careful supervision would not be necessary in the recording of purely material facts such as history, but would be necessary in the spiritual matters God had decided upon revealing. Thus man came into possession of a written revelation, showing him the condition under which he could be redeemed. God's plans unfolded a way for man to follow which would open up for him as much of the spiritual communion of his spirit, with the spirit of his Maker, as was necessary or allowable, under the varying conditions and circumstances in which man had placed himself.

Gradually these revealed records were gathered and added to as time passed and other revelations were made. Collections of these were made, language and dialects changed, many who made copies were not as careful as they might have been, and for many other reasons the pure inspired authoritative copy of God's revelations was obscured.

The dark ages came and almost everything seemed to be lost. Following the Protestant reformation the scriptures began to emerge from their obscurity. Great scholars spent many years, some their lifetimes, gathering manuscripts and translating them into more understandable language until a very stable and usually acceptable text was developed for both the Hebrew Old Testament and the Greek New Testament.

But no one was sure that they had the correct text either for the Old Testament or the New Testament. Reformers were concerned with both the Old Testament and the New Testament, but the chief interest of the Protestant reformers centered around the Greek New Testament text and its translation. Slowly but surely the Bible became available to the people through translations into their languages. These translations have

all more or less been influenced by the beliefs of the translators, as well as their ability or inability to carry over from the accepted Greek text the thought intended to be conveyed.

The King James or Authorized Version of the Bible gave to the English speaking world for several centuries a very acceptable text. Hundred of different sects, independent of each other, sprang up in America and in Europe, each having a foundation in some particular text or translation of the Bible. And no one was certain about the text of the Bible itself.

Into all this confusion, division and uncertainty great attacks were made during the eighteenth century by atheism, which quite often came out the winner. A great wave of distrust and disbelief in the Bible swept over the so called Christian world.

Then a sort of counter attack set in. Bible scholars began to examine the Bible itself, to make a more convincing and more understandable book. It was taken up book by book and verse by verse and parts would be deleted as not genuine. But these higher critics themselves were often influenced mightily by agnosticism, infidelity and sectarianism.

A revision of the King James Version was undertaken by a committee of English and American Bible men. Even they could not agree and when the work was finally finished the American committee was so displeased with it that they immediately began getting out a translation for themselves more to their liking. As soon as copyright agreements made it possible the American Standard edition was put on the market with a supposedly better and more accurate translation.

Meanwhile others were working at the same task and other Bibles appeared translated into modern English. But most of these versions also had an axe to grind so multiplicity did not do much to further Christian thought.

The effect of all this was to slow down the growth of the large man made denominational churches and sects almost to the stopping point. But the growth of religion did not stop. Great numbers of new sects sprang up caused by the search for the real truth among such a huge mass of speculation.

The great organized churches, seeing the effect of pulling in so many directions, began to feel keenly their position and decided that something must be done to secure their positions and their institutions in which they had great financial investments.

About the turn of the century a new organization came into being called the Council of Churches of Christ, which included these churches and organizations in its make up. No true church or New Testament restored church affiliated with them for the very simple reason that only human organizations or denominationally established sects could join in such an enterprise.

This Council has attempted to take unto itself supreme power in the Protestant denominational world and has a national council, state councils, regional or city councils and a world council. They are attempting to obtain complete control over Protestantism as the Pope has over Catholicism.

They have taken over or attempted to take over almost everything touching religious life, the education of the people the preparation of ministers and missionaries, the ordination of ministers, the sending out of missionaries, and the division of the prospective mission territory among the associated sects and the barring of unassociated workers from the mission field.

Not satisfied with all these things they decided that we needed a new translation of the Bible. The New Testament portion is now before the public, and the Old Testament portion is still being worked on. May 5, 1950.

I wrote to the publishers, Thomas Nelson and Co. and received a copy of the booklet describing the revision, American Standard Revised New Testament. What a surprise. A list of highly educated and lettered individuals, some of whom had learned so much that they knew the Bible was not inspired, that Christ was just a man, a kind of superman, and that there had never been any miracles. Read the list and then copies of their beliefs, teachings and acts. Read the subterfuge by which they placed in the New Testament their own decisions upon the deity of Christ.

So now we have a New Testament made up to suit the group of religious sects who believe in man made creeds, organizations and names, for their guidance and salvation. Where does God come in? Where does Christ come in? In this latest program. And thousands upon thousands of innocent people swallow this poison whole then follow the leaders like a herd of sheep, not blind leading the blind, but those who see exceedingly well leading the blind where they want them to go. It has been said, "You can fool all the people part of the time, part of the people all the time, but not all the people all the time." Let me add a correction to this. There are some people that you cannot fool at all.

In every period of the life of man God has had an avenue of truthful and inspired representation. This has not always been in the same form and not always recognizable by ordinary means. So it has been, while the sects have been feuding and fighting over the spoils, writing their own Bible, creeds, and methods of salvation, and elevating their learned to the highest possible seats at the feast, in the background for upwards of half a century the entire Bible, both the Hebrew of the Old Testament and the Greek of the New Testament was being rediscovered.

The original texts have been reproduced in both the Hebrew and the Greek. This has not been along the line of ordinary human investigation and translation but by a divinely inspired plan and system that is so complete that every book, every chapter, every verse, every word and every single letter in every word is absolutely proven to be inspired. This settles once and for always just what belongs in each book, chapter and verse of both testaments. The scholarship of the world has been challenged to deny it, or to prove it untrue. For years now no one has come forward to deny the claim for its inspiration, correctness, or completeness of content. At last we have the word of God as it was given to man.

For over fifty years I have been faced with an unsolvable dilemma. I have continuously had these experiences of visiting in Heaven. They are entirely understandable to me. I have studied the Bible. The experiences agree with or are entirely possible according to what it says. I know it agrees in every way. But when I tell my experiences to those who

profess to believe in the Bible they do not agree, still being generous enough not to call me a liar right to my face.

The most common reason given is that although they may agree with the Bible, they are not certain of the Bible. They do not know if it is true, or what part is true, and furthermore, everybody believes it just to suit themselves and places an interpretation they desire upon it. So no matter what I say or how much I contend that my experiences are normal Christian behavior and agree perfectly with the Bible, I am given the run around of a vicious circle.

But that is all over now. The Bible is true. It has been proven inspired, every book, verse and word, and no one man can disprove it. I actually possess a copy of that New Testament, the actual revelation of God, not only to me but to every one else. And in studying it I find full corroboration for all my statements about Heaven.

So the seventh and final stumbling block has been removed. There is something true. At last truth has been proven to be truth. This then is solid ground upon which I may begin, in my seventy-first year to build for the remainder of my eternal life. And as this life is to be spent in Heaven, there is where I am going to build my home.

Individual and Group Relationships

We live as individuals, have a mind and will to do as we choose and are very jealous of this right and privilege. Anything that seems to infringe upon our personal liberties immediately becomes a stop sign emblazoned across our path. So great is this prerogative that it has been expressed in our national Declaration of Independence, “We hold these truths to be self evident—that all men are created equal; and that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.” But the very nation that was founded upon this Declaration immediately passed laws and adopted modes of procedure whereby they could, without his consent, limit his individual freedom, his life, his liberty, his happiness and the disposition of any or all of his property, real or personal.

The reason for this is that although a man is an individual he is also a member or portion of a larger unit or society, and those rights which he holds dear are the rights of the larger group, not only of the individual. Only to the degree that group laws and social custom permit is the individual able to enjoy these liberties.

So all inclusive is this power that the individual becomes accustomed to its operation, accepts it, and goes so far in some cases as to consider this as being their own free will action. For this reason individual ideas are so coalesced with group ideas that we find it difficult to discuss matters on an individual basis.

This is the reason that we are Republicans or Democrats, why we profess a particular religion, why we wear particular styles of clothes, why we enjoy dancing, music, football, why we pass on the right side when we meet, and why we speak the same language. We are the creatures of education, both intellectually and emotionally. Much of it

is administered by others and all of it is influenced by academic and environmental education.

Children coming into the world receive their first training and education from their parents, immediate companions and environment. At about five or six years of age many fall under organized educational programs, strong formative influences such as kindergartens, playfields, primary classes in public, private or church schools. What they are taught helps to mould their future life and character. Much of this education follows a definite pattern, chosen for certain results. As the child matures the plans become more definite. Even parents have definite aims, in the preschool period and infancy, both conscious and unconscious to influence the child's later life. Deviation from the established order is rare and usually requires more friction and difficulties than the child can surmount.

The Origin of my Individual Problem.

Seventy years ago I was a little over three years of age and that is as far back as I can remember accurately enough to make correct statements or records. I began to tell my companions, usually my mother, about children and places where I was playing. She would question me about where I had been and I soon began to understand that she did not believe that I had been anywhere or had played with the children I was telling about.

But the unbelieving visits continued day after day. She did not believe me and as I grew older a serious situation developed. I was accused of telling stories and finally punished for repeating my experiences. I was too young to understand such things, but as I grew older I realized that I was different from the other children. I could and did make these visits but the other children did not. I did not know where I was going at first.

My spirit was leaving my body at home and making visits to Heaven where I was playing with children whose spirits were also there. I did not learn this all at once, but I gradually understood as I grew older.

I was kept in Sunday school and at an early age learned a great deal from the Bible. When old enough to study the matter I discovered that the Heaven of the Bible was where my spirit was visiting. There I experienced all the wonderful beauty and pleasure, and saw people, angels and spiritual beings as spoken of in the Bible.

My father became an infidel while I was yet a small child. As I grew older my mother wanted me to join the church. My father and I became very close and discussed every phase of the matter for a number of years. He could not explain to me how I could be visiting in Heaven if it did not exist, but he very definitely objected to my joining the church.

The result was that I made an investigation in my own way of church beliefs and religion, and at sixteen years of age I joined a Christian Church. The minister assured me that the church was as nearly like the Church of the Bible as it was possible to make it; that they had no name, no organization except their own congregation, no creed nor articles of faith, no book nor set of rules nor guides of any kind except the Bible.

I was happy and satisfied with the move I had made. I plunged whole heartedly into Sunday school, Christian Endeavor and Church work and made an intensive study of the Bible with the intention of becoming a minister. I studied allied subjects including sermon writing and public speaking. I did not find it possible to finance a ministerial course of study in college so I studied at home.

Finally the time came when I thought I was ready to enter the ministry. I was encouraged by the pastor of the Christian Church where I was worshiping and was ordained to the ministry by ceremony and the laying on of hands by the Elders. This was followed by several years of preaching in various churches while I was still employed as a teacher.

Meanwhile I continued studying and investigating. Also I continued my visits to Heaven. I could find no way of helping the original problem, that of disbelief of religion on every hand, and the differences between those who did believe. There seemed to be no established truths to which one could turn with confidence. Even the Christian Church to which I belonged began to depart from its stand of following only the Bible and

introduced many non-biblical innovations, which of course put me in a compromised position.

Of course a Bible Church, with no denominational organization could not split up into separate sects; there was nothing to split. But groups of ministers banded together to make of their congregations a denomination, organized central control and financing, together with united missionary effort. The tail was soon wagging the dog. Many independent churches have been drawn into this man made field of endeavor, but many are still standing on their principle, striving to retain their status as Christian Churches, free and independent.

The struggle at present seems to be a losing action for the independent Churches. Group planning, organization, financing and propaganda are robbing the individual of his freedom just the same as in nonreligious activities unless they are branded as antis, modern, obstructionists, or old fashioned. Slowly but surely they succumb to the pressures being put upon them. Most members of these independent churches are Christians and do not know what is going on behind the scenes, or they learn too late to do anything effective about it.

Since my ordination I have been an Elder in the church, but nothing I can say or do has been of any effect in correcting the nonbiblical innovations. The entire Board of Elders of the church to which I belong, without a dissenting voice, officially refused to discuss any phase of the matter. What can an individual do when the group acts in this manner?

Group Control Over Religion.

A person's religion is, according to general understanding, a personal matter between himself and his God. The individual is either obedient or sinful, does what is pleasing and satisfactory, or what is displeasing to his God. The individual is either blessed or punished according to the behavior of that individual. We can trace this individual relationship with God in the histories of all peoples as far back into the past as we can trace religion.

There is however, a flaw in this picture. Although the individual is to be blessed or punished according to his own actions, the group requires that his actions be what they demand, not simply what he decides. The individual does as the group decides. He is trained or educated from infancy in the religion, taboos, habits, charms, prayers and customs of the group or groups coming in contact with him. He is not allowed to decide very many things for himself. Even in some Christian homes little children are taught to pray ready made prayers, prepared for them by parents and others. As they grow older they are taught the peculiar beliefs of the groups and many times join these religious bodies at a tender age. They have not had time nor opportunity to know much about the matters which they have adopted to become the guides for their lives. If they are saints or sinners they have become so, not of their choice only but by the choice of the group and are expected to receive the rewards or demerits individually, not as a group.

However, the child continues to grow and develop bodily, mentally and spiritually. There comes a time when his reason demands an accounting to harmonize his actions with his mature judgment. He discovers what the group has been doing but in only a small way. No one ever discovers everything that has been done to him. The rebellion of the individual is therefore only partial and comprises only those features of his indoctrination which he decides to rebel against. These are few, very few indeed, compared with the entire education the group has given him. A person must have an exceptionally strong will to be able to free himself.

Strong influences work in favor of his retaining permanently the group conditioning. One is the ever present force of imitation or the desire to be like the others in the group. This includes the associations it has produced; friends, loved ones, business, occupations, small groups, schools, lodges, churches and politics.

Another reason, much more comprehensive and irrational, is aptly expressed in a popular religious hymn, 'Faith of our Fathers', "We will be true to thee 'til death." In this is expressed the demands of the group that

the individual accept a faith that has been decided upon for him. So all inclusive is this demand that it has abandoned reasoning, investigation, science and other sources of ascertaining the truth and has substituted faith. The faith inferred to is the acceptance by the individual of that condition or mass of knowledge and educational seasoning which the group has imposed upon him.

The Inspiration of the Bible

One of the most important questions which must be studied in connection with the relationship of material and spiritual things is the inspiration of the Bible. We have been quoting passages from it and assuming that they were truth. Before progressing we must examine the question.

As a premise in the beginning, we assumed that there was such a thing as reality, that man really exists, and there is a material world and universe. Man lives in this world as an animal, is born, matures, lives and dies as an animal. Science has proven much regarding anthropological matters and these stand out as great mile posts in the life of man.

There is a conflict of ideas in the world and a difference of opinion or belief regarding the existence of spiritual beings. Upon this question rests the central or main proposition which is, 'There is a God.' This is the premise which we have taken. We hold to the idea that there are spiritual beings and there is a God.

Many scientists who study material phenomena and the laws which govern them, hold that there is no God or personal Creator, and everything which exists came into existence strictly in accordance with material laws. They hold with others, that the Bible is a collection of purely human writings, and rightfully too if there is no God who could have inspired them. To my way of reasoning it makes good sense. Either there is a personal Creator and God or there is not.

If there is no God that settles the question. If there is no God there can be no religion, for religion is the worship of a God, of a superhuman or spiritual being. If there is no God, all the writings, rituals, ceremonies, sacrifices and prayers are useless; much worse than useless, for they are based upon falsehood.

Man cannot invent a God which is superhuman and then write the rules and regulations for worship of that God and get anywhere. Man cannot invent a system of religion by which he can obtain any results or benefits whatever, which are not just material benefits, obtainable without the religion.

This is the reason that scientists and logicians who do not believe in God get the better of the argument. And the reason is easily understood. The hundreds of religions in the world today are inventions, written by councils of men. They see the error in these religions, which make the claim of being the religion of God.

On the other side of the question, if there is a God, the Creator of heaven, earth and man, what would He do about this man whom He created in his own image? Personally, I could not imagine anything more appropriate or more Godlike than the Garden of Eden prepared for them for a home, where He could visit with them, and God and man could commune personally. Under this provision God talked freely and openly with man and told him what he needed to know for his well being and co-existence.

But there came a time when this Eden life ended. God no longer told everyone personally how to live. He communicated with them through the head of the family, then later through the chief, king, prophet or particular representative.

As time passed, these instructions, or the desires or commands of God, became changed or perverted as they were handed down from one person or authority to another, and God's will concerning man became obscured. When man began writing, God used this method of giving His instructions, and brought to an end the misinformation and mistaken orders which had been changed so often over the years that they were no longer correctly understood.

Let us skip over the thousands of years, the many nations or peoples, the multitude of writers, languages, translations and printing, that the Creator of heaven and earth could have used to give His word to man. If there were and is a Creator, a God all powerful, He could have done just

that. I think that He did. If He did not then we are of all men the most miserable. We have no other trustworthy authority.

Since childhood we have accepted the proposition or premise that the Bible is inspired, that it is the 'Word of God.' And with that premise comes the unavoidable implication of its authority. Through the years we learned much about the many religions existing in the world today. They differ from each other in many respects, not only among non-Christians, but also among Christians. Many of these differences are so diametrically opposed that the conflicts between them have produced much suffering, torture, death and war. Many of the major conflicts are spread upon the pages of history and are facts in the general storehouse of historical knowledge.

A conclusion was really forced upon us by this widespread conflict. The conclusion was that this conflict is not right, not a good thing for man, that there must be some solution to the question. Certain aspects of the question seemed possible of solution, while others seemed not to be.

It was a quite obvious certainty they could not all be true. It was also a possibility that none of them were true, as the scientists claimed. But a conclusion that there were both truth and error in all of the religions seemed to be a position that repeatedly confronted us. We have no proof that all were wrong; neither did we have proof that any one was altogether true.

In the search for a solution we learned one fact early in life. To measure anything there must be an acceptable standard. In material matters we have accepted accurate measurement standards and for relationships between individuals and governments we have laws to guide us. Having been raised in the Christian home, with a Bible always available, it is understandable that even in our teens we looked upon it as such a standard. This conception of the accuracy and authority of the Bible was often asserted and defended with arguments and discussions, sometimes with success, often with failure.

Slowly but surely, a little at a time, we came to realize that the Bible was not accepted as authority or standard, not even among the many Christian religions that stated in their formal creeds that it was their

standard. We learned that there were mistakes made in translating the Bible into English from the original languages, mistakes made both ignorantly and innocently. Some mistakes were made intentionally too. New translations and revisions were made, removing many of the imperfections, but still intentionally retaining others. Our standard had failed. The Christian religions in general said in effect, “We are all going to the same Heaven but by different ways. There is no authoritative standard. We are saved by faith. To live the faith we profess is our goal.”

This conclusion of the religious situation resulted in a number of the large and influential denominational organizations uniting upon a basis of cooperation for promotion of growth, social service and the dissemination of religious propaganda. They united upon the basis of each group retaining its own peculiar beliefs and differences. It was called The Federal Council of the Churches of Christ, and is now known as the World Council of the Churches of Christ.

To remove the barrier of not having a satisfactory standard or Bible, they purchased the copyright of the American Standard Bible and revised it. They corrected some misinterpretations, retained some errors, and introduced new features, some of which had the effect of discrediting the deity of Christ.

From an introduction to the Revised Standard Version of the New Testament, by members of the Revision Committee, Luther A. Weigle, Chairman, Chapter VII., page 56. We quote the following.

“One of the great issues which the present revisers faced was whether or not to retain the second person singular ‘thou’ with its correlative forms, ‘thee’, ‘Thy’, ‘thine’, (‘ye’) and the verb endings ‘est’ and ‘edst’. After two years of debate and experiment it was decided to abandon these forms and to follow modern usage, except in language addressed to God”.

This divides the new Testament into two categories: God and man. They show the division by using ‘Thou’ in language addressed to God, and, ‘you’ in language addressed to man. In the following passages they thus rob Christ of His Deity.

- Matthew 14:33 *Truly you are the Son of God.*
- Matthew 4:3 *If you are the son of God.*
- Matthew 4:6 *If you are the Son of God.*
- Matthew 4:9 *If you will fall down and worship me.*
- Mark 1:24 *What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God.*
- Matthew 16:16 *You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.*
- Matthew 16:22 *This shall never happen to you.*
- Matthew 17:4 *One for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah.*
- Acts 1:6 *Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?*
- Acts 9:5 *And he said, Who are you Lord?*

And many other references also.

In 1950 we received a small tract which briefly described the 'Numeric Bible' by Dr. Panin. We purchased a copy of the New Testament. By an internal pattern of the arrangement of the numbers or values expressed by the letters forming the words the inspiration of the Bible has been proven. The numerics are of such a nature as to prove the entire Bible to be inspired and impossible of being produced by man without inspiration. This proof of inspiration is so thorough and complete as to include every book, every chapter, every verse, word and letter. It is so inclusive as to designate which of alternate renderings are inspired and which are not.

At last a standard has been produced. The Bible has been proven to be inspired by God. To the Bible we go for proof. Upon this basis of true inspiration by God we claim those references already given in this study. To this true standard we will go for continuing reference and authority, knowing that the Bible is in reality the 'Word of God.'

The Personality of God

There are two possible sources of knowledge regarding the personality of God. One of these sources is the revelation of God himself to the individual. This knowledge is authoritative only to the individual receiving the revelation. To be of value to other individuals it must be supported by supplemental authoritative corroboration.

The other possible source is the Bible, which is the word of God, and authoritative. It is not only authoritative for the knowledge which it gives or discloses; but is also an inspired standard by which revelations to individuals may be referred for corroboration.

Science might by some be considered a source of knowledge, but science is not a source, it is a systemized presentation of truths or laws already acknowledged through experimentation, observation or induction. The science of logic is especially valuable for considering action of the present matter now under consideration.

As all individual revelations must be supported by the Bible, our only actual source of knowledge thus becomes the Bible. For this reason we make a study of the Bible to learn what it tells us of God's revelation of Himself. In order to simplify the matter we will state the question in the form of a proposition or statement and then examine the standard or Bible for corroboration or refutation.

Explanation of Terms Used

'God', the supreme Being of the universe, the Creator as represented in the Hebrew language by 'El, Eloah' singular; and by 'Elohim' plural, being much more common than the singular forms. The singular form, El, Eloah, masculine in the Hebrew, is the word generally translated God or Jehovah and is represented or understood

to be the strong one, the all powerful, and in the New Testament called by Jesus, 'Our Heavenly Father'. Christianity expresses God as plural, a Trinity, of which El, power and masculinity is the Father. When displaying the quality of fecundity in dealing with Abram and Sarai, God is designated as 'El Shadai', Genesis 17:1. this being strength combined with femininity, the 'Spirit of God' represented in the New testament writings as the Holy Spirit, and still displaying the feminine attributes. The third portion, member or expression of the Trinity is that of redemption, 'El Elyon', Genesis 14:18, used as Abraham, returning from the saving of people under the Abrahamic covenant, expresses his obligations to the universal priest, Melchizedek, the type of Christ. El Elyon thus is strength combined with redemption, or the Father and Son, the third member or person of the Trinity. I use the word God in this proposition as the Trinity of Fatherly strength, Motherly comfort, and Sonship of redemption. God here is Trinity, Father, Son and Holy spirit, one, two or all three included in each reference to God as given by inspiration in the Bible, God's word to man.

'Spiritual'-consisting of spirit, not material. Pertaining to the intellect or higher endowments of the mind, relating to pure moral states, holy, sacred, divine.

'Personal'-pertaining to a person as distinct from a thing. Being of bodily form or figure, individuality in action, not done through a representative or medium.

'Being'-the state of existence, that which exists. He or she or that which exists, a conscious existence, either the created existence or the Creator of that existence, God.

Genesis 1:1, *God created the heavens and the earth in the very beginning.* 'God created'. God did something that required intelligence. A thing does not have intelligence. A person or personality does.

Genesis 1:2, *And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the water.* The 'Spirit of God,' a part or portion of the Trinity moved. A thing does not move. An intelligence, a personal being can move, directed by the intelligence.

Genesis 1:3, ***And God said, Let there be light; and there was light.*** A thing does not talk, an impersonal being does not talk, a personal being can talk. 'Let there be light', a definite command or statement proving a mind. Talk shows the existence of organs of speech. Power, strength, an impersonal thing or something cannot talk; they do not have the organs of speech. A personal being with the organs of speech can talk. And there was light, shows not only intelligence to give a command but also power or ability to follow it through to fulfillment.

Genesis 1:4, ***And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness.*** A power, a force, a thing, an essence has no eyes, it cannot see. A personal being with eyes, organs of sight, could see and evaluate the light He himself had caused, whether good or bad, and cause further action of dividing or disposing properly of His former actions. No thing, power or essence could do that. Only an embodied judgment, able to think, decides, talk, see, move and will could do such acts.

Genesis 1:5, ***And God called the light day and the darkness he called night and there was evening and there was morning, the first day.*** The acts or happenings of this first day are natural, performed by a spiritual being or beings containing the spirit of God. Thus the first period of creation shows us a God as a spiritual personal being.

Genesis 1: 6-8, Second day of creation. God spoke and created a firmament.

Genesis: 9-13, Third day of creation. God spoke and created dry land, grass, herbs, seed plants and trees. God saw it was good. Whether God saw it with or without eyes, He still decided it was good, which required a mind and a decision, so He was just as surely a personal being as if He were seeing with eyes.

Genesis 1:14-19, Fourth day of creation, day, night, sun, moon, stars, days, seasons and years. God was here exercising spiritual power.

Genesis 1:20-23, Fifth day of creation, animal life, birds, fowls and fish. A command was given to animal life, ***Be fruitful and multiply.***

God was directing His created life. He had super-intelligence to create, know and direct reproduction of class and kind.

Genesis 1:24-25, ***God created land, animals and beasts of the earth.***

Genesis 1:26-27, ***And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness— So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him, male and female created he them.*** Here we have a statement in the Bible that He made man in His own image and likeness. We know that man is a personal being, so now we know that God is a personal being. We know that man is male and female, so now we know that God is male and female.

We know that man is a material being because he is an animal. God is a super-human being. Spiritual is super-material and we now have this further proof that God is spirit. We now have Bible statements that God is like a person, thinks, acts, plans, commands and exercises pleasure and discrimination; that like man He sees, hears, talks and moves. We will continue our search in the Bible to see what further statements we may find that reveal the nature or personality of God.

Genesis 2:2, ***And on the sixth day God finished his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.*** Here we have another quality of personal being, 'rest'. Omnipotence, strength, universality, power, nor any attribute which may be assigned to God as being exercised by him cannot stop or rest. The action does not control the Actor. The Actor controls the action. The action does not rest when the act is finished, the Actor rests. The Actor rests because of a mind, intellect, reasoning and will power which do not belong to incorporeal objects but to corporate personal beings. The body of the Actor who performs the act rests. The act stops, the effect continues, the Actor rests.

Exodus 16:30, ***So the people rested on the seventh day.***

Genesis 16:22-30, Rest from bodily work or labor was commanded of the Children of Israel because God rested his body, the like action commanded of them.

Genesis 2:4-6, Created—every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew; for the Lord God (plural) all three persons of the Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, had not caused it to rain upon the earth—but there went up a mist from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground.

The scripture shows us another instance of God, a plural or Trinity, exercising the spiritual and superhuman ability of a Creator by creating the vegetable world before it was placed in the earth to grow, and before it was possible for a plant to grow as there was no moisture. God then placed the plants in the earth where they could not grow and could not have been created by natural evolution. By spiritual super-human creative ability God caused a mist to moisten the earth so the plants could grow unnaturally, supported by God's creative acts until the time would arrive when they could grow naturally. God's creative acts required intelligence, direction, calculations and mental action only possible with a spiritual, superhuman and super-material mind. Every mind is a part of a body. Where there is no body there is no mind. Power or energy without a body or mind to direct it is retrogressive, destructive, not creative.

Take some particular form of energy, say electricity. A good example of a large quantity of electricity in action is the electricity of the earth, a portion embodied in the earth, a portion embodied in the elements of the skies. In action it is undirected destruction, meaningless, thunderous, glaring ineffectiveness. It never creates any conditions for anything except chaos.

Take a small definite measured amount of electricity flowing through a motor directed by an embodied mind or intelligence and a reasonable sensible act is performed when that being is in control. But let a weak spot or any irregularity in conductivity develop beyond or outside the control of that personality; and the power, the energy, not only does not adjust the erroneous condition or create corrective measures, as God did when He caused moisture to support His newly created plants, but it destroys the very mechanism it is

using, burns it out. That is what happens to power when not directed by personality.

God is a Spiritual Personal Being

Genesis 3:8, *And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the Garden in the cool of the day.* Adam and Eve, living in the Garden of Eden, heard the voice of God. A voice requires vocal cords, controlled by an intelligence. For a person to hear someone talk in a language he can understand requires a person to do the talking. For someone to be walking in the garden in the cool of the evening requires a pair of legs. God was walking and talking. He had vocal cords and a pair of legs.

Genesis 3:8, Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden. God was there, present in bodily form, walking around. They hid from God because they did not want to meet him. They made aprons of fig leaves and hid themselves. Who were they hiding from? There were no other people. They did not want God to see them. God had eyes to see, a voice to talk, legs to walk and a presence which required a body to support it.

Genesis 3:21, *And the Lord God made for Adam and his wife coats of skin, and clothed them.* Another proof of the bodily form of God. God was like a man. A man is like God.

Genesis 4:9, *And the Lord said to Cain, where is Abel your brother?*

Genesis 4:13, *And Cain said to the Lord*

Genesis 4:15, *And the Lord said to him*

Genesis 4:16, *And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord*

God and Cain talked together and God heard him. Cain was in his presence, another proof of personality. They talked together in each other's presence.

Genesis 6:8, *But Noah found mercy in the eyes of the Lord.* God has a mind capable of like and dislike. The narrative of Noah shows us God as a being with thoughts and feelings. Pure force, energy or strength does not have feelings. The energy must be embodied in a personality.

Genesis 11:5, *And the Lord came down to see the city*

Genesis 11:6, *And the Lord said*

Genesis 11:6, *Come, let us go down*

I can understand the Trinity going somewhere and doing something together, seeing, deciding, acting. I cannot understand energy, already everywhere, saying to some other energy; let us look into this matter. Let us go down, where we are already and do something about something we know nothing about. Energy has no perception. It exists, but must be directed to be effective.

Genesis 12:7, *Then the Lord appeared to Abram and said*

Genesis 17:1, *The Lord appeared to him and said*

Genesis 17:22, *And when God was through talking with him He went up from Abraham.* If we accept the Bible as it is written it can be readily understood, but if not, we have to do a lot of manipulating to make any sense out of it.

Genesis 19:13, *The cry of the oppressed has come before the Lord.* Energy has no face. A person has a face.

Exodus 3:7-8, *And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their task masters; for I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them—.* Here again are four proofs that God has a body; first He sees so He has eyes; second He hears, so He has ears; third He knows their sorrows, so He has a mind and a brain; fourth He came down to deliver them. Only a body can voluntarily change its location.

Exodus 4:14, *And the anger of the Lord kindled against Moses.* Only a personal being can display anger, power alone cannot.

Exodus 19:11, *And be ready by the third day; for on the third day the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people.* If God was strength or force only, without a body, the people could not see him.

Exodus 19:21, *Lest they break through to the Lord to gaze.* The Lord was there to be seen and the people were restrained within the bounds that were set. Did you ever see a crowd of people gathered to see some great personage, and how they had to be restrained by bounds, ropes and guards?

Exodus 20:22, *And the Lord said unto Moses, Thus you shalt say to the Children of Israel, You have seen that I have talked with you from Heaven.* All the people saw God talking.

Exodus 24:9-14, *Then Moses, and Aaron, Nadab and Abiha, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up, and they saw the God of Israel; and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone clear as the color of the sky. And He did not harm the elders of the Children of Israel; and they saw God and ate and drank.*

Here we have described to us a get together meeting and feast, where they talked things over and ate and drank. There was God and Moses with seventy four invited guests, important picked men in authority, of the elders of the Children of Israel. After the banquet was over the Lord asked Moses to come up into the mountain and He would give him the law which He had written on a stone tablet. Moses took his minister, Joshua, with him, asked the rest to wait until he returned, and went up into the mountain to get the tablet of law.

I have read this story many times and in several translations. I see nothing unusual or irregular in God having a meeting and banquet with the leaders in the new nation He was establishing. I see nothing unusual in the descriptions which include seeing God, His feet and the beautiful sapphire mosaic, and talking, eating and drinking with him.

But if you say that God is not a person, has no body or parts, no feet, no hands, no eyes, no mouth to eat or drink, no voice to speak, nothing for Moses and Joshua to accompany into the mountain, then I cannot agree with you. This would take more faith than I have, for I believe the Bible to be the word of God. I also believe that God can hear me when I pray.

It is not necessary for us to understand everything. We should, however, understand the basic facts if we ever expect to use spiritual power effectively. It is not necessary for us to understand the omnipotent power of the Father, the omnipresent power of the Comforter or the omniscient power of the Savior, but it is necessary for us to understand that they are three individual personal beings so closely knit together as to be a unity or family that we call God.

We pray to God in hope of an effective answer. We must pray in spirit, but the spiritual power we display or use is not the superhuman power of God, not omnipotence, omnipresence or omniscience. We use the universal power of love, common to all creation; God, man and all spiritual beings. We pray with our conscious self but being material it does not contact God. Our spirit through our subconscious is what contacts God.

Our first and greatest concern should be the relationship existing within ourselves, between our material nature and our spiritual nature, or putting it in other words, between our conscious and our subconscious. Unless our subconscious can understand and transmit correctly the thoughts of the conscious to our super conscious our prayers cannot be effective.

We must realize that God is a being, a person like ourselves, with these powers, able to use them for us, able to understand the perfect person of which we are but an image. We must be concerned that our spirit carries the proper thoughts with sufficient power, love and trust, and then leave it with God for a solution. We seek an answer. Then let the Trinity use their powers and authority, individually or collectively, any way they choose.

They are intelligent beings, not just powers or energy or strength, but having these attributes, all of them far beyond ours. It seems to me that our main purpose in this mortal life is to learn cooperation, the power and use of love in unity, not only with God for superhuman satisfactions, but also with our earthly brethren for satisfactions in this present life.

The Reality of God and Love

There is reality. We exist. We know this because we are here. We are people. We see and hear and feel. We have nature and scientific study and experimentation all around us. These are undeniable facts. The material world today is using these truths to forward our way of life. The natural world is one immense unity which includes everything, each in its own place, each necessary and useful in the economy of the Creator of it all. What we think about it, our belief in this or that or something else has nothing to do with it at all. Facts are facts. Truth is truth. Law is law, and time-space continues regardless of human attention.

Albert Einstein has given us a wonderful insight into this vast universe of which we are a part. He has proven to the scientific world that all power, force or energy is one, the same, (with the possible exception of atomic and nuclear energy which had not yet been proven but are understood to be.) All matter, substances or elements when reduced to their infinite detail consist of the same parts. A portion of matter combined with a unit of energy is the standard which measures every element in the physical world from one to one hundred and one elements. The only differentiation is in the disposition of these two units. These are facts. This is reality. Chemists, physicists and scientists are using and proving this unity of the universe thousands of times every day, in every walk and department of life. There is reality. There is fact. There is unity. There is law now, from creation, and into infinite time-space or eternity. We have no choice. We must accept facts.

I, on my part also, must accept the same as all of you. I must accept what I see, feel, hear and learn from the sense sources with which I was created. I have no choice. I must accept the facts, understood or not. When I was a little child, two or three years old, I do not know

why nor how, I began to make journeys or trips to Heaven. I only know what I saw, heard and experienced. As any other small child I did not know where I was nor understand much of what I saw. As I grew older and the trips continued I learned by first hand observation what I know about Heaven. It was not told to me nor dreamed. I learned it of myself.

What did I learn that concerns us now? In over seventy years I have learned much that is worth knowing, because it concerns you the same as me. I met playmates of mine who had died. I played with them there. I met cousins, uncles, aunts, neighbors, and later my own grandfathers and grandmothers, my father and mother, my brothers and my own son. I learned the wonders, beauties and joys. I heard the music. I met face to face with Jesus, Mary His earthly mother and the Holy Spirit, His spiritual Mother. I talked to them, I became acquainted with them and they also know me. What has this to do with you? A great deal.

I have learned that God is not a single personality. God is a Trinity. God is three personalities. There is the Father, the Holy Spirit Mother and their Son, Jesus. They are a unity, a perfect family. God is love. God is a spirit. God is a personality, not a power, but a user of power. The power He uses is the power of the universe. I call it spirit force. It is the primary force. By its use God has created, from the primary spirit substances of the universe which are invisible, everything that is visible in both Heaven and earth. His nature is love. His first creation was the Holy Spirit. Together they created their Son. The Trinity, united in love, created everything else. They are a unity of love. They created Heaven as a home for love, joy, happiness and togetherness or unity. Lastly, after all else was finished, they created man in their own image; a unity, a family a man and a woman. They were creatures of perfect love, and they in turn became the parents of others. God gave them His law of love for their guide. God told them how to live, what to do, walked and talked with them. He showed them the operation of the love law. You know some of the story. I have learned some more.

We must live in love. We must love God, all three of them. We must love each other. There is but one law. Everything else is a portion of that one law. Evil is the breaking or opposite of the love law. There are three portions, or a trinity in the law of love, the law of God.

1. Love God with all your being.
2. Love your neighbor as yourself.
3. Love others as Christ has loved you.

Breaking the law of love is the only sin. God has provisions for treating this sin. Breaking the law of love for your neighbor is an evil act for which you must get His forgiveness. Breaking the law of loving as Christ loved you is evil also and brings Christ into the situation as your Savior. The ten commandments of Moses and the commandments repeated by Jesus all fall under the three sections of the law of love.

Why do we mention God, creation, law of love, and forgiveness when considering natural law and our relationship to each other in the group? The answer is easy to find. In Heaven I have found countless thousands of other people besides those whom I have known personally, who are living in what I know to be the fore part or beginning of an eternal life. This is important to know and understand for it affects every one of us. We are all interested, not only in eternal life but also in how to live the best we can in this earthly life with other human beings.

God is a Trinity. Love is a trinity. Man is a trinity also. Here again we call upon science to do her share. Science changes and advances by experimentation and some theories are accepted as truths or facts before their complete operation has been proven. Such is the case with the mind of man.

The science of psychology tells us that the mind of man consists of three distinct or main parts. Listed are the conscious mind, the subconscious mind and the preconscious mind. There has been much written through the years explaining these minds and their operation. We will need but a short summary of each.

The conscious mind is that which controls our acts, makes our decisions, attends to our voluntary actions and directs education and social contacts. It has no memory. The memory is in the subconscious mind. What the conscious mind needs of memory it receives from the subconscious mind and that portion of memory being used at the time is said to be in a sort of temporary or preconscious mind.

In the subconscious mind is located the various senses, the intuition and the hereditary instincts. By the exercise of its memory it controls the involuntary muscles, acts and decisions which make up the habits, customs and life of the man; deciding what is proper or improper according to the facts and information available to it. It is self willed and often stubborn when once it has decided what is right and wrong in a situation. It is the seat of guilt or innocence, right or wrong. No tear is ever shed without its emotional order, for it controls the grief.

Also a super conscious mind is known and proven to exist, but they have learned very little about it, or if they have they have not made the information available to the general public. The principal reason for this lack of recorded information on the super conscious mind is that psychologists have learned that this mind possesses superhuman powers, superhuman knowledge and other attributes beyond the human and science restricts itself to the material and physical realm.

With the study of man this is impossible to do for a very simple reason. Man is a dual natured creature; he is both material and spiritual. When he was created God made him in some respects like an animal and in some respects spiritual.

We have the statement in God's revealed word that man has both a material and a spiritual body. We know this statement is true because it has been proven scientifically by mathematics, that every statement, word and letter in the Bible has been dictated by God. I learned of this scientific proof of the inspiration of the Bible only a few years ago, and this absolute proof has added a great deal to my understanding of man's spiritual life.

The two bodies of man, the material and the spiritual are identical in every part, every organ, fiber and particle, bone, muscle, joint and

operation. They each have a conscious mind and a subconscious mind. They are alike except that one is spiritual, created out of primary spirit, and one is material, created out of the physical elements. One was created to live in a spiritual world and one in a material world.

They may be separated. The most common cases of separation are caused by the death of the material body. The material body dies and with it the material personality, life and material mind; the material conscious mind, the material subconscious mind and the temporary preconscious mind. The super conscious mind does not die for it is not material, but is a spiritual mind. Studies of the operation of the super conscious mind show that it is not contained in the material body. It is not a part of the material individual, but is an outside mind, one or more spiritual minds all of which have powers and conscious contacts. This super conscious mind is not an entirely outside mind for one of its contacts is the spirit of the individual, which is super or above the material.

The material body being separated from the spiritual body by death or otherwise, the spirit of the man, a living being carries on as an individual, a personality. It has a conscious and a subconscious mind, the duplicate of the material mind before they were separated. The material conscious mind, the guiding, ruling willing mind that controlled the man, now being removed, the recessive spiritual conscious mind becomes dominant, takes over and carries on without a break, the subconscious spiritual mind continuing its regular functions but now operating without the cooperation of the material duplicate.

During the separation of the material and the spiritual bodies, whether it is for a short space of time only, (after which they are reunited as in dreams, visions, levitations, hypnosis) or forever as in permanent material death, the spiritual body carries on, lives and acts with the same minds, the two it had up to the moment of separation, with this difference, that is, this spiritual is no longer encumbered with material limitations or powers and the super conscious mind or minds come into closer contact and operation.

Yes, while separated, the spirit does do superhuman acts. All of us know that. We have had these experiences personally. It is perfectly

understandable and natural, for through the super conscious contacts all the powers of the universe are available.

Why we do not use more spiritual power is a good question. Our material conscious mind is in control of our bodies and minds and directs our education, even the education of our spirits. We are free moral agents, created so by God in the beginning. We make ourselves what we are: good, bad, religious, moral, immoral, unsocial, criminal, illiterate, educated, refined, devilish or God-like. No wonder our spirit, when freed from material restraints, performs as it does. The spirit of man is the most acquisitive and responsive pupil of any educational situation, either natural, artificial, general or specific. The spirit of man, through the super conscious, contacts other spirits, good, bad or indifferent, in accordance to its training.

Spirit force is the energy of the universe that is used by spirit beings. This force is primary in its nature. It is before or basic to any energy known or discovered by physical, chemical or material means. It is the force used by the Creator to produce the tangible from the intangible spirit substance of the universe. It is used by the Creator and spiritual beings in all their actions, including the producing of elements from the substances of spirit which are tangible to spirit beings but intangible to material beings. These conversions of primary spirit substances into spiritual and material tangible substances, sentient to beings, I first observed in the laboratories of Heaven when I was a boy, still in grade school, over sixty years ago.

The spirit force, like all other natural forces, is carried over a conductor, like electricity, sound, light, magnetism, electronics or heat. This conductor of spiritual force is a definite spiritual substance which can be connected with the centers of contact as electrical conductors can be connected with the generator and the tool, instrument or motor performing the operation.

Just so, and as naturally and positively, spiritual power must be conducted from source to contact; no conductor no action, no connection no action, no power no action. Power must be of suitable strength or voltage to produce the desired action. This natural spiritual

force is not to be confused with religion, which is the invention of men. Keep it separate from faiths, creeds and all forms of worship. It is natural law.

God is the Creator, the Creator of you and of me, the Creator of the universe, the omnipotent Director of the power or force. God is love, the love of the universe. God's love is three, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. He has sent His love to us in the person of His Holy Spirit by His angels and His power. Through His love we become a unity with him, when we love Him and love others. The common bond of love makes us all one. With our conscious mind we will to love Him. We love Jesus our Savior. We love all our angels. We love our Holy Spirit Mother. We love everybody, her other children, our brothers and sisters in Christ. We are in love with them. We completely fill ourselves to overflowing with love consciously; and command and control our subconscious minds to do whatsoever is of love, pure and of good report, to put away every unlovely thought and deed.

Our subconscious minds thus being constrained by love, cooperating with the subconscious minds of our spirits, are educated and trained to love good and to abhor evil. When contact is needed with the super conscious mind and the super human power of the universe to accomplish our needs, requests, prayers or desires, our spirits make contacts for us with the forces of love, good spirits, good angels, and if necessary with the Trinity of God. The answers to our prayers are good. They cannot be otherwise when love is in control.

No evil can harm us. No evil spirit can be contacted. Our lives, our conscious minds are controlled by love. Our subconscious memories and habits are only lovely. Our spirits cannot be otherwise. We have taught them love. We have taught them to abhor the unlovely. They know no evil power, only love power. That which we have taught them, lying deep in our subconscious minds will be brought into the preconscious and the super conscious power connections will accordingly be lovely, desirable and of good report. The answers to our prayers, returned over the spiritual force conductors will be God's will, God's purpose for us, not the wrong answers given by evil spirits.

How is this possible? How can we be assured of this spiritual help here and now in this ordinary earthly life? It is all up to us. It is entirely in our hands. God has done His part. Whosoever will may come. It is ourselves with whom we should plead. It is we ourselves that have failed. God is love. He has created us in love. He has surrounded us with the wonders, glories and powers of His creation. He has provided you with an omnipotent Heavenly Father, an omnipresent Heavenly Mother and an omniscient Brother, companion and Savior; a Heavenly Trinity of embodied love and infinite power. He has provided for our every possible need.

He has assigned each of us seven angels whose special work is our spiritual oversight. Always there are two or more of our own personal angels in close proximity, loving us, caring for us. They are here, ready, working and filled with joy whenever we use their help. And there are also the angels of our families, loved ones and others. Their combined joy and expressions of love, devotion and communion in loving unity fills the air about us, connects us with bonds of love, (the spirit force) to each other, to the Heavenly Trinity, to other loving spirits and makes of all God's loving spirits a unity, a oneness, a kingdom of eternal life, love and cooperation, the unity of love.

How? It seems so easy to me. Jesus told us to enter into our closet and shut the door. There we are to commune alone with God. And God, who hears in secret, will be contacted. We all realize that the Bible, God talking to us, His inspired word and commands, is transmitted in loving forms, beautiful figures, meaningful symbols, whose real and spiritual imports are often foolishness to the material man, but life, love and reality to the spirit.

We do not enter a literal closet but we do shut out the physical world about us and are alone with the spiritual world of God and His love. By alone we mean that no other material person or human spirit is included in our own spiritual closet. We do this by conscious effort and deliberate intention. We try to get away from all possible physical activity, sit or lie quietly, shift our attention to meditation of love and peace. We make a definite conscious effort to shut out of our field of consciousness every

earthly thing that we can. We do not move consciously. We close our eyes. We make the same efforts as when we desire to sleep. We still hear the earth sounds, the autos passing, the wind and weather, the sounds about the neighborhood and in the house, but they now seem a long way off and do not enter fully into consciousness, very much as though we are going to sleep.

We do not lose consciousness and the earth sounds as they recede are replaced by other sounds. At first they are physical body sounds, such as breathing, heart beating and flow of blood through our ears. But we have listened to these many times and they soon pass out of consciousness like the louder sounds around us. There gradually grows a consciousness of other sounds as the physical sounds recede, spiritual sounds, and spiritual activity.

With this consciousness of spiritual sounds which we have commonly called, "The still small voice" there gradually develops the perception spiritually of the other senses and conscious realizations which actuate the spirit. Sight is usually one of the first to develop and levitation the last, which seems to complete the transformation. As far as we know or can determine, in levitation the spirit senses are fully developed or used. But levitation is a factor in only part of our experiences. Partial transformation is most often, and without levitation easily effected. Quite often, we might say almost every day, or many times some days, we hear the spiritual music and activity around us, of angels and spirits at work about their regular occupations. Everything seems natural and regular.

We affect spiritual hearing one of the first of the senses and it usually develops while we still hear physical sounds. Often our conscious attention will shift from one to the other. Return to the physical is usually faster and sometimes sudden, and so far has been satisfactory and complete spiritually, although at times our physical body has behaved in a manner different than it would if our spirit had been present. Our physical body seems to lose its sense of right and wrong, and to behave in a manner which the spirit would not approve.

The stage is set for us. Angels and love surround us. So also do evil spirits and hate. It is up to us. We make our own decisions. It is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow. We have found an earthly lifetime of love, joy and spiritual companionship and communion, with the beginning of an eternal life by following the directions given by God in His inspired word. We have found a spiritual unity with God and His illimitable family and kingdom. We have found a home in Heaven.

The Question of Original Sin

God is the God of every person who was ever born upon the earth. God does not have favorites but treats all alike. He is the God of every people, nation, tribe or race and of every individual in every period of the history of the world. He is just as much the God of the pigmies and savage tribes of Africa as He is of the Pope of the Roman Church or the bishops, officers or ministers of modern day churches. He is God to the criminal, to the convict, to the prisoner, to the slave, to everyone in the slums as well as those in mansions.

Great congregations of fashionably dressed people, sitting in cathedrals and churches, which are as beautiful as art can make them, singing hymns and hallelujahs to the tones of melodious pipe organs are of no more concern to God than the inmates of concentration camps, asylums, prisons or leper colonies. The same laws, the same love, the same answer to prayers, the same salvation, the same blessings, the same opportunity of eternal life, is just as much the concern of God for me as it is for the greatest Doctor of Philosophy or preacher on earth now, or of any who have every lived, even David, Solomon, Moses, Peter, James, John or Paul. We are all in the same position and relationship to God, always have been and always will be.

James 1:13-17, *Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil; neither does he tempt man; but every man is tempted by his own lust, he covets and is enticed. Then when lust has conceived it brings forth sin; and sin when it has matured brings forth death. Do not err, my beloved brethren. Every good and perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness nor shadow of change.*

God created Adam and Eve out of the earth, out of the natural material elements, an original and complete creation. This man was

created with the power and human freedom to sin if he wanted to. God told him what would happen if he did. Man sinned and death followed according to the law of God in which there is no possibility of change or variableness.

God made man male and female and told them to have children. This man proceeded to do after he became a sinner, after he had been punished for the sin he had committed, not before. From that day forward to the present time every person has been created by his parents according to God's natural laws, not by God as Adam was. The children of Adam, his descendants, are not perfect human beings when they are born, like Adam was before he sinned, but like Adam after he sinned. Neither his material body nor his spirit is absolutely perfect for he inherits from his parents according to the natural laws of genetics.

The children of Adam and his descendants sinned by choice, the same as Adam sinned, and with exactly the same consequences of death or separation from God. That was the law given to Adam. It still remains the law to his descendants and always will be the same. Each individual is dealt with by God for his own sins, not for the sins of Adam nor Eve, nor Cain nor of anyone else. God deals with the individual, not the race.

How my ancestors lived, what they believed, what good or bad deeds they committed is no concern of mine except in my inheritance from them. The physical or spiritual qualities or tendencies which are capable of being transmitted by inheritance are all that concern me. Their relationship with God, their obedience or disobedience of law was their own responsibility; it is their own foundation or acts upon which their own chances of eternal life are based. My hope of eternal life will be based upon my own acts, not upon my mother's or father's acts or omissions. Their sins are theirs, mine are mine.

If my inheritance from my parents is of such a nature that I cannot choose, and my acts are not my acts but those of another, then I am not a human being in the usual sense of the word. I am just a human animal. Just how God would deal with such a case I do not know. I have not found an explanation in the revealed word of God to man.

My inheritance from my parents might conceivably be of such a nature as to impair my choice. In Exodus 34:7 such a situation is suggested but even here it is stated that it will by no means clear the guilty, the inheritance going sometimes as far as the third and fourth generations. All are guilty of their own sins, but no one is guilty of any one else's sins, not even of Adam. Exodus 34:7, ***Keeping mercy for thousands of generations, forgiving sins and transgressions, who by no means justifies the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, to the third and fourth generation.***

Let us look at Paul's explanation of Adam's sin and its effect upon the human race. Romans 5:12, ***Just as sin entered into the world by one man, and death by means of the sin.*** That one man was the first man, Adam. That death was the separation of man's spirit from direct association with God. ***So death was imposed upon all men, inasmuch as they all have sinned.*** Death came to them when they sinned, not because Adam sinned. Romans 5:13, ***For until the law (the law given by Moses) was given, though sin was in the world, it was not considered sin because there was no law.*** Those in the world before the law was given by Moses sinned, even as Adam sinned and with the same consequences. Romans 5:14, ***Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them who had not sinned in the manner of the transgression of the law by Adam.*** The law of death was a universal law and covered all sin, whether like Adam's sin, or any other kind of sin.

Romans 5:13, ***it was not considered sin because there was no law.*** At the time Paul wrote this he was referring to the two laws that had been in effect in Israel up to the coming of the Christ, the first universal law given to Adam and the special Mosaic law given to the Jews only. The sin of breaking the law of Moses was not imputed against those who were not under the law of Moses, but the rest of the world still sinned and were punished by death under the universal law, and the Jews by both laws. Those under the Jewish law were a small fraction of the world population.

The operation of the law of sin and death was not affected very much by the Jews. Their nation was small and not very influential. The reason why we attach so much importance to it is because it was used by God to prepare the world for the coming of Jesus, and as a setting for the establishment of the Church. Through the Jewish nation, its laws and religion, prophecies were made and types set up which helped to establish the Christian religion throughout the world, including the Jews.

Immediately, at the very instant of time, when the blood sacrifice of Christ as the Savior was complete, at the moment of His death upon the cross, at the exact time when the Jewish special laws and prophetic national life, government, and religion were repealed, the new gospel of eternal life and forgiveness of all sins of all the world for all time and the death, burial and resurrection to a new life for each individual was established through the institution of a universal sacrifice, and the temple veil between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies was torn down. The Jewish order ended then and there. From that moment forward all people, Jew and Gentile alike, exactly alike for all people of all time, had access to God and eternal life individually. God's special use and care of the Jewish religion and nation came to an abrupt end. The small nation of Jews was now again on the same basis as before Abraham was called.

In connection with this abolition of the special Jewish order and blessing it is profitable to read about it in Paul's letter to a Gentile Church which had been started in Ephesus. It is only six short chapters. It is Paul's first letter after his imprisonment in Rome, to the churches he helped establish. This letter was addressed to Christians, those who were familiar with the gospel, who believed in Christ, God and the Holy Spirit, and had been living the Christian life. Paul does not give to them the first principles necessary to obey in order to become Christians. He does not command faith, repentance or immersion, but he does commend them for having fulfilled these conditions and receiving the benefits.

Paul in Ephesians addresses, the faithful in Jesus Christ. Eternal life was planned by God before man was created. 1:4, He chose us through

him before the foundation of the world. Ephesians 1:5, Christianity and those accepting it were predestined from the beginning, Ephesians 1:7, to have forgiveness of sins, Ephesians 1:9, according to His will, Ephesians 1:10, for all people in Heaven and earth, Ephesians 1:11, inheritance is obtained, not given to us, but predestined according to the purpose of God, and not that man was predestined as has been taught so long. The reason that eternal life was predestined was because God knew that man would sin and provided for it from the very beginning. Ephesians 1:13, *the gospel for your salvation, in Him you have believed, so you are sealed with the Holy Spirit that was promised.* Ephesians 1:14, *which is the pledge of our inheritance of eternal life.* The remainder of the chapter is a commendation of their faithfulness in obeying the gospel, and its blessings.

Ephesians 2:5-6, *Even when we were dead in our sins, has made us live together with Christ, by whose grace we are saved; and He has raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in heaven, through Christ Jesus;* Ephesians 2:8 *for it is by grace are you saved through faith; not of your doing; it is the gift of God.* Salvation is the gift of God, predestined from the beginning for those who through faith toward Christ and obedience to Him enter into eternal life, saved not by obedience, not by good works, not by a moral life, not by circumcision, not by being in the commonwealth of Israel, but by the blood of Jesus Christ.

Thus does Paul throughout the Ephesians' letter explain the heavenly blessing inherited by those who have buried their old sins and come forth new creatures, in one body by the cross, saints. Ephesians 2:14-16, *For He is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the wall of separation between them. And He has abolished by His precious body the enmity between them, and He has abolished by His commandments the ordinances of the law, that He may create, in His person, from the two, a new man, thus making peace.*

The Sin Cursed Heathen World

When the Church was started and the years following, in what we call the apostolic age, the Bible makes no distinction between sinners, whether they are Jews or Gentiles, civilized, or barbarians. At the present time the so called Christian world makes a very marked distinction between our modern civilization and that of what we call the backward countries or underprivileged people. We in America are trying to help these people to raise their standard of living. This raising of the standard of living of foreign countries is being done by two agencies, the government and the religious organizations.

But their purpose in helping these people is not the same. The government is helping them so as to create an ally in case of war or aggression, to help them resist their enemies, those enemies which America says are their enemies. Most organized religious groups are helping them raise their standard of living for the purpose of making it easier to convert them to their religious belief and thus increase the size and strength of their peculiar kind of religion.

So far as the government help is concerned everyone knows we are doing what we are for political and military purposes and unless that help produces the expected results we shall stop. Our concern is not the individual, not the group. Exactly the same thing may be said of the religious groups with the added explanation that modern habits and customs have so obscured the issues that very few people understand them. Let us not be so blinded by the issues raised by the big religious organizations as to lose our judgment entirely.

Sin is what condemns men to spiritual death, all men, everywhere, in American or in foreign lands; all men, in the church just as in darkest Africa. To belong to a church does not remove a man's sin. What is sin? There is but one sin. That sin is lack of love for either God or your

fellow man. How is that sin removed and eternal life secured? One way only. That sin must be buried in a grave of water in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Our faith that God will do this for us is our only hope of life.

All people are the same to God. All who have not obeyed are lost. They continue lost until they do obey. Obedience or death. Spiritual life or death. Might we use some of the strong language God has used in the Bible for those who have not obeyed His commands? We do not like to hear the bad news. We all like to hear the pleasant and likeable. But truth is truth as surely as God is God.

Genesis 2:17. ***To the first man mentioned in the Bible. for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.*** Genesis 3:17, ***Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you saying, You shalt not eat of it, cursed is the ground for your sake.*** Man is punished for his own disobedience of God's command. Note that there is no lack of faith mentioned.

Genesis 6:5, ***And the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was evil continually.*** Genesis 6:8, ***But Noah found mercy in the eyes of the Lord.*** Genesis 6:22, ***Thus did Noah according to all that God commanded him, so did he.*** Genesis 7:22, ***everything in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was on the dry land, died.*** All these died because of their acts of sin, disobedience, not for lack of faith, not for lack of adherence to group laws and customs. Genesis 19:25, Sodom was destroyed for wickedness. God overthrew those cities and all the inhabitants.

Exodus 15:26, ***If you will diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and will do that which is right in his sight, and will obey his commandments and keep all his statutes, I will bring none of these plagues upon you which I have brought upon the Egyptians, for I am the Lord your healer.***

God was here working particularly with the Children of Israel. The principle of obedience was the same as it had been for everyone since creation and would remain the same for everyone not a Jew. But the

Jews were being organized into a nation, a peculiar people, for a very special purpose, and given laws and ordinances not applicable to any except the Jewish nation. This purpose was the coming of Jesus and His sacrifice to do away with the blood sacrifice by means of immersion.

This distinction between the Jews and those not specially chosen by God was important because the Jews were a small minority, even a small minority of the descendants of Abraham and Isaac, whose descendants were all blessed of God and worshipped by blood sacrifices the same as the descendants of Jacob. There was a host of these people true to God and they became great and their religion and worship endure to the present time, even though greatly changed.

Abraham's oldest son, Ishmael, shared with Abraham in the first covenant with God. He was thirteen years old and Abraham's only heir when he and Abraham were circumcised. Ishmael had twelve sons and they became a great nation. Abraham was eighty-six years old when Ishmael was born. After Sarah died he married Keturah and had six other sons, all younger than Isaac. Isaac was thirty-seven years old when his mother died. Besides these Abraham also had a number of concubines who bore him many sons, who also later became the heads of tribes and nations.

Then also, Isaac's oldest son, Esau, married three wives, and had sons and his descendants developed into a great nation. While the Children of Israel were in Egypt these other descendants of Abraham grew into strong nations and occupied nearly all the land east of Egypt and were still worshipping God by the original blood sacrifices.

Into this country the children of Israel returned, having been worshipping God while in Egypt just the same as the other descendants of Abraham, Isaac, Esau, Jacob and their other descendants which had remained behind, still worshipping the God of their forefathers. But now a distinction was made between them for a special purpose, and their new religion must be kept free and separate from all others, even from the form of religion which they themselves had been using until now.

Now was introduced the laws of Moses which were to remain in force only among the Jews, until Jesus the Christ came to abolish the

blood sacrifices for the whole world. It was first to the Jew because that was where it was beginning, but it was for all the rest of the world also, even for the inhabitants of the land, the descendants of Abraham and all other people, even those afar off. Obedience to God's revealed word, to His commands, to His laws was still the condition of His blessing. Genesis 26:5, ***Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.***

During the lifetime of the Jewish nation, from the giving of the law through Moses until the death of Jesus on the cross, there were two authentic religions on earth.

First, The original and simple command to love God and to love your neighbor, with the simple blood sacrifice as a means of relieving the guilty feelings of the spirit which was a result of sin, or the breaking of the love command. The sin was not forgiven, just rolled back from year to year until the sacrifice of Jesus would be made, to become the basis for the complete forgiveness of all the rolled back sins.

Second, The Mosaic law, especially for the Jew and for no one else, and even for the Jew for a limited time only. The sins of the Jews were expanded to include the entire law of Moses until Jesus became the last blood sacrifice under that law. The law of Moses was an expansion of the law of love, and that original law was still in effect as Jesus told us. When Jesus became the last blood sacrifice, it was a perfect sacrifice, made by God for all the sins that had been rolled back awaiting that sacrifice. The Mosaic Law now became repealed and void. The law of burnt offerings and blood sacrifices for the rest of the world also became repealed and void at the same time as the Jewish. The sacrifice of Jesus was the last authentic sacrifice for sin. Jesus became the Savior for the whole world.

Third, After Jesus' sacrifice a third authentic religion came into existence with the establishment of Christianity. Both of the first two religions were still in effect as was the law of love which we so strongly emphasize in the Christian religion. But the law of love is not a Christian law, not taught by Jesus first here on earth, but is the original basic law

of obedience to God which was given to the first man and has been in full force and effect all over the world.

Jesus, while here on earth before His sacrifice, was personally instituting the change from blood sacrifice to immersion, going up and down the land explaining the working of this simple law of love of God and neighbor. Jesus gave but one new law. What he did was to explain the original relationship between God and man which had existed from the time man was created and first sinned. He particularly condemned the interpretations and new meanings which the group, through the priesthood, scribes, lawyers, and legislative bodies had made in the true and original intent and application of this law of love.

Jesus definitely and thoroughly explained to the people that this love of God and neighbor was a matter for each individual, that love and obedience was from the heart of man, and that sin was the breaking of that law by the individual.

No merit exists in obeying church rules or laws, in observing days or times or seasons. No merit exists for supporting man made worship plans, churches or organizations of any kind. No merit exists for helping to build beautiful buildings, supporting social activities, helping in philanthropic drives and other man made schemes of substituting human works of charity and good will for obedience to God's law of love.

Each individual is obligated first to God to rid himself of sin by immersion and thus purify his spirit in order that it can be in right relationship with God. Then and only then can God, working with man, through his obedience to the law of love, bring about the results desired by God. God must have men freed from their sins.

Did you ever know of a perfect man or woman? No, not one. Jesus was perfect, yes. But Jesus was not a man, Jesus was God. God came to the earth to redeem man from his sinful condition and as a part of that plan lived here on earth as a man, in a human body, under ordinary living conditions, subject to any and all temptations to not observe the law of love. He gave us an example of a perfect human life.

But there is one very important point to consider in connection with this God-man relationship which makes sense amid a great mass of contradictory ideas. The instruction by Jesus was, Matthew 5:48, ***Therefore become perfect, just as your Father in Heaven is perfect.*** But no man ever obeyed that instruction. Jesus also told them, Matthew 28:19, ***Go therefore, and convert all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*** That is the only way God provided for the gospel to be told to the world. By the mouth of imperfect men.

Nowhere has God said that He will teach man the gospel without man's help. It is true that God promised those who would be immersed in water and become new creatures spiritually would at the same time receive the help of the Holy Spirit to guide them in their work. But nowhere has God promised that these imperfect men would be so guided that their message would always be the true gospel. The gospel message as given to us in the Bible is a story with many ramifications, touching practically everything connected with human life here upon the earth. It explains carefully and in detail the destruction of the law of Moses, and the substitution of immersion for the blood sacrifice for the entire world. It also explains the operation of the moral law, men's relations with each other, in home and family, in the Church and in the nation. It also explains God's dealing with men physically, mentally and spiritually. Incidentally it often touches upon scientific and historical material.

Men in teaching the gospel use their own judgment in selecting what material to talk about, its application and importance. The matter they select and the vehicles of presentation to the people are the results of imperfect human judgment, and God has no other way of presenting the matter to the people.

God must present the gospel through imperfect and sinful men. There are no others. The Holy Spirit helps and guides in many ways but does not compel. The fact of participation by the Holy Spirit in the work of the ministry does not guarantee that the ministry is correct and sanctioned by God. Man has always been left free to speak and act of his own free will. The free will acts of men are not given the seal of

approval of God, either of the Father, the Holy Spirit or their Son Jesus, the Christ.

Here is presented to our judgment a many sided problem in relativity. God has truths to present to the world to help them attain the eternal life He has planned for them. God has entrusted that message to imperfect sinful men's judgment. God has given the help of the Holy Spirit for their work.

Let us use logic now. God is helping men teach. Man teaches both truth and falsehood. God is helping teach the truth, but now comes the difficulty. Is God helping the falsehood also? Can God so control the teaching that the truth is effective or productive of the results He desires and the falsehoods do not produce destructive results? Can God be on both sides of the question at the same time? If the matter is both good and bad and cannot be separated, and God is helping the good He is also helping the bad. If that is the case we have a peculiar situation. The growth and success of some particular form of teaching or organization which claims God's help carries with it a confirmation by God of not only their truth but also their falsehoods. Successes of any matter, whatever its nature, does not necessarily prove its truth or its approval by God, nor does the failure or unpopularity of any matter prove its falsehood.

Let me explain what I mean by a very personal experience. I was a Christian, immersed when I was sixteen years old. My wife, now immersed, was a Methodist, sprinkled when she was a baby. Desiring to have peace and uniformity in our household we went to the Methodist minister about the matter. He said there was no confirmation whatever in the Bible of infant baptism but that he knew it was proper because of the wonderful success and growth of the Methodist Church.

This brings up the question, Is the success of a matter a proof of God's help or approval or both? Possibly the success is the result of purely natural causes or natural laws of the universe and the operation of those laws does not prove or disprove God's approval of any matter, of either doctrine, practice or organization because of its success. That success may be due to purely natural causes.

To think that you are being loyal to God, that you are loving God, that you are doing God's will by following or supporting them in any way does not make it so. If faith in something makes it right, then everything is right for there are as many kinds of faith as there are people.

We sing the song, 'Faith of our Fathers', as if it was something to be proud of, something wonderful, something approved of God, whereas the fact is that the faith of our fathers has produced most of the confusion and difficulties that are to be found today in the religion that Jesus gave to the world in perfect form and sealed it with His life blood. We should hang our heads in shame instead of singing.

The True and False in Religion

Let us use logic in religion. The Bible, the only true standard, the only word of God we are certain about should be our guide, our only guide, not the faith of our fathers, our preachers or our churches.

Here is what Jesus says of false teaching.

Matthew 13:24-30, *The kingdom of Heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; but when men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went away. But when the blades sprang up and bore fruit, then the tares also appeared. So the servants of the landowner came and said to him, Our lord, behold, did you not sow good seed in your field? Whence did the tares come into it? He said to them, An enemy did this. His servants then said to him, do you want us to go and pull them out? But he said to them, It might happen that while you were pulling out the tares, you might uproot with them also the wheat. Let them both grow together until the harvest; and at the harvest season, I will say to the reapers, Pick out first the tares, and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barns.*

The wheat and the tares, the good and the bad, the true teaching and the false were both subjected to the same natural laws, the same soil, the same fertilization, the same care and cultivation and in that sense of the word were blessed by God, for He is the Author and Sustainer of the natural laws. But this parable plainly tells us that the false teaching was not approved by God, and the success of the true teaching did not carry with it approval of the false.

Success, big revivals, great churches, successful organizations and accomplishments, great moral and spiritual awakenings mean only that

they are the natural results of the work the servants are doing. Unless the fruit produced is a new creature who has buried his sins in the watery grave and come forth out of that grave a new man, an heir to eternal life, the blessings of God which he has so much enjoyed and on which he has built up his hope will be of no avail. Matthew 7:20-23, ***Thus by their fruit you will know them. It is not everyone who merely says to me, My Lord, my Lord, who will enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he who does the will of my Father in Heaven. A great many will say to me in that day, My Lord, my Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name cast out devils and in your name do many wonderful wonders? Then will I declare to them, I have never known you; keep away from me, O you that work iniquity.***

God has no choice in the matter. His work must be done by sinful men. If God did not use sinful people to do His work, His teaching and preaching the work would not be done at all. There are no other kinds. It is a matter of relativity. If the teaching is true a worthwhile harvest is the result. If the teaching is false the harvest truly may be great, but the net results may be a small percentage of wheat.

But there are other factors also which enter into the net results of the harvest. That is the size of the field and the proportion of the wheat and the tares. A small field of nearly pure wheat will often yield a much greater harvest than a large field which is nearly all tares. Another factor also is the quality of the wheat. Some wheat may be much more desirable than other kinds, if one considers quality as well as quantity.

In considering the quality of the teaching, or the fruit produced there is also a big problem of its relative value. It is true that no man will enter eternal life unless he has become a new creature. This joint heir with Jesus Christ is a valuable help, the most valuable help there is in teaching the word of God, but even he is not a perfect man. He is a sinner, because he is still in human form. But now he has an advocate in Jesus, a Helper, and God will forgive him whatever sins he commits after he has become a child of God and still living in the flesh under human conditions. While in the human form he may teach anything

he chooses. The Holy Spirit helps him but does not compel him to be always true.

This child of God, this saint, may teach what is erroneous and have great success and the very things he teaches may be in denial of the truth. He may teach that eternal life is given because of faith in God and Christ, and not because of obedience. Death came by disobedience and life comes by obedience. He may teach something else.

Immersion as an act of itself does not make a man a new creature. The acts of obedience culminating in the act of immersion are what makes the man the new creature. Those acts of obedience begin by hearing the word of God. What he hears must be the word of God, not the opinions or decisions of some group of people. He must know that he has sinned, broken the law of love, and that he cannot enter into eternal life as a sinner. He must know that Christ came to save him from the inevitable resulting death, and accept Christ as his savior. He must be sorry and willing to change his way of life to conform to God's word. This is called repentance. He must be willing to acknowledge his allegiance to Christ or acceptance of Him as his Savior. This is called confession.

As a man begins the process of regeneration the mind is operating along the line of the sinner and his emotions, acts and consequent habits of life. He hears about Christ and His saving power. He hears or studies until he begins to realize that his life is geared to a sinful way and here is an avenue of change. He contemplates the possibilities of eternal life. There comes a time when he desires to make the change and the desire becomes strong enough to change both his conscious and his subconscious mind. Then his habits, his emotions, his feelings, his love and his subconscious acts are changed. Physically and spiritually he becomes a different man, different in life and habits. This is the progress of repentance.

Usually this change comes about over a period of time and depends upon a number of things or conditions. With children and young people in religious homes it usually comes as they begin to study and understand. Often the change is almost or quite imperceptible. With older people

it sometimes comes within a short time and with some quite suddenly. With some, especially those who have been deeply sinful or who think that their sins have been particularly condemning, the change is very violent and emotion may run high. Great importance is readily assigned to anything that contributed to the change. But a real and important change has taken place. On the day of Pentecost three thousand at one time cried, out, *Men and brethren, what shall we do?* They were not told that they were saved. They were told what else they must do.

One of the most natural things in a person's religious experience is to attach undue importance to this change which has come about through a decision of his mind to accept Christ. He is filled with joy and love of God. He now looks on God and Christ and the Holy Spirit with a feeling of nearness never experienced before and he often regards with disgust those things which he once loved.

But the change is different in each individual. With some it is very marked and accompanied by high emotion. With others there is hardly a perceptible change in life or feelings. It is all due to the individual and his natural reactions. This change was not caused by God. This is not the beginning of the new life of the new creature. This is the result of obedience, that of repentance. Repentance is the change, the giving up of the old habits of life and changing over to the Christ like way of life.

Christian repentance is the change of man from sin to righteousness. This change is not the work of God but a perfectly human change. The change that God makes in the man in the process of regeneration is the same for all individuals. All become new creatures with their sins forgiven at exactly the same time regardless of their condition, age, knowledge or feelings. That moment is when they arise from the grave of immersion a child of God, born of the water and the Holy Spirit.

The feeling of emotion and often exhilaration that comes from the change from sin to righteousness, in the process of regeneration, may occur at any time. In some it occurs at the first realization that Christ can save him, with some after long and difficult study, with some after a deep spiritual upheaval or disaster, some before and some after repentance,

some after publicly confessing that they have accepted Christ as their Savior.

With some it does not occur until after immersion and then often not immediately. It depends upon the individual and his mental condition. Not being controlled by God, but entirely by the relationship of the conscious and the subconscious mind of the man it may occur at any time. With some individuals the change is so slight and unnoticeable that many think there has been no change at all.

There is a widespread belief that this feeling or consciousness of the change is an attestation to the work of the Holy Spirit on the heart of man. Some think that this consciousness of new feelings and attitudes is the proof of his salvation. It represents a profound change in attitude, motivation and emotional direction, but this is not so different, except perhaps in degree from many changes in life's direction; such as through the influence of a loved teacher or the sacrifice of a friend which brings a new and meaningful perspective to life.

The Bible is a large book and contains God's word regarding His relationship with men from the time of creation. But not all of it is to be believed and obeyed for the purpose of becoming a new creature and heir of eternal life. Much of it is devoted to sustaining the proper relationship, explaining how it has been or should have been functioning with various individuals and groups. Explanations are given of how the laws of God operate and how the powers of Satan influence the spirit of man.

All of these Bible teachings are true and help us to know and understand God and how He wants us to live here on earth. Man is a sinner, and at the moment when he arises from the watery grave all his sins have been forgiven and Jesus becomes his surety of the inheritance of eternal life. Man cannot remain sinless because he is a human being and makes decisions otherwise. But he now has an advocate in Christ. The Bible explains how this new relationship works. Read about it, particularly in Hebrews. Jesus taught his disciples to pray, ***Forgive us our offences*** Hebrews 7:25, ***Therefore he is able to save forever those who come unto God by him, because he lives forever to make***

intercession for them. Hebrews 9:15, *For this cause He became the mediator of the new covenant and by His death He became salvation for those who transgressed the old covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of eternal inheritance.* Hebrews 10:12, *But this one after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, sat down on the right hand of God forever.* Hebrews 10:15, *The Holy Spirit also is witness to us.*

Thus we see that the Father, the Holy Spirit and the Son, the complete God is the surety that we have forgiveness now under the new covenant when we ask for it. Read this wonderful explanation in Hebrews. It is the word of God. It tells how and why sins are forgiven and the new creature kept in correct relationship to God.

People do not read their Bibles enough. They read about the Bible, books and opinions of men. Those who teach, even from the pulpit, teach about many different things and most of what they tell us is true. But they are human and not perfect. They form opinions of their own. A doctrine is started. Others take it up. It grows and becomes popular. Great churches are built upon these doctrines and opinions. There is always at least two sides to every human opinion or doctrine. Some are many sided, even hundreds of opinions.

Is God blessing this teaching and preaching and these books? The truth is mixed with falsehood. Humans have promoted sects and factions based upon many shades of opinions. Very few churches accept the Bible any more as the actual word of God. Yes, God is blessing this teaching. He has no choice. Both truth and falsehood are sown in the field. But because God is compelled, by the very nature of the universe and the laws of nature which He himself has created, He blesses the false teaching along with the true. If God stopped the false portion of the teaching He would have to stop the true teaching also and that would destroy the harvest entirely.

Creation

In The Beginning

Genesis 1:1, ***God created the heavens and the earth in the very beginning.*** There is reality. Human beings actually exist. It is a fact that they live, move and have their being. There is such a thing as truth, and it is possible for people to think, reason and make decisions by the use of their natural faculties with which they are endowed or created. People use their five common senses, and others not so common, to receive impressions and evidence upon which they make their decisions.

No one can discover all truth unaided. Much is taken for granted, or is in general acceptance, and makes up a large sector of the total body of useable truths. There is a general storehouse of knowledge free to all, and by its use we may arrive at new decisions more easily and quickly. Much work has been done by others and we merely enter into their work and appropriate their decisions.

God created the heavens and the earth in the very beginning. This is the first sentence, the beginning of the Jewish Scriptures, the Old Testament portion of the Bible. It is of course a statement of a number of facts which none of us have been able to ascertain of ourselves without the help of other persons and labors. As a beginning, we are going to accept this statement as a truth which has already been discovered and recorded.

In the very beginning. Beginning is our first word which needs clarification. By the consideration of the entire sentence we discover that beginning was at some time before there was a heaven or an earth. It is not necessary to assume more than that. For instance it is not necessary to a proper definition of beginning, to place it before anything was created. Neither is it logical to place the beginning before God existed, nor to assume that God existed in a void where there was nothing. Such speculation is entirely outside the truth being studied in the sentence.

In the very beginning. We have discovered that all the elements of the physical world are composed of atoms. These atoms consist of two things, matter and force. The atom has been broken down into smaller parts, neutrons, electrons, protons, etc. and tentatively at least a quantity of each has been assigned to each of the various elements. There are also associated with these atomic divisions forces such as electricity, magnetism, attraction, adhesion, cohesion, motion, heat, light, space, weight, mass and time. Now we are venturing even further and are delving into that, whatever it is, that underlies the several divisions of these items and their association.

There is one basic substance or matter in time-space. This I have called spirit or primary spirit. There is one power or energy in time-space. This I have called spirit force or spiritual force. Since the beginning of time-space there have existed two things, this essence of spirit and force, and an intelligence. The essence is that which constitutes the nature of the universe, the essential reduced to its lowest or simplest terms, which answers the question, What is it? The Intelligence, using this essence of primary spirit and spiritual force, created the universe. The universe is matter with force. That Intelligence was God, whom we call the Creator. He used this spirit and force, which are the essence of the universe, to create everything which he created. He did not create the essence.

Science has proven much to us regarding the atom. We believe these discoveries and descriptions because they are shown to us in a form or manner which we can understand by the exercise of our senses. A demonstration of the truth of atomic structure was the announcement of the success of the atomic submarine. Here is proof possible of understanding. We do not need to know the details, which must be true, when the entire structure is true.

All atoms, of themselves, singularly, are invisible to the human eye. Some of them are invisible in the mass, such as hydrogen, oxygen and other gasses. We do not see the air about us. Many combinations, such as water, which is composed of two atoms of hydrogen and one atom of oxygen, are transparent in small quantities. We can comprehend the

fact that force, power or energy is transparent, that is, we cannot see it. It is entirely different when we comprehend that the other portion, or matter, of all the atoms is likewise transparent. In their atomic form nothing is visible or capable of being recognized unaided by any of our five common senses.

When studying physics in High School in 1898, there was an experiment prepared of an electric bell in a glass globe from which the air had been removed. We could see the bell ring but could not hear it. The teacher told us that this was proof of a vacuum. I immediately challenged the statement by stating that the supposed vacuum did not carry sound waves because the material or matter which carries sound waves had been removed, but that the matter which carries the light waves had not been removed, for the simple reason that we could still see the bell ringing.

Science has proven to us a very important fact in relation to the creation or beginning of the heaven and the earth. They have proven it but they do not know it yet except in a vague way. The fact is that the atomic form of matter those invisible particles; the substance matter of the essence pervades all space. For need of a better name scientists have called it 'ether,' but have not proven that it is anything physical.

We can see stars millions of light years away, and this light comes to us, not through space, not through a vacuum, but carried over the basic matter of the universe, primary spirit.

Sound comes to us, being carried over a material, or combination of atoms, such as air, water and others, but never in a medium of primary spirit as light waves are carried.

There is one other universal essential indicated in this first Bible sentence, and that is the word created, which by its very nature indicates the use of force, energy or power.

Albert Einstein, a number of years ago startled the scientific world by his theory of relativity. I do not understand it in a scientific manner, nor am I able to solve the mathematical equations with which he proves his theory. But what his theory means has been stated in common language

which most people can understand without the necessity of a knowledge of mathematics or science.

On January 9, 1950, there appeared an article in 'Life Magazine' by Albert Einstein, entitled, 'Unified field Theory.' From this article I gathered the following information.

That all forms of physical nature, stars, planets, light, electricity, and possibly even the tiny particles of matter inside the atom obey the same basic universal laws; is the objective in its broadest sense.

The unified field theory combines in a single, mutually consistent sequence of equations the physical laws governing both the electro-magnetic force, which is the basis of light and all radiant energy, and of gravitation, the mysterious force that guides the movement of celestial bodies and all material objects.

Virtually all the phenomena of the physical universe arise from these two fundamental primordial forces. Nuclear force which holds the nucleus of the atom together is the only other force in nature.

Quantum Phenomena. The theory which sets forth the physical laws governing the vast outer universe of stars and galaxies.

Material Substances. The hundred and one physical elements, chemical, cohesive, electrical, magnetic, all electro-magnetic force, light, heat, all radiation, X-ray, ultra-violet, radio wave and electro-magnetic wave.

Time and space do not exist separately, but exist as a combination of time-space. Light, heat, magnetism, electricity and gravitation are all related in such a manner as to make them all forms of a universal natural force, power or energy. It is very generally understood that in time proof will be found that nuclear force will be included as belonging to this one force. (End of information received from the article.)

This universal force, power or energy is carried from one point to another in the universe over the same medium or ether. Light travels from one star to another. In the same manner we find heat coming to our earth from the sun, and magnetic and electronic waves radiating, each according to laws which may be learned and recorded. Let us give names to these scientific facts.

All substance is made from identical matter, every atom, of every element from the same matter. We shall call this matter, material. All force is carried over the same medium.

We shall call this medium which fills the universe, spirit, or primary spirit. The universal force which scientists have proven but not yet named we shall call spirit force or spiritual force.

Each atom is made from a portion of material and spiritual force. The same laws apply to the entire universe and to everything in it. We shall call this natural law. This primordial substance, primary spirit, spirit force and natural laws are the same yesterday, today and forever. There is a sameness to it all. There is a pattern.

On one of my journeys to Heaven, in the summer of 1891, when I was eleven years old, I visited a university building in Paradise where there was an exhibit of creative art. I made a written statement concerning what I saw in this building, this statement quite naturally being about the features of the exhibits that were of interest to an eleven year old boy.

As I remember the exhibit, it was in a landscape setting of great beauty, the grounds, building and landscaping being part of the exhibit. Great crowds were examining the details from every side, noting the architecture, the flowers, shrubs, trees and landscape settings.

The interior of the building consisted of seven rooms, one large central room in the form of an hexagonal crystal, in which was the final or completed exhibits or arrangements. This was a setting of seven groups of statuary, one in each angle of the room under the high vaulted ceiling of the prism. This demonstrated seven steps in arriving at the completed exhibit.

Around this central room were six others connected with arched or vaulted doorways. In these rooms were exhibitions showing the preparatory steps or stages of development for the various items used in the final or completed central exhibit and also in the completed ensemble of statuary, architecture and landscaping.

The first room showed in three corners or angles, primary spirit being converted into usable, spiritually conscious substances, through

the use of Spirit power, the first three forms of spirit, which later I named—First-spiritas or spiritual gas, Second-Spiritene or spiritual fluid, Third-spiritite or spiritual solid. In the other three corners of this room was being demonstrated the effects or results of the use of the three kinds or forms of energy as related to the three substance forms, primary spiritual force, spiritual force waves and spiritual attraction. I later named these Spritower, spirito and Spiritism.

Through this room was the entrance and exit and crowds were passing in and out continually. I was just a spectator and had no particular interest in any part of it except to see the beautiful things that any boy would like. As I remember it now I spent most of my time in the room showing the metals, crystals and gems, the original crystalline forms of the spiritual substances.

I paid very little attention to the first exhibits where primary spirit was being converted into what appeared to be gas, water and glass. The products were transparent, apparently no coloring matter being introduced at this stage. The mechanisms seemed to be tubular with valves and contained within a short chamber, vault or tunnel, with an end or front of bright metal, and a receptacle of transparent material for display.

From this simple beginning all the various exhibits were developed a step at a time through the remaining rooms, primary spirit, permanent crystal forms, metals, stones, earthy substances, vegetable fibers, clothing, sculptured models, grouping and finally the completed, fully clothed central spectacle.

This has been of particular interest to me since scientists have discovered that there are forms of something; call it mater or what you will, smaller than atoms. There is another step in the process of developing elements from primary spirit, or we might say, another step in the act of creating elements from spirit, which was not shown in this heavenly exhibit, for there are no elements, only spiritual substances in heaven.

Quite a number of years ago I inquired of some celestial being about the relation between spiritual substances and earthly substances

or elements. He told me that elements were created from a spiritual counterpart which required great energy, spiritual power and attraction, which I have called spirit force or spiritual force. I understood that the act was instantaneous, cataclysmic and involved great heat and light. I was of the impression that such acts were performed only by the Creator and in specific areas or locations in the vast universe about us. It may be that in time scientists will discover how to convert primary spirit, through its several steps into elements of the physical world.

God

God created the heavens and the earth. With the word God we come to another important beginning. On the first page of the Dr. Scofield edition of the King James Version of the Bible, the first notation given, in the first verse, the first time the word God appears is found this information. 'Elchim' (sometimes El or Elah,) English form God, the first of the three primary names of Deity, is a uniplural noun.—This uniplurality implied in the name is directly asserted in Genesis 1:26, ***Then God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness:*** (Plurality). In Genesis 1:27, ***So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them.*** (unity). Genesis 3:22, ***Then the Lord God said, Behold, the man has become like one of us.*** (plurality) Thus the Trinity is latent in Elchim. Used in the Old Testament about 2,500 times. There are three personalities participating in the work of creation as recorded in the Bible. (Scofield Reference Bible, page 3, Genesis 1:1, Note 1, Elchim)

Genesis 2:4, ***These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the heavens and the earth.*** Genesis 2:7, ***And the Lord God formed Adam of the soil of the earth.*** We find a translation, Lord God. This comes from the Hebrew words, 'Jehovah Elchim,' or nearer the simpler forms, 'Havah' and 'Yahwe,' which signifies a predominating quality of utmost strength, power and revelation. Thus we have singled out one of the three personalities of the trinity, 'Jehovah,' which Jesus in the New Testament calls the 'Father' or 'Our Heavenly Father.'

Genesis 17:1, ***I am the almighty God.*** This designation for God is translated from the Hebrew, El Shaddai. The word 'El' retains the character of power and revelation but, 'Shaddai' introduces a new

element into the Trinity. ‘Shaddai’ means in Hebrew, ‘The breasted one’ and is used in Hebrew to designate a human breasted one, or a woman, a female. (Scofield Reference Bible, page 26, Genesis 17:1, Note 1, El Shaddai)

We find then a second member of the Trinity disclosed to us in the story of Sarah when Her feminine characteristics are revealed. Here we find creation, fruitfulness, conception, birth, with motherly care and solicitude exhibited in no uncertain manner. As translators of the Old Testament have not given this second personality of the Trinity a distinctive designation, I have taken the liberty to call Her ‘The Holy Spirit,’ or the ‘Spirit of God,’ Translators of the New Testament use Her name, but not knowing that She is feminine have used the neuter gender.

The third member of the Trinity, or the third person or personality in this uniplural name, ‘God,’ concerned primarily with that portion of the Godhead is more obscure. Moses, the writer of Genesis, is concerned primarily with that portion of the Godhead representing strength for the delivery of his brethren from bondage. Nevertheless his writings contain the information, though not thoroughly understood; until, in the sacrifice of Jesus, the long withheld mystery was revealed.

The first intimation of this third member that we have been able to find in the Bible is the familiar passage in Genesis 3:15, ***And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your posterity and her posterity; her posterity shall tread your head under foot, and you shall strike him in his heel.*** Volumes have been written by very able Bible students regarding this reference to Jesus of Nazareth and I will not elaborate on this point except to state a very obvious fact that many have overlooked when studying this scripture.

Here is foretold a struggle or conflict between Satan and the posterity (singular) or child of the woman. Satan is represented throughout the Bible as a very strong and powerful spiritual being with abilities beyond that of mortals. The only way in which this reference makes sense is for the adversary of Satan to be superhuman, also to be a human child, and still to be more powerful than Satan. The God Child,

Jesus, born of a human mother is the only answer to this mystery, as the study of the New Testament reveals.

Moses again refers to Christ as a member of the Trinity unknowingly in Genesis 14:18, ***And Melchizedek King of Salem, brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of the most high God.*** The Hebrew word translated God in this passage is 'El Elyon.' Elyon means simply highest. This personage or person of the Trinity is different from the 'Elhoim' or God of strength as representing the Father or 'El Shaddai' representing the Mother.

In Genesis 14:19 Melchizedek blessed Abram and said, ***Blessed be Abram to God most high, (El Elyon) possessor of heaven and earth.*** In Matthew 28:18-19, Jesus said, ***All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and convert all nations, and baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.***

Here we find the most high God (El Elyon) being announced as possessor of heaven and earth and Melchizedek being his priest. Christ in Matthew announces that this authority has been given to him. In Psalms 110:4 the Psalmist in prophesying regarding Christ says, ***You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.*** This is repeated in Hebrews 5:6. Christ as a third personality in the Trinity is introduced by Moses through this priesthood, which is independent of the Jewish and Levitical law, a universal priesthood.

Thus we see that the Father, the Mother, and the Son, the three personalities which constitute God were in the beginning. When we realize that God is a family, Father, Mother and Son, the passages in Genesis referring to the creation of man make sense.

Genesis 1:26, ***Then God (the Trinity) said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness*** Genesis 1:27, ***in the image of God (the Trinity) he created him; male and female he created them.*** Genesis 1:28, ***And God said to them, be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it.*** So God, a family of Father and Mother created man as a father and mother.

If we should take time to look up the many passage relating to the personality of God we would find overwhelming reference to and proof of the Father God, the Mother God, and their child, Jesus our Savior. The entire subject matter is so voluminous and interwoven that a complete analysis will probably never be made. Meanwhile we shall accept as a fact, that God consists of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, each with their own personalities and powers, acting as a unit or single personality in at least the important provinces of the creation, maintenance and ultimate disposition of man.

Bible references to the power, authority and priesthood of Jesus.

Psalms 110:1, *The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool* Psalms 110:4, *The Lord has sworn and will not lie, You are a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.* Genesis 14:18, *And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of the most high God.* Genesis 14:19, *and he blessed him saying, Blessed be Abram to God most high, possessor of heaven and earth.* Matthew 28:18, *And Jesus came up and spoke with them, and said to them, All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me.*

Mark 12:35, *And Jesus answered, saying as he taught in the temple, How do the scribes say that Christ is the Son of David? Mark 12:36, for David himself said through the Holy Spirit; The Lord said to my Lord, Sit on my right hand until I put your enemies as a stool under your feet.* Mark 12:37, *Now therefore, David himself calls him my Lord;* Also Luke 20:41-44.

In Acts 2:32-36, Peter explains that David in Psalms 110 states that the Lord mentioned there is both Lord and Christ.

Hebrews 10:11,12, *For every priest appointed ministered daily, offering the same sacrifices, which had never been able to cleanse sins; But this one, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, sat down on the right hand of God for ever;* Hebrews 10:15, *The Holy Spirit*

is also a witness to us. Hebrews 10:20,21, By a new and living way, which he has made new for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having a great high priest over the house of God.

Universal Priesthood

By universal priesthood is meant that Melchizedek was a priest of God for all people. At the time Abram paid tithes of the spoils of war to Melchizedek, the people of the world were of one family, or universal relationship to God. The world had not yet been divided into the two classes so common in Bible narrative, known as Jews and Gentiles.

Abram would have been classed as a Gentile at that time, for God had not yet established His covenant with him. This appearance of Abram before Melchizedek occurred at least twenty years before God made His covenant and ordered the rite of circumcision. Abram had no children at this time, even Ishmael his first was not born until about ten years later. Ishmael was thirteen years old when God made His covenant with Abram. There were no Jews or Gentiles at this time, so Melchizedek was a universal priest for all peoples, and as such was a type of Christ. Jesus authenticated this type and reference to Melchizedek as applying to himself. Mark 12:35-37. For a full explanation of the universal priesthood read Hebrews, chapters 5-7.

The Nature of Man

Genesis 2:7, ***And the Lord God formed Adam out of the soil of the earth, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.*** In the beginning God created man as a ***living being***.

We do not know when this creation took place except that it was in the beginning, the beginning of that which He created; which by observation and reason was a long time prior to the creation of man. But sometimes by some manner man was created. We know this because we are here. How he was created, the method used, the time consumed and the condition of the first human beings, we do not know. But this much we know: man was created under the same laws of nature, or creator, as were the remainder of His creatures, and these laws still exist to this day, notwithstanding that many believe God changes laws for man and have incorporated this into religion.

There is no explanation of God's method of creation or of the composition of this man. Two things are mentioned specifically. He was formed of the earthly dust or elements of the physical world. Does this mean that only his body was created and that he became only an animal? In that case a living being would mean alive, as other animals are alive. This would almost certainly carry with it the conclusion that being means life.

If we accept this interpretation then the clause, ***and man became a living being*** adds nothing. It is superfluous. In this interpretation the creation was completed when God ***breathed into his nostrils the breath of Life***. But it is not necessary to make this clause meaningless. This verse does not tell us what God used in creating man. He could have used the earthly elements to make his body and primary spirit to create his soul or spirit. This added clause would then make sense. Furthermore this would then show the true composition of man to be both material

and spiritual, both animal and spirit, but still a natural man made by natural laws.

There is another interpretation to this clause, Man became ***a living being***. It could be inferred that man already existed as a soul or spirit and became a living or animal being when his body was created from the physical element of the earth. Let us compare the first created man, Adam, and the last created man, Jesus. Both of their bodies were created from the natural elements of the earth, and both of their spirits were created by God and incorporated into their earthly bodies. There was no earthly father or mother for the spirit of Adam nor Jesus.

Regardless of how we interpret the Bible statement of the creation of man in Genesis we have the statement in I Corinthians 15:42-49, ***So also the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written. The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit, that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.***

We have here given to us the composition of man. There are two elements, natures or minds united together in the natural living man on the earth as God created him. These two are quite distinct and different from each other. Paul explains it to us by the comparison of Adam and Christ. Adam is of the earth, of dust. This I have called the material to distinguish it from the spiritual. I do not call it the natural man because the spiritual is natural just as certainly as the material. Christ is of heaven, spiritual, not created of material elements as Adam.

When we see man living here on earth we do not recognize the spiritual because the body we see is material. When Christ, who is

spiritual, came to earth He took upon himself a material body for man to see and hear, for the material body of man does not see nor hear the spiritual.

Man is both material and spiritual. Man has a material body and a spiritual body. These two bodies may be separated. When separated each functions as a separate individual. Each has powers, functions, abilities or actions peculiar to itself, but each also partakes to some extent of the uniqueness of the other.

Each body has a mind. There is a material mind and there is a spiritual mind. When the bodies are separated each body uses its own mind. Each mind partakes somewhat of the characteristics of the other. The material mind uses some spiritual attributes and the spiritual mind uses some material attributes. Neither is complete in man without some of the other.

In order to adequately express myself I have defined some terms, limited some and in a few cases use my own expressions. I use the word soul to express the life of the material body.

The spiritual body is a duplicate or pattern of the perfect material body. This spiritual body is born a natural birth the same as the material body and at the same time, and with the same parents. The spiritual body grows and develops. Its body and mind grow and advance in age and accomplishments according to natural laws.

The material body and the spiritual body are duplicates of each other; every fiber and tissue, size, shape and function. The difference between the material and the spiritual is just the differences between the material elements with their materially perceived appurtenances, and the spiritual elements with their spiritually perceived appurtenances.

There is this difference in the development. Spiritual laws develop the spiritual body so its development is not subject to the physical imperfections of the material body. For this reason we find an imperfect physical body which does not develop the same as its spiritual counterpart.

The spiritual part of man is the real, true and only complete portion or personality of man. The spirit of man lives after the material body

dies. This spirit is a real man, with a real body, a perfectly performing body, a body without blemish or flaw, a body created out of the same substance as its Creator, a spiritual body. This spiritual body is born at the same time as the material body, created at the same time, grows up through infancy and matures. The development of both the conscious and subconscious minds depend upon education whether that education is just the accidental process of growing up as an animal or being directed by a definite plan or purpose.

It finally becomes a mature adult spirit living in the material body, every organ, fiber and particle of the spiritual being a perfected duplicate, part by part, of the material man. But there is this difference between the two bodies which are enmeshed to make a human being. The spiritual grows according to natural laws from the moment of conception to the mature spirit and does not take on or develop imperfections, does not grow old or infirm, but remains perfect in form, composition and make up. When the material body becomes damaged and nature starts to repair it the pattern, the permanent perfect pattern, is still in existence. The material body may or may not be able to reproduce the existing pattern of the spirit, but the spirit remains complete and perfect nevertheless.

The mind of the spirit of man, while it is in association with the material body, develops and grows according to the direction or will of the material mind. The development of the spiritual mind is without limit but most material minds that are directing that development do not advance beyond the usual circumscribed limits of the groups to which they belong. For this reason we seldom encounter a spirit still associated with its human body; that develops beyond the commonplace.

Occasionally we find individuals who have changed from the pattern of the group to which they belong and we marvel at their accomplishments. Attainments are reached which almost stagger the imagination. Feats of mathematics, music, physical prowess, memory and innumerable seeming impossibilities are performed. Some of these feats are detached instances and some become permanent parts of the human personality. Many times this controlled development has been

accomplished by a definite exertion of the material will and its operation has been studied and methods noted. Many other cases have not been so successfully analyzed. The natural laws of these associations still need much investigation and experimentation.

Both portions of man, the material and the spiritual, grow and develop into an adult at the same time. The conscious mind is the reasoning planning, willing mind that directs all voluntary actions, thoughts, decisions and plans of both the material and the spiritual. The subconscious mind is the memory storehouse and directs all involuntary actions, thoughts, decisions and plans of both the material and the spiritual. This subconscious direction is always according to the established conditioning of that subconscious mind. Its perfect memory keeps it in line. The spiritual subconscious is the connecting link through the spirit with the Creator and the natural laws.

Thus we see that there is an overlapping of personality and control of the conscious and the subconscious. The conscious must have the cooperation of the subconscious for memory and the subconscious needs the conscious for its decisions and directive abilities. Neither is complete within itself. It takes both to make a complete human being. The material animal is the home of both the conscious and the subconscious, as is also the spiritual body, its duplicate.

When the animal body dies the material mind also dies, and its powers of control over the voluntary actions is of course gone as there is nothing left to control. During the life of the material body, both the conscious and the subconscious have been developing, being controlled by the reasoning power of the conscious mind according to natural laws.

After death of the material body the mind remains undisturbed in the spiritual body and the use that is made of that mind depends upon the development or education which has been directed by the conscious mind. Man's conscious mind has, by its own choice, directed the development of the mind, and its future life, activities, character and final disposition have been primarily determined by the reasoning and decisions of the conscious material mind.

The subconscious mind is the seat of all the instincts and emotions; love, hate, jealousy, greed, and the sensations which accompany the use of the five or more senses of the material body. All these sensations are retained in the memory. For the conscious mind to benefit from or use these sensations they must be supplied to the conscious by the subconscious.

The conscious calls upon the subconscious for these memory sensations and in reality trains the subconscious to supply them. So thorough is this demand and response that many of the voluntary actions become involuntary in the usual course of living and we often refer to them as being second nature. Some of these are walking, talking, reading, singing, skills of all kinds; the safest actions taken after alarms, such as heat, noise, taste, smell and others. The subconscious becomes trained to respond without a new or distinct demand being made upon it consciously.

In this way each conscious self educates and trains its mind and fixes its character. We hear the expression, 'Let your conscience be your guide.' It is not just a guide, it is you. It is the course or path of action your conscious and subconscious have agreed upon. Your subconscious will keep you there until the paths have been changed.

There is a third element that enters into the mental structure of man, but not of other animals. Some have called it the super-conscious, some God, the Great Spirit, the Heavenly Father, Ultimate Love and numerous other designations. It is a personality or group of personalities to which the spirit has access or contact, and the conscious has access through the subconscious mind.

We have learned a great deal about this super-conscious source which the spirit of man can contact. It is not a single personality. Sometimes one personality and sometimes several personalities are involved. At least one of these personalities, and possibly more, possess powers far beyond the range of the conscious mind's ability, and probably also beyond the power of the spirit of man. There are lesser personalities in this group, some at least which do not have the ultimate power of the one most powerful.

This one ultimate source of power we shall call the Creator. This Creator is a spiritual being or personality with the same or like attributes of the spirit of man. He it was who created the laws and circumstances which brought into existence the human man or dual personality of spirit and animal being. Having created the man, and also the laws under which he exists, he is superior or super to them. Also He still exists today with the same powers and the same laws as when He created, not only man, but all the other features and portions of the universe in which we live.

The Creation

Genesis 1:1, ***God created the heaven and the earth in the very beginning.*** Then follows a description of how it was done. Twenty-five verses tell about the creation until the time man appears upon the earth.

Genesis 1:26-27, ***Then God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild beasts of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.***

Genesis 2:1, ***Thus the heavens and the earth were finished and all the host of them.*** Here we have as a beginning the true inspired word of God. God gave His word for a reason, to be understood by man. Let us see what He has told us in the first chapter of the Bible.

As has been stated, the Hebrew word for God ‘Elchim’ is a uniplural word as explained by Scofield in notes in the Scofield Reference Bible. This word ‘God’ is not a singular but a plural God. It includes the Father or Creator, the Holy Spirit or Mother, and the only begotten Son, a God Family.

So God (three of them) ***created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female*** (as God is male and female) ***he created them.***

God created the heaven and the earth in the very beginning. This is a general statement covering the entire creation, heaven and earth being what we know as the earth and everything above or outside the earth, commonly called the universe.

Beginning with verse two He takes up the details of this creation. In chapter two, verse one He says, ***the heavens and the earth were***

finished and all the host of them. See Psalms 33:6. ***Host*** here refers to the spirit beings that are God's co-workers and helpers. I have used this passage as an explanation of the creation of the spiritual hosts of heaven. The Bible is its own best explanation of what God has revealed to us. We shall use it as such. ***the heavens and the earth were finished and all the host of them.*** Before mention is made of the seventh day, in which no further creation is made. Angels are not the spirits of human beings. They are an original creation, included in the first six original days of creation. It also tells us when the seven heavens, the abode of the host of spiritual beings were created. The heavens were also an original creation.

As God is a Trinity we had best correct our nomenclature before this becomes too complicated. I will call the Creator Father, Jehovah, the Creator Mother, the Holy Spirit; and the Creator Son, Jesus. The three of them considered together will be called God. This will prevent confusion.

Genesis 2:8,9, ***And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground the Lord God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.***

Genesis 2:15-17 ***and the Lord God took the man and put him into the Garden of Eden to till it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden you may eat freely, But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shalt not eat; for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.***

Then follows a description of the creation of the woman already mentioned in chapter one verses 27-30. One point in Genesis 2:24 is generally overlooked. ***Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh.*** The word translated flesh here does not mean in the original the same as we usually understand it. We know that they had two bodies of the flesh, were two individuals, or two personalities, and they are dealt with throughout the Bible as such.

We refer to God as one, who is really a Father, Mother and Son, a family. If we consider God, before the Son was begotten, we have the exact image of God, male and female. In what way was God one at the time of creation, and now also? A man and a woman married are one as God is one, being created so by God in the beginning.

God's first creative act was their Son. Man was created later, much later, but was given the command immediately to create offspring, which they did. Genesis 1:28, in this respect they were Gods, or creators. Creators of what is the question to consider. They were not the creators of the material bodies of their children; for all animals come into being following the same laws of reproduction as do human beings. We call these natural laws, or laws of the material world or universe.

As the animals were being created God blessed them saying, Genesis 1:22, ***Be fruitful and multiply***. But He did not say they were made in His image nor that the pair which mated to produce young were one flesh. Man was a different creation. Man was not created just an animal. Man was created in some respects like God; some creation of man was to be like some creation of God. Luke 24:39, ***For a spirit has no flesh and bones as you see I have***. Read the last chapter of Luke. Here you will find some of the activities of God. Jesus, one of the Trinity we know as God, reveals that He had both a body and a spirit. He demonstrated to His apostles both His spirit and His material body of flesh and bones.

Man was created a spirit as well as an animal. Man creates a spirit in each child, the same as God created His Son a spirit. This is the difference between a man and an animal. This is why a man and wife are one. They create an infant spirit which must be reared, trained, educated, and taught the proper use of both material and spiritual faculties. We call this spiritual creation natural law just as legitimately as the material creation; because both body and spirit of man is created by the same act and the body and spirit advance to maturity together.

The character of the personality of each individual human being depends entirely upon the development achieved by that individual. A savage baby raised in civilized society will be civilized, and a civilized baby raised by savages will be a savage. The only modifying element

in the development will be the native condition or inheritance of the baby.

So a man and his wife become one for the creation and development of their offspring, setting them aside from the remainder of the world of animals. Otherwise they are individuals. They do not inherit eternal life as one. Matt. 22:30, ***For at the resurrection of the dead, men neither marry women, nor are given to men in marriage, but they are like the angels of God in heaven.*** Babies are not created in heaven but on earth. ***for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.*** Man was created in the image of God but not a complete counterpart in every respect. We find two of these differences commented upon in the statement of the creation. One of these differences is suggested by the command of God for the man not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This is the first command of God which carries with it a penalty for disobedience, death. Death the same day he disobeys. Death? What kind of death? We know it was not the death of the animal body and life because his body did not die then, for he lived to be nine hundred and thirty years old. It was not sexual because our first parents reared all of their children after this death happened. This first or original sin happened before any children were born. It happened that same day.

It was not the death of the spirit, for if the spirit of our first parents died before any children were born to them then no people after that would have a spirit. I Corinthians 15:44, ***There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body.***

Another of these differences is suggested by the tree of life also growing in the garden. Genesis 3:22, ***And the Lord God said, Behold the man has become like one of us, to know good and evil; and now, lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever,*** Genesis 3:24 ***So the Lord God drove out the man.*** Who was the Lord God talking to there in the Garden of Eden when He said, ***the man has become like one of us?*** Genesis 3:8, ***And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day.***

We have here just a glimpse of the original relationship which existed between God and man. How glorious it must have been. We can read of

the wonderful creations, the beautiful garden, and the ideal conditions of human life to which man had access for his enjoyment. The cap sheaf of enjoyment was the companionship of God. Here in this garden of love our first parents lived in the company of the Creator Parents; Father, Holy Spirit and their Son. ***Walking in the cool of the day.*** Just another one of those wonderful days of love and communion.

I do not know much about this original companionship, how long it lasted, where this particular garden was, where they lived, how they were occupying their time or any other particular details except what God has told us in His inspired revelation to us. I do know the conditions in Heaven now where people are living, how grand the associations are with the Holy Spirit and Jesus, how beautiful the trees and flowers, how delicious the fruit, how satisfying the peace and tranquility of God's loving care and cooperation in all things. I know because I live there many hours of many days.

Death of my material body would not be a punishment to me. Death of my spirit would be unthinkable, and the absolute of me. The thing which would be the most punishment or disagreeable to me here and now would be the death, estrangement or denial to my spirit of access to the wonderful blessings and associations that God has prepared for me for eternity in Heaven. That I think would be the greatest punishment that could be meted out to any individual, either our first parents or anyone else, then or now.

Genesis 3:23,24, ***Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the Garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. so he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the Garden of Eden, cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the path to the tree of life.*** Genesis 3:17-19, ***cursed is the ground for your sake; in sorrow shall you eat the fruits of it all the days of your life. Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to you; and you shall eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of your face shall you eat bread, until you return to the ground; out of it you were taken; for dust you are, and to dust shall you return.***

Man was deprived of the original relationship of the human with the spiritual. It was the death of that relationship. The human life or personality portion of the human being would not obey God, so access to the tree of life was barred. Man retained his mortal life and body and his spirit with its body; but the access of man to God was conditioned that day in Eden.

The book of Genesis and the first eighteen chapters of Exodus deal with God's relationship with man before the record of the first organized religion of the Children of Israel. The entire world, including the descendants of Abraham were what we might call Gentiles. The Children of Israel as an organized theocracy came to an end with the choosing of Saul as king, but the formal religious system continued, and with changes has survived until the present time.

The first sixty-eight chapters of the Bible deal with people who were not worshipping under a formal religion. It gives us an opportunity to study some matters without the interference of formality.

The first direct formality given by God for man to obey is found in the seventeenth chapter of Genesis. This formality was not given to the peoples of the world for their observance but to one single man and his descendants. It had nothing to do with his worship of God and no spiritual significance was attached to it.

Genesis 17: 7-8, *And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your descendents after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, and I will be God to you, and to your descendents after you. And I will give to you, and your descendents after you, the land in which you sojourn, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting inheritance. And I will be their God.*

But this did not include eternal life. Hebrews 11:39, ***Thus these all, having obtained a testimonial through the faith, did not receive the promise.*** In these first sixty-eight chapters of the Bible all people are as one, all in the same relationship to God as were the first created men and women.

The New Relationship Between God and Man

In Genesis 3:24, we have the statement that God drove man out of the Garden of Eden. In Genesis 4:1-2, we have an account of the life after the expulsion. There is no time lost or words wasted to get to the point, for in verse three the new relationship is taken up and fourteen verses used to state it.

Cain made an offering of fruit and Abel made an offering of the life of an animal. The life offering was accepted and the fruit offering was rejected. To Cain God said, Genesis 4:7, ***Sin lies at the door.*** Cain had sinned against God. Sin may consist of either or both of two offenses; lack of love of God or of a fellow man. This sin mentioned in the seventh verse may have been just a sin against God, for no mention was made of a sin against a fellow human. But in verse eight Cain does sin against his fellow man for he kills Abel. And Cain is punished, not by imprisonment for either a long or short term, not by a fine of any kind but by being conscious continually of his sin against both God and Man.

Genesis 4:13-14, ***My transgression is too great to be forgiven. Behold thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the land; and from thy face shall I be hidden.*** But all relationship between God and man did not die. God was still God, and man was still His creature, created to be a co-worker, a co-creator with him.

To maintain this relationship God commanded an act of obedience or submission as evidence of man's sincerity and continued loyalty. He required that some of the animals man was killing for food be ceremonially offered to God. This ceremony was performed by the conscious man as an education or conditioner, to assure the avenue of approach to God being kept open for use.

This offering was a reminder of the death man had brought upon himself by disobedience. This offering was not made for its material value, but as a mental and spiritual act; an offering of one's self, a declaration of love and loyalty, and a keeping of the dual law of love.

Hebrews 10:6-7, ***Burnt offerings and sin offerings thou hast not required. Then said I, Lo, I come in the beginning of the books, it is written of me, I delight to do thy will God.*** In the book of Hebrews we have this statement of the fact that man through the exercise of his own free will keeps his spiritual access to God open and operative. This is by loyal, loving obedience.

Here we find also the three personalities of the Godhead, Father, Holy Spirit and Son, being woven into the substance of the subject in such an intimate manner as to assure us of their unanimity of purpose.

Hebrews 10: 9-15, ***Lo, I come to do thy will, O God, thus he put an end to the first in order to establish the second. By this very will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*** Hebrews 10:15, ***The Holy spirit is also a witness to us.***

No man is born a sinner. No man ever was born a sinner. No man can be born a sinner in any sense of the word. Even Adam was not born a sinner. Through the act of Adam man's direct approach to God was cut off, or killed, and God no more associates with man as He did in the beginning.

But God provided a means of approach from the human side of the relationship whereby man could live a normal satisfactory human life. This was through the offering of the sacrificed life to God ceremonially. This was not a hardship upon man. It was not an expense. The life of the animal was destroyed when it was killed for food. God commanded that of definite animals, always of the edible food variety the life be offered as a sacrifice and the portions not edible be burned. It was not required that every animal be used ceremonially, but that certain of them be so used. The point of the entire matter was a definite act of obedience in love to God, acknowledging the relationship of Creator and creature. The life was the only required offering.

Scientists now know that God knew from the very beginning of man's disobedience. The obstacle to man's right relationship, the cause of disobedience had to be brought out into the open, understood and then acted upon. Something definite, positive and making sense had to be done by the sinner. When a life offering was made to God, the sin was set aside. Originally it was as simple as that.

We do not know how often God required this sacrifice in the early ages of man, possibly once would be sufficient. But in cases of repeated sin other offerings would be necessary. God's part in this offering has been static since He told man what to do. All man had to do was to obey as instructed. God made the act simple and without cost. The life which was taken was offered to God but the edible portion of the animal could be used for food.

When Moses systemized worship for the new nation he was leading, these offerings took on definite form, time and distinctive meanings for the first time in the Bible narrative of man.

The New Hope.

Beginning with the twelfth chapter of Genesis we have a new development in the relationship of God and man. This period of about five hundred years was new, not for the peoples of the earth in general but for one man and his descendants. This man was Abram, living at Haran in Syria where he had come with his father, Terah, who had died. In the first three verses of the twelfth chapter of Genesis God calls Abram out of his country and from his father's house and says that He will make of him a great nation and in him shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

How were all the families of the earth blessed? It was not a change in the relationship of God with man. The necessary life sacrifice was not changed. In the centuries which follow we find evidence that some individuals were still obeying God, still making the life sacrifices as required and being blessed by God. In the rainbow promise God had said He would not destroy man entirely because of his sin.

The method God used in developing the family of Abraham is a sure indication that the blessing of all the families of earth was to be important. This blessing was not to be of a material nature, as was necessary for the making of a people or nation, but of a nature which would bless the individual, the family; and not only the individuals or families in the nation forming from Abraham's family, but the blessing was for all people of the whole world.

God did not change the life sacrifice nor did He withdraw himself from man. They were still able to obtain His help and blessing, not only in the family of Abraham, but in every other family if they would obey the two primary laws which had existed from the time of creation; love of God and love of his fellow man. History shows us that people have lived, developed and advanced in civilization throughout the earth for thousands of years. Some scientists believe for millions of years.

It is clearly apparent that when sin, that is the breaking of the two primary laws of God was in the ascendancy, individuals and whole tribes and nations went down to destruction. Sin broke off the connecting link between God and man. With tribes and nations the breaking of the law of love for others often destroyed whole peoples. We find many examples of this in history, even in the recent world wars. Hate, not love, is even today attempting to destroy whole civilizations, and we experience its workings at first hand.

The leaders of the new nation, being developed as a vehicle for bringing this blessing to mankind, did not know what it would be. We find in the Old Testament many references and prophecies about it, but as it had not yet been revealed to man by God, no man, neither Jew nor Gentile, knew what it was.

Christianity

The Revelation of Christianity

Galatians 4:4-5, *But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son who, born of a woman, became subject to the law, to redeem them who were under the law, (universal law, not just the Jewish law) that we might receive the adoption of sons.* Galatians 5:14, *For the whole law is fulfilled in one saying, that is, You shall love your neighbor as yourself.* Galatians 3:23-29 *But before faith came, we were guided by the law, while we were waiting for faith which was to be revealed. The law then was our pathfinder to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But since faith has come, we no longer are in need of the pathfinder, for you are all children of God by faith in Jesus Christ. For those who have been baptized in the name of Christ have been clothed with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Aramean, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. So if you belong to Christ, then you are descendents of Abraham, and his heirs according to the promise.* Galatians 4:8 *Howbeit then, when you did not know God, you served those things which by nature were not gods.* Hebrews 11:39-40, *Thus these all, having obtained a testimonial through the faith, did not receive the promise, because God from the beginning provided for our help, lest without us they should not be made perfect.*

At the proper time, when everything was ready, God revealed to the world His plan of salvation, His method of bringing man back into a full relationship with Him, including eternal life. If we have followed closely the revealed relationship of God with man up to the time of the New Testament, or the beginning of the new relationship, we have noted the following.

Men through sin brought death upon themselves. The sin they committed was the breaking of a twofold law, *Thou shalt love the*

Lord thy God with all thy heart and thy neighbor as thyself. This included every person in the world, Jew and Gentile alike, who were old enough and who did actually sin themselves. The death they brought upon themselves was the severance of their close relationship to God. All relationship was not severed, as God had a method of restoring that relationship by substituting another death or sacrifice, willingly and obediently offered by the individual to God. This kept the relationship operative from year to year.

Hebrews 10:3-4, ***But in those sacrifices they remembered their sins every year, for it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats could take away sins.*** The relationship was kept open but the sins were not forgiven by the animal life sacrifice. The great mystery all down through the ages had been, how was God going to forgive those sins and restore eternal life to man? Through the offspring of Abraham prophecies had been made, types and symbols had been set up, and the Jewish nation prepared for the coming event, that there should be no doubts of its authenticity.

The Beginning of the Revelation

The new condition imposed upon man, to perfect the plan of salvation, which was put into effect immediately following man's first sin was started with a miracle.

Luke 1:5-25, a child, John, was promised to Zacarias and Elizabeth in their old age. John was born and grew to manhood, Luke 1:80, ***The boy grew and became strong in spirit; and he was in the desert until the day of his appearance to Israel.*** Luke 3:2-3, ***The word of God came to John, son of Zechariah, in the wilderness. And he went throughout the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.*** This was so important that it was announced first, and John began the practice of immersion for the remission of sins, replacing the life sacrifice practiced since man's first sin.

The next step in the new plan also was started with a miracle about six months later. Luke 1:26-38, *Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to Galilee, to a city called Nazareth, to a virgin who was acquired for a price (dowry) for a man named Joseph, of the house of David; and the name of the virgin was Mary. And the angel went in and said to her, Peace be to you, O full of grace; our Lord is with you, O blessed one among women. When she saw him, she was disturbed at his word, and wondered what kind of salutation this could be. And the Angel said to her, Fear not, Mary; for you have found grace with God. For behold, you will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will call his name Jesus. He will be great, and he will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David. And he will rule over the house of Jacob for ever; and there will be no limit to his kingdom. Then Mary said to the angel, How can this be, for no man has known me? The angel answered and said to her, The Holy Spirit will come, and the power of the Highest will rest upon you; therefore the one who is to be born of you is holy, and he will be called the Son of God. And behold, Elizabeth, your kinswoman has also conceived a son in her old age, and yet this is the sixth month with her, who is called barren. For nothing is impossible for God. Mary said, Here I am, a handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word. And the angel went away from her.*

Mary went to see Elizabeth and they talked about these miracles, and Mary abode with her about three months and returned to her own home. In due time Jesus was born and grew up to manhood. The story as told in the New Testament is well known.

Mark 1:1-11, *The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the son of God.* was commenced by John, preaching and immersing for the remission of sins. Jesus began His active work by coming to John and being immersed in the River Jordan. Matthew 3:13-15, *Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. But John tried to stop him, saying, I need to be baptized by you, and yet*

you have come to me? But Jesus answered and said to him, Permit it now; for this is necessary for us so that all righteousness may be fulfilled; And then he permitted him.

Thus we have something new, or at least it appears to be, coming into the God and man relationship. But it in reality is not new, merely being a substitution for the life sacrifice so long required.

Why was it necessary for Jesus to be immersed? Jesus did not explain the underlying reason to John, just saying, permit it now. The Son, the God, the Spirit from heaven came to earth and was the Spirit of the baby Jesus, born of Mary. Before His human birth, the Son of God did not have a human mind. The human portion of Jesus was begotten of God but born of Mary. When Jesus died upon the cross and later returned to Heaven He took back with him His human mind the same as all humans have done. Immersion was necessary that this act of obedience required of all human minds be performed. Thus the human portion of Jesus fulfilled the law of the new birth.

For three years Jesus taught openly among the people and explained carefully everything necessary for man to know about the new plan. It was not until His death that it was really understood in its fullness. The Son of God, the Son of the Holy Spirit, the only begotten son of the Father came to earth as a human being and was made a life sacrifice for the remission of sins by the offspring of Abraham. Thus was the promise to Abraham fulfilled.

Immersion in water was substituted by John for the life sacrifice and burnt offering; and this fulfilled the required act of obedience. The Son portion of the Triune God was sacrificed for the forgiveness of all the sins of all the people of all the world for all time, both before He was sacrificed and for all time thereafter until the end of the age.

The life sacrifice for sin was made unnecessary because in its stead was given the rite of immersion. Jesus explained in detail to Nicodemus that he had to be born of the water to inherit eternal life. John 3:5 ***Jesus answered, saying to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, if a man is not born of the water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into***

the kingdom of God. But the rite of immersion did even more than become a substitution for the life sacrifice which rolled back the sins from year to year.

It gave to those who obeyed eternal life. For the first time eternal life was offered to man. A sinner entered the water. There he was buried. An eternal saint of God emerged, raised up a new creature, to a new life, his sins left buried, his new estate now a child of God, a brother of Jesus and joint heir of all his glory.

This rite, called immersion in the Bible, a burial in water of a person and their arising there from as Jesus arose from the dead, is the center of the new relationship between God and man. Those who have not been immersed when they arrive in Beulah Land are instructed further, and upon their acceptance are immersed in the River of Life. (I have seen this in Heaven many times. See my book ‘Seven Heavens’)

It was the first thing announced and practiced by John. It was the first act of Jesus. It was performed by John for Jesus before He started to teach or explain the relationship of God with man. The apostles were immersed before they were led by Jesus to teach the people. And when they started to help Jesus they immersed the followers. Not until the immersion of Jesus was fully established was John removed from the scene of action. Jesus explained the action of immersion to be the initiatory rite into eternal life.

The last thing He told His apostles just before He ascended into Heaven was, Matthew 28:18-20, ***All power in Heaven and on earth has been given to me. Just as my Father has sent me I am also sending you. Go, therefore and convert all nations, and baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, And teach them to obey everything that I have commanded you; and lo I am with you always, to the end of the world. Amen.*** Luke 24:49, ***Sometime earlier He had told them, But remain in the city of Jerusalem, until you are clothed with power from on high.*** Acts 1:8, ***But when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, you shall receive power and you shall be witnesses to me both in Jerusalem and in all Jordan also in the province of Samaria and to the uttermost part of the earth.***

The disciples followed Jesus' directions and remained in Jerusalem, the number of names together were about a hundred and twenty. Peter suggested that a replacement for Judas be selected to complete the number of apostles so there would be twelve. The qualification that he stated was, Acts 1:21-22, ***one of these men, who have been with us during all the time that our Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John until the day he ascended from among us, become a partner with us as a witness of his resurrection.*** It seemed important to Peter that the new apostle must be a witness to the introduction of immersion by John into the new relationship being established. Immersion was the new and important rite introduced.

Fifty days after the resurrection, Acts 2:1-2,4, ***And when the day of Pentecost was fulfilled, while they were assembled together Suddenly there came a sound from Heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and they began to speak in various languages according to whatever the Spirit gave them to speak.***

Acts 2:14, ***And afterwards Simon Peter stood up together with the eleven disciples, and lifted up his voice and said to them, Men of Jewish race and all that dwell at Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and hearken to my words.*** Then he preached a sermon to the assembled crowd of thousands of people. The recorded portion of His sermon ends with this sentence.

Acts 2:36-41, Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this very Jesus, whom you have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

When they heard these things, their hearts were touched and they said to Simon and the rest of the apostles, Our brethren, what shall we do? Then Simon said to them, Repent and be baptized, every one of you in the name of the Lord Jesus for the remission of sins, so that you may receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise was made to you and to your children, and for all of those who are far off, even as many as the very God shall call. And he testified to them with many other words and besought them, saying, Save

yourselves from this sinful generation. And those men among them who readily accepted his word and believed were baptized, and about three thousand souls were added in that day.

Here we have the first and most important thing being given to the world by the Holy Spirit (one of the triune God) through Peter. ***Repent and be baptized, every one of you.*** From the beginning by John until the establishment of the Church we find immersion taking an important place, the central act of the individual which changes his spirit by a new birth into a new creature, thus restoring once again direct access to God by every individual.

Christ's Life Work

Jesus is God the Son, the Son of the Holy Spirit and the Father Jehovah. He is the only begotten Son. The three members of this family make up what we call the Godhead of the Trinity. As far as man is concerned the three are one and the same. By the power of the Father and the Mother they caused Him to be born a human baby. But in so doing they did not break up the Trinity. He was still just as much God as He ever had been. This act of coming to earth as a human, to be sacrificed for the purpose of giving man access to eternal life was planned from the creation of man.

Revelation 13:8, ***And all who dwell upon the earth shall worship him, (the beast) even those whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*** Jesus, the Son of God was with the Father and shared in His glory before the world was created. John 17:5, ***So now, O my Father, glorify me with thee, with the same glory which I had with thee before the world was made.*** John 17:24 ***For thou hast loved me before the foundation of the world.*** John 10:30, ***I and my Father are of one accord.*** Read the entire chapter. John 14:9, ***He who sees me has seen the Father.***

Jesus knew the plan of Salvation, the place of sacrifice, and all the many details, for He helped plan it before man was created. One of the primary causes of Christ's coming to earth was to establish the rite of immersion which would make of man a new creature, restore the proper relationship between the Trinity and man, and restore eternal life.

In order to do this it was necessary for God to come in person, live among the people as a human, meet the same problems, temptations, customs, group education, religious ideas, laws of civil and spiritual government, and show the people first hand what the true situation really was regarding the all important God and man relationship. He

lived among men as a man, worked with them, worshipped with them, truly following the life sacrifice practice with his parents. He truly kept every point in the law, which He himself had given. He was the first human to obey that law in full.

God, by living among the people, was able to point out to them, day by day, in each case as it arose, what was truth; and point out to them His real will concerning them. He used His power of God and Creator at any and all times that suited His purpose.

We call many of these acts miracles. There were actually miracles happening all the time in the life of Christ. For He was God the Creator. Such miracles as were discovered by Nathanael (John 1:46-51) were really common with Jesus. We see it again with the woman at the well. John 4:18-19. Jesus was God, the Creator himself. It was His natural self. He was not just performing miracles; He was using His creative power.

At Cana He went to a marriage. His mother was there and she knew that He was God. Jesus acted at that feast just as any guest. He helped make the party a success. It is foolish for people to try to make out of this act of God the things they do. He gave no sanction to drinking, no condemnation of those who did. He attended and did what He could to help make it a success. Jesus manifested His glory and His disciples approved of it. So did everyone else, evidently pleasing His mother also.

John 2:13-14, *And the Jewish Passover was nearing; so Jesus went up to Jerusalem and he found in the temple those who were buying oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers sitting. He drove them all out of the temple. Do not make my Father's house a house of trading.* It had become a custom; the group conditioning had forced the people as a whole to accept a wrongful attitude. God in Christ corrected it.

Following this display of authority and godliness, Nicodemus, one of the rulers came to Jesus by night and said, John 3:2, *We know that you are a teacher sent from God.* Here is another miracle like that of Nathanael and the Samaritan woman. Jesus knowing why Nicodemus

had come tells Him of His mission without being asked. God had come to earth for a special purpose. This is the first recorded opportunity of Jesus to instruct directly a ruler of the Jews that immersion was taking the place of the blood sacrifice. Jesus embraced the opportunity without any preliminaries. John 3:3, ***if a man is not born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.*** But how? Nicodemus questions. John 3:16, ***For God so loved the world that he even gave his only begotten Son so that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life.*** He closes His instructions to Nicodemus about immersion by saying, John 3:21, ***But he who does truthful things comes to the light, so that his works may be known, that they are done through God.*** John, the apostle, was writing this narrative, in the next verse he continues, ***After these things, Jesus and his disciples came to the land of Judea, and he remained there with them and baptized.***

John 3:23, ***John also was baptizing at the spring of Aenon near to Shalim because there was much water there.*** (It required enough water to bury the sinner.) John 3:25,26, ***Now it happened that a dispute arose between one of John's disciples and a Jew about the ceremony of purifying. So they came to John and told him, Teacher, he who was with you at the Jordan crossing, concerning whom you testified, behold, he also is baptizing, and a great many are coming to him.*** John answered, in verse 30, ***He must become greater and I lesser.*** John 3:35, ***The Father loves the Son and has placed everything under his hand.*** John 4:1-3, ***When Jesus knew that the Pharisees had heard he made many disciples and was baptizing more people than John, though Jesus himself did not baptize, but his disciples; he left Judea and came again to Galilee.***

The immersion of repentance for the remission of sins which had replaced the blood sacrifice in the plan of salvation which was begun by John had now been fully transferred to Jesus, and the rulers had been notified through Nicodemus. The Pharisees were well aware that Jesus was the principal in the now well recognized substitution. Jesus went back into Galilee. But the struggle was now definitely out in the open. The Jewish rulers knew what it meant to have immersion replace

the sacrifices, and they prepared to do away with Jesus for changing their practices. They also were moved with envy toward him. Matthew 27:18.

Following this, on His trip to Galilee through Samaria, He met a woman at Jacob's well. Even in a simple meeting with a strange woman drawing water from a well He discloses His Godship with the ever present miracle, and in answer to her question regarding the place of worship, He met her needs and revealed deep seated fundamentals, not only to her, but for the other villagers as well. John 4:6-26.

The old forms of religion were on their way out and, John 4:21, ***The time is coming, when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will they worship the Father.*** No group can henceforth legitimately claim adherence to this or that, for John 4:23,24, ***But the time is coming, and it is here, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father also desires worshippers such as these. For God is spirit; and those who worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.*** In John 4:25-26, She challenged His authority and He told her plainly that He was the Christ.

In the three years of Jesus' teaching He meets each individual, group or situation as a separate and distinct problem or project and gives the correct, true answer in each case. Being God He deals with the individual problems, gives answers to the lack of human reasoning, and corrects the wrongs which have influenced the lives of people through group conditioning. In studying these cases we must try to understand what is being taught and why, and be careful not to generalize. The generalizing and standardization of problems did not come until He had completed His work upon the earth and turned the problem over to His apostles and disciples. While here on earth He dealt with each case individually. After He left His followers took up the problems, not alone as human beings, but as God sent ambassadors, (sent by Jesus, one of the Trinity) and guided along the way by God. (Guided by the Holy Spirit, also one of the Trinity.) Much of the individual instruction given by Jesus does not apply to other individuals, especially those who do not have the same background that He was correcting.

After staying two days in Sychar, and teaching many besides the woman He first met at the well, Jesus and His disciples continued their journey into Galilee and arrived at Cana where He had made the water into wine.

There was a nobleman whose son was sick at Capernaum about twenty miles away. When he heard that Jesus was coming he went to Him and besought Him to heal his son. John 4:49, ***My Lord, come down the boy is dead.*** Here was an individual problem. Jesus met the need and healed the boy immediately. We call it His second miracle. It was a miracle in the sight of man, and important enough for John, in writing about it, to call it His second miracle. Jesus (God) had restored the boy. With God all things are possible. But with God (Jesus) it was not a miracle, it was just natural. Jesus had already performed many miracles, but humans, not knowing the mind and nature of God seldom recognize the superhuman acts. Only the spectacular or interesting acts are called miracles. Jesus met the needs of this individual as He did those of the woman at the well three days before. He did not ask them to believe in him, to believe in God, to repent of their sins, to change their way of life, to promise to do right or live differently in the future. Let us not generalize. He met their problems and solved them as God.

Luke 4:16, ***And he came to Nazareth where he had been brought up; and he entered the synagogue on the Sabbath day, as was the custom, and stood up to read.*** He read a passage from Isaiah. The portion He read was Isaiah 61:1-2, It was a prophecy Isaiah had made about Jesus performing miracles, healing the sick, relieving distress, preaching the glad tidings, and bringing comfort generally to those who needed him.

The community as a group this time heeded His instructions. He told them plainly Luke 4:21, ***Today this scripture is fulfilled in your ears.*** And he proceeded to preach to them the things they needed to hear as a community Although He taught them many wonderful and gracious things, so that they all marveled, they did not like what they heard after He began to tell them their faults. So as a group, exerting mob violence, they rose up and thrust Him out of His native city, while He was still trying to help them. Luke 4:29, ***and brought him to the brow of the***

mountain on which their city was built, that they might throw him down from a cliff. They had been asking Him to perform a miracle for all to see. He did. He walked through the midst of them and went on His way unharmed. This was God and the time had not yet arrived for His life to be sacrificed.

After leaving Nazareth He went down to Capernaum where the boy from Cana lived whom He had healed a few days before. Capernaum is on the Sea of Galilee and He walked down to the beach. He evidently saw all the sights; the lake, the ships, the distant landscape and many of the interesting activities to be found on the shore or neighborhood of a fishing village. But this was God, with the problem of giving a revelation to a needy world and He saw things you and I would not see, superhuman insight.

He saw men whom He needed to help Him teach the crowds the new way of life. He stopped and talked to them, just fishermen. It was evidently early morning and they were bringing in their boats and taking care of their nets and gear, and unloading whatever fish they had caught.

He got into Simon's boat and asked him to thrust out a little into the lake, which Simon did for him, and He taught the people for awhile from this boat. All the people knew who He was, the Christ who had healed the boy, Christ, the God, who was living all the time super-humanly. Even in the boat the miracles, the super-human power of God was being shown forth. He asked Simon to take his boat out and let down his nets for a draught. He knew Simon had not caught anything during the night. God knows everything. Simon's need just then was for a catch of fish, an individual need. Christ met it.

The catch was so great that they called for help and their partners came with another boat and that one catch more than filled both boats. A miracle? Really not a miracle, this was just natural living for God, who is superhuman, a miracle himself, from our point of view.

What was the result of this little morning stroll Jesus made to the beach to see the fishermen come in with their fish and boats? He gave a talk or sermon to the village people and fishermen on the shore, another

miracle to prove His Messiah-ship, a large catch of fish to help out the four fishermen in making their living from the sea. Finally, Jesus asked the four fishermen to come with Him and help Him tell the wonderful new gospel. And best of all they accepted, left their nets and went with Jesus; Simon Peter and his brother, Andrew; with their partners James and John, sons of Zebedee.

Healing and the Sabbath

Mark 1:21-22, ***he taught in their synagogues on the Sabbaths. and they were amazed at his teaching; for he taught them as one with authority and not as their scribes.*** He had authority for all authority was his, He was God. Mark 1:23-24, ***And there was in their synagogue a man who had in him an unclean spirit; and he cried out, saying, Jesus of Nazareth, what have we in common, have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God.***

Here was God facing an unclean spirit who was really challenging Him before a crowd of people in the synagogue. Jesus did not sidestep the issue. Here was a man in need of individual help. A spirit had control of him, very probably in such a way that he could not ask for help of himself. Jesus rebuked the spirit, saying, Mark 1:25, ***And Jesus rebuked him, saying, come out of him.*** And he did come out. And the people were all amazed saying, Mark 1:27,28, ***what does this mean? And what is this new teaching, that with such a power he commands even unclean spirits and they obey him. And his fame immediately spread throughout the country of Galilee.*** Jesus lived superhumanly all the time. He was in the midst of situations needing Him and proving Him God.

After the services were over in the synagogue they went home with Simon and Andrew. James and John also were with him. When they arrived they found Simon's mother in law sick with a great fever. Jesus healed her immediately and she arose and ministered to them. Mark 1: 30-31.

Later in the day, toward evening as the sun was setting, they brought to Him all the sick people of the neighborhood, those that had diseases and also those who were possessed with devils, and the whole town was gathered about the door of Simon's home. He laid His

hands on them and healed all that were sick, and cast out the devils, not allowing the evil spirits to talk back to him, for they were crying out and saying, Luke 4:41, ***You are the Christ, the Son of God***; for they knew that He was the Christ. Here was God helping His people to understand him.

In the morning rising up a great while before day He went out to a solitary place to pray. When they discovered that He had left the house Simon and some of the others went out and hunted for him. When they found Him they told Him that all men were hunting for him. And also the people came and stayed with him, that He should not depart from them. Luke 4:43, ***But Jesus said to them, I must preach the kingdom of God in other cities also.*** Matt. 4:25, ***And great crowds followed him from Galilee, and from the ten cities and from Jerusalem and from Judea and from across the Jordan.***

Mark 1:40-45, A leper came and asked to be healed. Jesus healed him and sent him to the priest to report and conform to the laws then in effect regarding a healed leper. And His fame increased and great numbers came to hear and to be healed. And again He withdrew himself into the wilderness and prayed.

A needy world of sick, lame, lepers, demon possessed, just about anything that could affect man was meeting the power of God to heal anything and everything. Miracles, superhuman acts, God given advice, a new perfect gospel, love for hate, hope for despair, Christ, God himself, helping each individual as he had need.

After a few days He returned to Capernaum. As was customary he was teaching the crowds that had gathered out of every town of Galilee and the power of the Lord was present to heal them. He was still performing miracles. Among the throng listening to Him were Pharisees and Scribes and Doctors of the Law.

As these men who were in authority and high in power among the Jews, were listening the crowd brought up a man with palsy on a bed. The crowd was so great that they could not get through, so they went up on the roof, removed some of the tiles and let the bed down in front of Jesus as He was teaching.

Jesus knew the authorities were listening, and He knew their thoughts. He changed His procedure a little for their benefit, that they might witness a miracle which would prove to them that He had the power to forgive sins, which power belonged only to God. In this way He presented to them His claim that He was God.

Mark 2:5-12, *he said to the paralytic, my son, your sins are forgiven. Now some of the scribes and Pharisees were sitting there, and they reasoned in their hearts, why does this man speak blasphemy? Who can forgive sins except God only? But Jesus perceived in his spirit that they were reasoning among themselves, and he said to them, why do you reason these things in your heart? Whether it is easier, to say to the paralytic, Your sins are forgiven; or to say, rise, take up your quilt and walk? But that you may know that the Son of man has power on earth to forgive sins, he said to the paralytic, I tell you, Rise, take up your quilt, and go to your house. And immediately he rose, took up his quilt, and went out before the eyes of them all; and they were all amazed, and gave glory to God, saying, We have never seen anything like it.* Jesus was still fitting His help and His teaching to the individuals who needed His ministrations.

After this there was a feast of the Jews and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. While at the pool of Bethesda He saw a man who had an infirmity for thirty-eight years. John 5:6-11, *so he said to him, Do you wish to be healed? The sick man answered saying, Yes my Lord but I have no man, when the water is stirred up, to put me into the baptismal pool; but while I am coming, another one goes in before me. Jesus said to him, Rise take your quilt, and walk. And the man was healed immediately, and he got up and took his quilt and walked; And that day was the Sabbath. So the Jews said to him who was healed, it is the Sabbath; it is not lawful for you to carry your quilt. He answered, saying to them, He who healed me told me, Take up your quilt and walk.* The man learned that it was Jesus who had cured him and told the Jews. Then they sought to kill Jesus because He had done these things on the Sabbath. Jesus was interfering with the group customs and was substituting the correction of the individual, physically, mentally and

spiritually. He was setting the human spirits on the right road to eternal life. He did not tell or explain everything to everyone at once, but met each need individually as it arose.

He answered the authorities by saying, John 5:17, ***My father works even until now, (on the Sabbath) so I also work.*** If we just think for a moment or two we will immediately realize that God works every Sabbath and every Sunday. How foolish to even imagine God not answering prayers on Sabbaths, or not granting any petitions or giving other help on Sundays. Imagine God letting the stars and planets run wild on Sunday. Imagine God not working to keep the grain and vegetables growing on Sunday. Imagine God stopping His regular work on Sunday, or on the Sabbath.

Neither God, the Father, the Holy Spirit, Jesus nor the angels and other spiritual beings abandon their regular work on the Sabbath. The very fact that Jesus broke the Jewish law proves that the law was wrong, for He kept every portion of the law perfectly, the only human that ever did.

The Sabbath commandment may have accomplished the work for which it was given and was no longer in effect. Or the later law makers of the Jewish people may have changed or added to the commandment in such a way as to make its obedience unworkable. Jesus condemned in no uncertain words those who sought to fasten unnecessary laws upon the people.

John 5:18, ***And for this the Jews wanted the more to kill him, not only because he was weakening the Sabbath, but also because he said concerning God that he was his Father and he was making himself equal with God.*** He was God, the Son of the Father, the Son of the Holy Spirit, equal. Then Jesus answered them and explained in detail to those in authority why He broke their Sabbath laws. Read all of John 5:19-47, for a full explanation. He did not again refer to the Sabbath incident but told them plainly that He was doing the work of the Father, that they were working together as one to give eternal life to the people, and that they could even raise the dead to life. But He condemned them for their wrongs and told them that if they had followed or believed Moses

they would have believed in him. John 5:47, *If you do not believe his writings, how then can you believe my words?*

Luke 6:1, *It came to pass on the Sabbath, as Jesus walked through the wheat fields, his disciples plucked heads of wheat, and rubbed them in their hands and did eat.* Again He was criticized. Again He answered them, pointing out times when their own authorities broke the Sabbath and that even in the temple itself. Luke 6:5, *And he said to them, The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath.* I am greater even than the temple, for I am Lord even of the Sabbath day. He was God who established the temple, and gave the original Sabbath commandment through Moses.

Luke 6:6-7, *And it came to pass on another Sabbath he entered into the synagogue and taught; and there was there a man whose right hand was withered. And the Scribes and the Pharisees watched him to see if he would heal on the Sabbath; so that they might find an accusation against him. And He said to the man, Rise up and come to the center of the Synagogue And He said to them, What is lawful to do on the Sabbath, that which is good or that which is bad? To save a life or to destroy it?* But they held their peace. To the man He said, *Stretch out your hand*, and it was restored whole like the other. God was at work on the Sabbath day. And they were filled with madness. The Pharisees went out and consulted with each other how they might destroy him.

This great multitude He had administered to was fairly representative of the entire country from north to south, from the east to the western coast, Tyre and Sidon. Then He made a change in His method of operation. Until then He had been dealing with individuals and with isolated cases of persons breaking the laws of God. The crowds had grown too large to deal individually with all of them. Those He could not minister to crowded in just to touch him.

Now He, in a manner, withdrew from the crowd and found a place, a natural amphitheater on the side of the mountain, very probably just west of Capernaum near His present home. Here He could talk to a vast multitude of disciples in a natural arena or plateau. He discoursed to

them at great length. But the subject matter of His talk was different. He did not talk to them as individuals but as a group. He gave them the great basic underlying truths of correct living and righteousness which the world so badly needs. The discourse has been called, 'The Sermon on the Mount.'

The Sermon On the Mount

Three chapters in Matthew (5, 6 and 7) are devoted to this sermon. A sermon by God to His people, for all people of all the earth for every age of man. The sermon is preached to a crowd but applies to each one.

Matthew, Chapter Five

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up to the mountain and as he sat down, his disciples drew near to him and he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying:

Blessed are the humble, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who do hunger and thirst after justice, for they shall be well satisfied.

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall have mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of justice, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when men reproach you and persecute you and speak against you every kind of evil falsely, for my sake.

Then be glad and rejoice, for your reward is increased in heaven, for in this very manner they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

What a wonderful introduction. The people who are doing good, living righteously, having a difficult time are to receive the reward they

are entitled to in spite of all the odds against them. Truth will triumph. ***You are indeed the salt of the earth. You are indeed the light of the world. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father in Heaven.***

It is well to notice here that the individuals are being commended, not the organizations. The organizations, the groups, Scribes, Lawyers, Pharisees, those who were dictating the terms of religious life and worship are condemned. The individual is commended for his acts of righteousness and warned that they must exceed the righteousness of the Jewish religious authorities. Christ's emphasis here is placed on works and obedience to God's real laws. ***His disciples drew near to him, and he opened his mouth, and taught them***

The Sermon on the Mount was preached to His disciples. A disciple is one who receives the teaching. Faith is the first requisite of discipleship. After faith is established it is mentioned less and less as the teacher goes on to explain the details of His teaching, plan, system, philosophy, or whatever it is called.

Christ did have a way of life for man to live here in this world, a way acceptable to God. Faith is not all. After faith comes the living of that faith, the doing of what that faith stands for, the everyday habits, customs and routine of the human earthly life; the earning of a living, the community life of which the individual is a part; a community made up of more individuals who do not have faith than those who do.

I see no objection to Christ telling His disciples that they were the salt of the earth, the light of the world, and that their works must be such that all would see the light and glorify their heavenly father. Christ had a legitimate right to explain proper works to His disciples. He had a legitimate right to talk to people, who already believed and were following Him to learn more of His way of life, about the necessary character of good works.

The fact that He did not emphasize faith does not imply that He considered it unnecessary. But it does imply that He considered the manner of life one lived to be very important. Humanity will never be saved by faith, but by the good works which follow after faith. Faith

without works is dead. Christ had the right to tell His disciples what that life should be.

The commandment of Moses, *You shalt not kill*. Was to remain in full force, and to it was added, *Whoever becomes angry with his brother for no reason is guilty before the court*.

For the Jew, living under the law, He said, *If it should happen therefore that while you are presenting your offering upon the altar, and right there you remember that your brother has any grievance against you, leave your offering there upon the altar, and first go and make peace with your brother, and then come back and present your offering*. Then He especially calls attention to the fact that He is including any and all differences, even those with strangers. Settle your differences while you have a chance, lest you get into worse trouble, possibly even sent to prison. The group might not judge justly; it is better to settle with the individual.

You shall not commit adultery, nor even look on a woman to lust after her. *If your right eye should cause you to stumble, pluck it out and throw it away from you; for it is better for you to lose one of your members, and not have all your body fall into hell*. Jesus, God, the Creator, knows how man was created a material body and a spiritual body. Better lose part of his material body if in so doing he can save his spiritual body for eternal life.

Do not swear or take an oath to strengthen your testimony. Do not swear at all, either by heaven or by God, or by the earth, or by Jerusalem or by thy head. Let what you say be either yes or no, anything more is evil. You shall not hate your enemy nor require an eye for an eye, nor a tooth for a tooth. But you should love your neighbor as yourself. Your neighbor may be your enemy. You should also love your enemy. Everyone loves his friends. This is a group condition. Pay no attention to the restrictions but love everyone, enemies as well as friends. This is the second important law of God, the breaking of which is a sin.

The first commandment is that thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy might, and with all thy strength;

and the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. ***whoever strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also; and if anyone wishes to sue you at the court and take away your shirt, let him have your robe also, whoever compels you to carry a burden one mile, go with him two.*** Love these people and treat them as you would like to be treated. You therefore must be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect. You desire to go to heaven, to your heavenly Father, therefore be like Him as best you can. God wants works, not just faith.

Matthew, Chapter Six

Again Jesus emphasizes that we must act independently, not follow the wrong practices which have been established. ***Be careful concerning your alms, not to do them in the presence of men, merely that they may see them; otherwise you have no reward.*** Do not as the hypocrites ***In the synagogues and in the market places, so that they may be glorified by men. They have already received their reward. Let not your left hand know what your right hand is doing.*** If your spirit is right with God it is a relationship between you and God, not to be publicized. The meaning is clear. Your deeds, works, thoughts, spiritual life, prayers, all of your personal relationships with God are yours individually. Do not recite them before the group, either in the synagogue or on the street. They are your own personally. When you pray enter into your closet and shut the door. ***Your Father who sees in secret shall himself reward you openly.***

Just remember, God knows your needs before you ask him. ***Therefore pray in this manner: Our Father in Heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth.*** A most important item. ***Give us bread for our needs from day to day.*** We might say just as correctly, give us this day what we need. For God knows what we need, not only bread, but the other needs of the material body, for the maintenance of life and the enjoyment of it. ***And forgive us our offences as we have forgiven our offenders. In Luke 11:4, it reads, And forgive us our sins, for we have also forgiven all who have offended***

us. Jesus later explains in verse fourteen, ***For If you forgive men their faults, your Father in heaven will also forgive you; But if you do not forgive men, neither will your Father forgive even your faults.*** This seems to cover about anything or everything that could be forgiven by either man or God; sins, debts, trespasses. We forgive others as we in turn would like others to forgive us, because we love them, thus obeying the second commandment. The prayer continues ***And do not let us enter into temptation, but deliver us from evil.*** When we recognize that man consists of two personalities, one represented by the material mind, and the other by the spiritual, we can understand this prayer which Jesus gave to His disciples as a suggestion or pattern.

Our material mind guides the training or education of the Spirit, either according to our own decisions or the decisions which are passed on to us by the groups with which we are associated. This spirit is our only, but very efficient, contact with God, our Father. ***Father*** we ask in prayer, Deliver us from evil and do not let us be led into temptations that are constantly presented by the group conduct about us. Help us to keep our spirit right and our contact with thee clear.

The remainder of the sixth chapter is devoted to what Jesus told the multitude to do to avoid having their spirits wrongfully conditioned. when you fast, wash your face, anoint your head; prepare yourself for a pleasant, happy spiritual experience. Avoid all show or pretension of grief. You should keep it a secret. God knows you are fasting for the improvement of your relationship with him. That is enough; keep the group out of it. God, not the group, answers your prayers, pray to Him.

Do not lay up for yourselves treasures buried in the ground. A place where rust and moth destroy and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up for yourselves a treasure in heaven, where neither rust nor moth destroys and where thieves do not break through and steal. For where your treasure is, there also is your heart. Heart here means the affections.

In the Father's care are two considerations, the material and the spiritual. In caring for the animal he provides only the material. In caring for human beings the spiritual provision is the all important part,

while the material things are often hindrances. To the Jew God promised material blessings through Abraham, but not eternal life. To the Christian God promises eternal life, not material blessings. Our needs for this earthly life are difficult to keep in the background. We continually place them ahead of the spiritual needs.

God cares for the material things of the universe. He makes the sun to shine, the rain to fall, the seasons to progress, the trees to grow, the grass and the flowers, the fruit and the corn. He cares for the animal creatures He has created and not even a single sparrow is overlooked.

But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added to you. Keep yourself free from the temptations around you and all those things which you need will be added unto you. Serve God. Obey him. God is a spirit and you must worship Him in spirit and in truth. Live by faith, the faith that will cause you to obey him, to do something about it, to do the works which will save you. Pray, but help God answer your prayers, by obeying His commandments. Help make His kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven.

Matthew, Chapter Seven.

Chapter seven is a general statement of those common or everyday situations in which people meet the temptations to sin, that is to break one of the two human conduct laws, first, love God; second, love your neighbor as yourself, a digest of the law and the prophets.

Judge not that you may not be judged. Live your own life in your own way. Let your neighbor do the same. Let your life so shine that others seeing you will glorify God. The greatest area of judging and criticism is among the customs or fashions of conduct prescribed by the group, the keeping or breaking of which has no connection with sin, nor man's relationship with God. The pros and cons do not matter at all.

Evils may result from attempts to have people adhere to nonessentials. Sometimes it is wise to avoid hate and violence by keeping quiet. ***Do not give holy things to the dogs.*** Lest they turn and rend you.

Ask and it shall be given to you. Ask what? Seek what? ***Whatever you wish men to do for you, do likewise also for them*** Ask for proper things which Jesus has not already emphasized in His formal statement; that is not daily bread nor common temporal needs. God knows what you need in your daily life, and these He will provide, the same as an earthly father would provide.

Knock and it shall be opened unto you. ***Enter in through the narrow door.*** Ask and the way will be shown to you. Broad and easy is the wrong way. The group is shouting it to you with all their persuasiveness, but do not follow. The way to life is narrow and straight and difficult to find and few find it. Most follow the group the wrong way. But ask and it shall be opened unto you.

Beware of the prophets from the group. Do not listen. Think of their character, habits, good and bad points. Are they producing good fruit? Do you think they have found the way to live as your heavenly Father would have you live? Are they a living testimony of obedience to His way of life? Are they the salt of the earth? Ask your heavenly Father to show you the way to live, the way to love, the way to enter eternal life by the only gate that leads to salvation and Heaven.

Thus by their fruit you shall know them. This examination of the members of the group to see if their fruit is good or bad is suggested by Jesus, almost commanded. It is not judging another. It is a necessary part of the information which the individual must have to make his choice. It is necessary to make His kingdom on earth as it is in Heaven.

Jesus dwells at length on this important point. He warns particularly to examine carefully even those who are in seeming places of power and authority. ***A great many will say to me in that day, My Lord, my Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name cast out devils and in your name do many wonders? Then I will declare to them, I have never known you; keep away from me, O you that work iniquity.***

Therefore, whoever hears these words of mine, and does them, he is like a wise man who built his house upon a rock; and the rain fell and the rivers overflowed and the winds blew and beat upon that

house but it did not fall. And whoever hears these words of mine, and does them not, is like a foolish man who built his house upon the sand. And the rain fell and the rivers overflowed and the winds blew and beat upon that house and it fell, and its fall was great.

Obedience is necessary. Doing the right thing is necessary. Faith which keeps you from doing the right thing is wrong. Faith that leads you to works of obedience will save you. Faith without works is dead.

Following the Sermon On the Mount

Matthew 8:1, *When he came down from the mountain large crowds followed him.* And He returned to Capernaum, to His home with Simon Peter. A Roman centurion, whose servant was sick with the palsy, sent elders of the Jews to request Jesus to come and heal him. When Jesus was not far from the house the centurion met Him and requested Him not to come to the house but just to say the word and the servant would be healed. *My Lord, I am not good enough for you to enter under the shadow of my roof. For I am also a man under authority, and there are soldiers under my command; and I say to this one Go, and he goes; and to the other Come, and he comes; and to my servants, Do this, and they do it. So Jesus said to the centurion, Go, let it be done to you according to your belief. And the boy was healed in that very hour.*

Here again are the miracles in which Jesus ministers to His neighbors even as He would like to be ministered unto. The centurion had asked and it had been given unto him. Several points should be noticed here. This was not in the physical need or daily bread category. It was something outside the model prayer. It was the same individual help Jesus had given before. It was not a promise of eternal life. It did not show the terms of salvation.

Luke 7:11, *The next day he was going to a city called Nain and his disciples were with him and many people.* They met a funeral procession. The only son of a widow was being taken to burial. He saw the widow's grief and touching the bier said, *Young man, I tell you, Arise. And the dead man sat up and began to speak. And he gave him to his mother.* Here need was met by Jesus without request, without any display of faith, without prayer or other requirements.

Luke 7:17, ***And this word about him went out through all Judea and through the country round them.*** John heard about it in prison and sent two of His disciples who inquired of Jesus. ***Are you the one who is to come? or are we to expect another? Jesus answered saying to them, Go and tell John everything that you have seen and heard; that the blind see and the lame walk the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear and the dead rise up and the poor are given hope.***

After their departure Jesus told the people, ***I say to you that there is no prophet among those who is greater than John the Baptist, and yet even the least person in the kingdom of God is greater than he.*** How could this be? Here is the explanation.

And all the people who heard it, even the tax collectors, justified themselves before God, for they were baptized with the baptism of John; for the remission of their sins. But the Pharisees and the scribes suppressed the will of God in themselves, because they were not baptized by him.

The kingdom was not yet established. Even John was not yet a citizen of the new kingdom. Until John it was the law and the prophets, but John came as the last of the Jewish prophets, introducing immersion, which was for the remission of sins, replacing the Jewish law of sacrifices. Part of the people accepted this change, but not the Pharisees and lawyers, who would not be immersed. But the least in the kingdom of Heaven is assured eternal life and was greater than John, or any prophet or individual who ever lived, who had not been immersed into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The point being made here is given in Luke 7:30, ***But the Pharisees and the scribes suppressed the will of God in themselves, because they were not baptized.*** The command of God was to be immersed, which changed the plan of sacrifices from blood offering to new birth. Luke 7:35, ***And yet wisdom is justified by all its works.*** Those of the people who were wise were accepting the proofs Jesus was giving of His Messiah-ship, were accepting His teachings and were being immersed.

Matthew 11:20, *Then Jesus began to reproach the cities in which his many works were done, and which did not repent. It will be easier for the land of Sodom in the judgment day than for you. For if in Sodom had been done the works which were done in you, it would be standing to this day.*

At that time Jesus answered saying, I thank thee, O my Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hidden these things from the wise and the men of understanding, and hast revealed them to children. Isaiah 35:8, And a highway shall be there, and it shall be called the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; and there shall be no road beside it; fools shall not err therein. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart and the tongue of the deaf shall be loosed; for waters are bursting forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert. In the wilderness John proclaimed immersion for the remission of sins and ushered in the ministry of Christ. Matthew 11:27-30, Everything has been delivered to me by my Father, and no man knows the Son except the Father, nor does any man know the Father but the Son and he to whom the Son wishes to reveal him.

Come to me, all you who labor and carry burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and meek in my heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is pleasant and my burden is light. Let us reject the dogmas and doctrines, creeds and statements heaped upon us by councils and other organized theological legislative bodies, and accept the simple truths Christ was trying to give us.

Condemnation of the Group Attitudes.

In Luke 7:36-50, Simon, a Pharisee, desired Jesus to eat with him. Notwithstanding that the Pharisees were plotting to kill him, to spy on Him for causes to keep His program of changing their Jewish

law from going into effect, He accepted the invitation and sat down to meat.

A woman who was a sinner, when she learned that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, and stood at His feet behind Him weeping, and began to wash His feet with her tears, and wipe them with her hair. She kissed them and anointed them with the ointment.

In this incident we find Jesus as usual in the midst of His miraculous spiritual power administering to the individual needs of the people. On one extreme was Simon, from the highest class, a self righteous Pharisee; and on the other extreme a woman from possibly the lowest class of the people. Simon was looking for occasion to deny Jesus' claims and thought within himself, *If this man were a prophet, he would have known who she is and her reputation, for the woman who has touched him is a sinner.*

This was one of the group laws the Pharisees helped preserve. He evidently had considered Jesus also in a lower class for he did not touch him; either by kissing Him as usual or washing His feet. Simon was keeping the laws which the group had made, the same as church members today keep the laws which their particular church has made. But keeping man made laws is not the answer to the God man relationship.

Jesus, miraculously knowing all the facts said to Simon, I have something to tell you. Jesus said to him, There were two men who were debtors to a certain creditor; one of them owed him five hundred pence, and the other fifty pence, and because they had nothing to pay, he forgave them both. Which one of them will love him more? Simon answered saying, I think the one to whom he forgave more.

And he turned to the woman and said to Simon, Do you see this woman? When I entered your house you did not give me even water for my feet; but she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them

with her hair. You did not kiss me; but she, since she entered, has not ceased to kiss my feet. You did not anoint my head with oil; but she has anointed my feet with perfume. For this reason, I say to you, Her many sins are forgiven because she loved much; but he to whom little is forgiven, loves little. And he said to the woman, Your sins are forgiven. Then the guests began to say within themselves, Who is this man who forgives even sins? So Jesus said to the woman, Your faith has saved you; go in peace.

And it came to pass after these things Jesus was traveling in cities and villages, preaching and giving good news of the kingdom of God. And his twelve were with him. And the women who were healed of diseases and unclean spirits, Mary who is called Magdala, from whom seven demons went out. And Joanna, the wife of Chuza the steward of Herod, and Susanna, and many others, who ministered to them of their wealth.

Matthew 12:15, *a great many followed him, and he healed them all.* Matthew 12:22, *Then they brought near to him a lunatic, who was also dumb and blind; and he healed him, so that the dumb and blind man could speak and hear. God was at work. All the people were amazed, and said, perhaps this man is the son of David?* (The Messiah)

Conflict With the Group Law Makers

Matthew chapter twelve. Where the crowds followed Jesus and were being taught and healed, the Pharisees, lawyers and scribes mingled with them and tried to make them believe that Jesus was acting on authority of the prince of the devils and not on authority of God. But Jesus, knowing their thoughts explained to the crowd by a parable. Matthew 12:25, *Every house or city that is divided against itself will not stand. And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then will his kingdom stand?* But I am on the other side.

I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come near to you, so, They who are not with me are against me. For by your words you shall be justified, and by your words you shall be found guilty.

Matthew 12:32, ***And whoever speaks a word against the Son of man will be forgiven.*** The law regarding the remission of sins had been changed. Blood sacrifices would no longer be used to roll back sins from year to year, until the coming of the deliverer. Jesus was the Deliverer. Jesus, by His disciples, was immersing them for the remission of their sins as John had been doing before him. ***But whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit shall not be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in the world to come.*** By immersion in water for the remission of sins the individual is born of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is Christ's Mother. We thus become brethren of Christ and sons of God, sons of Christ's Mother, the Holy Spirit. Refusal to thus be born of her in immersion is the unpardonable sin, which cannot be forgiven.

Either produce like a good tree with good fruits, or produce like a bad tree with bad fruits, for a tree is known by its fruits. A good man brings out good things from good treasures, and a bad man brings out bad things from bad treasures.

Jesus came to earth for two easily understood reasons. First, to bring eternal life to the spirit of man; second, to make the human life also happy; to make the earthly life a fitting prelude to the eternal life to follow in heaven. To do this He summed up for the entire race of mankind laws, rules and prophecies into two simple laws, easily understood, easily obeyed. Love God with all your heart and your neighbor as yourself. To assure the entrance of the spirit into eternal life after the death of the human body, He commanded that the individual be immersed in water for that purpose, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The blessings God offered were upon conditions which must be obeyed, which all could understand and do, easily possible to anyone.

The Church of Christ

The Establishment of the Church

Acts 1:1-15, *Simon Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples (there were there a number of men, about a hundred and twenty), and said.* After Jesus ascended into Heaven a group of disciples and the eleven remaining apostles returned to Jerusalem to an upper room where the apostles were living. In the company were the women, and mentioned particularly was Mary, the mother of Jesus, with His brethren. These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication. Jesus had told them to wait in Jerusalem until they received the power of the Holy Spirit, through the Father, after which they were to be His witnesses throughout the world.

It has not been revealed to us how many disciples there were at the time of His death. There must have been a great number for Jesus had been followed by multitudes for three years, and many thousands had been healed. Also, the disciples had been immersing, taking up the work of John, but soon greatly extending the group of disciples. But these disciples were scattered throughout the country and did not constitute a church nor an organization. So far as we know there had been no attempt to form them into an organization or a church. Years afterward Paul found a small group of disciples worshipping at Ephesus who knew nothing further than the teachings of John. Acts 19:1-7, the disciples of Jesus at this time were those to whom Jesus had ministered personally, healed and helped with their needs but to none of whom was eternal life promised at the time.

The Church started as an organization after the sermon by Peter on the day of Pentecost. This beginning was with about three thousand. There was also the group of one hundred twenty who had waited for the instructions of the Holy Spirit to launch the Church. And they continued

steadfast. The apostles taught them the doctrine. They had fellowship together in breaking bread and in prayers. Acts 2:46-47.

Here in Acts we see the Church. They are a group of new creatures, the first citizens of the new kingdom, the first human spirits to enter into eternal life, the first people to receive the blessing spoken to Adam and Eve, later promised to Abraham, and looked forward to by the people. They were a happy, thankful, praying Church. The Lord was adding daily to them those who were being saved from their sins by immersion. And the Church grew rapidly.

There is no indication of an earthly organization with a definite government, rules to follow, nor officers to rule, nor direct the group. It was a single Church. Christ was the Ruler, the way, the truth, the life. He had left the earth after giving the apostles and disciples instructions about how to build the Church. This church was the kingdom of Christ. He was the Head; He was the Ruler. He was the King. All authority had been given to him. One member of the Trinity, one third of the heavenly Family, the Mother God, the Holy Spirit, was delegated by the Father to guide the disciples as they spread the glad tidings of the change that had been made in the law, brought about by the sacrifice of Christ and His resurrection. They went anywhere and everywhere spreading the news, and the Holy Spirit guided them.

There was no authoritative group of officers. We have an instance of Paul and others going to Jerusalem to consult with the apostles over an argument, where one faction at Antioch in Syria tried to carry over into the new Church some of the Jewish laws, and the other faction claimed that it was not necessary. The apostles at Jerusalem settled the matter by stating that it was not necessary any longer to obey the Jewish law. This was not a decision by the apostles as a council, but just a restatement of Jesus' teaching and gospel.

No person ever did or could perform miracles as Jesus did for He was God, He was superhuman, and He was the Creator. He was not only the Creator of man but of everything else, even the natural laws of the universe. No man ever did or could do the things that God did.

The miraculous powers displayed by the apostles, through the aid of the Holy Spirit, were confined to their work of establishing the gospel, of substituting the new law, not only for the Jewish law, so thoroughly described in the Jewish Scriptures, but also for all other laws throughout the entire world. It is for all, Jew and Gentile alike.

One must always keep in mind the fact that Jesus came to earth as a Savior for the whole world, not for just a small nation of Jews. It had been thoroughly demonstrated to the Jewish people that Jesus had substituted the new gospel for the Jewish law. It was necessary that His gospel be preached to the whole world, and Jesus so instructed His apostles and disciples.

Every matter connected with the formation of the new Church was attended to as it arose. One matter which has often been of concern to some Bible students is the statement that they had all things in common, and no man held anything individually.

Jesus had shown them an unselfish life. He had told them to love their neighbors as themselves. He had told them to love their enemies, to give to those who asked, to loan to those who would borrow, give one coat to the needy if they had two, and to forgive whatever debts were owing to them.

Eternal life was promised as a reward for being immersed into the new creature, old things were left in the watery grave. They did just as Jesus had taught. They obeyed him. They loved as new creatures in a new life of love. They took what they had, put it into a common fund and then distributed it as each had need. Was it right or wrong? They had not been directed to do this. They did not have to do it. It was not commanded or ordered. They did it out of their love and thankfulness for the gift of eternal life. It was an expression of love.

In a large group of people there are many chances that perfect conditions cannot be maintained. In Heaven the Spirit of man does exist among perfect conditions and therefore the law is kept perfectly but the earth is not yet a perfect place. So it proved in this case. Some of the people complained that they were not given their proper share of the

common property or needs of life. I have no doubt but that some of these claims were true. At the apostles' suggestion they chose seven men and assigned the matter to them.

Then another difficulty arose. Some sold their real estate or other possessions and joined in the community effort. One couple held back part of the money and did not put it all into the common treasury. We have no record of other similar cases of discord but these two indicate what may happen when a group, even of Christians decided to bind regulations upon itself. The community effort did not last. It could have been maintained if all the members had been perfect. But, lacking perfection, it could not be legislated into the Church, nor even into the individual lives of the group.

Any group needs some one or more persons to look after matters pertaining to that group and so leaders were chosen for that purpose as the occasion demanded. Among the Jews, before the beginning of Christianity, elderly men were chosen for that purpose, and the idea of having elders to head the group was carried over into the Church. Each congregation would select such Elders as the need arose. Both Deacons and Elders were temporary officers serving in each individual Church, with no power to continue in office beyond the wishes of the congregation. The spread of the gospel was still an individual matter and disciples went everywhere telling the news.

Pentecost

Jesus said, if a man is not born again he cannot see the kingdom of God, the equivalent of eternal life. After His resurrection, Jesus, Acts 1:4 And as he ate bread with them, he commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem but to wait for the promise of the Father, the one of whom you have heard from me. For, he said, John baptized with water; but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days hence.

Acts 2:1, And when the day of Pentecost was fulfilled, while they were assembled together. Suddenly there came a sound from heaven

as of a rushing mighty wind and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues which were divided like flames of fire; and they rested upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit.

Here were one hundred twenty disciples, including the eleven apostles, who had not yet received the Holy Spirit. They had been immersed in water by John or by Jesus but had not yet been immersed in the Holy Spirit as Jesus had promised them. These were not yet in the kingdom, it had not yet been established. They had not yet been born again as new creatures, because they had not yet been born of the Spirit. They had not yet inherited eternal life because eternal life was reserved for the new born creatures in Christ.

This first initial experience was unique and different from all other immersions of the Holy Spirit. It finished the plan, partially introduced by Jesus personally, but finished officially by the Holy Spirit. It brought into a unit or definite order all the various items connected with the conversion of a sinner to a son of God and heir to eternal life in the kingdom of heaven.

Peter immediately addressed the assembled crowd and explained what had taken place and connected it definitely with previous Jewish knowledge. Those in the crowd who believed the preaching of Peter asked, ***Our brethren, what shall we do? Then Simon said to them, Repent and be baptized, every one of you in the name of the Lord Jesus for the remission of sins, so that you may receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise was made to you and to your children, and for all of those who are far off, even as many as the very God shall call. And he testified to them with many other words and besought them, saying, Save yourselves from this sinful generation. And those men among them who readily accepted his word and believed were baptized, and about three thousand souls were added in that day.***

Here we have three thousand examples of sinners being saved, sinners receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit, sinners being immersed, sinners being initiated into the kingdom of heaven, sinners joining the Church, sinners becoming new creatures, sinners receiving eternal life,

of sinners obeying the commands of Jesus and obeying the commands of the Holy Spirit through Peter. ***And our Lord daily increased the congregation of the church.*** Before, they were lost, condemned sinners. After their immersion the Lord added them to the Church.

When were they saved? Was it when they believed? If so why did the Holy Spirit through Peter tell them to repent and be immersed? If there were two immersions performed, which one was the spiritual immersion? When did they inherit eternal life? Was it before they were added to the Church? If so, at what point in their conversion? My faith in the Bible as the inspired word of God leads me to examine it to see if I can discover and answer, or at least find a satisfactory explanation of these perplexing points.

I am not unmindful meanwhile of the nature of spiritual matters. Every individual person has spiritual experiences and these differ. No two persons necessarily have the same experiences and spiritual relationships. Also, no person is able to duplicate in himself the experience of others. John 3:8, ***The wind blows where it pleases and you hear its sound; but you do not know whence it comes and whither it goes; such is every man who is born of the spirit.*** No two are alike. As it is impossible to find a uniform answer in individual spiritual experiences let us turn to the Bible cases of conversion for our answers.

Cases of Conversion

John the Baptist. Matthew 3:1-12, Mark 1:1-8, Luke 3:2-16

With the coming of John the Baptist we have the introduction of immersion into the New Testament. John came in fulfillment of prophecy. Isaiah 40:3, *The voice of him that cries in the wilderness, Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Malachi 3:1, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me, and he for whom you are waiting shall suddenly come to the temple of the Lord.* He was born miraculously. Luke 1:5-25, is the story of John's miraculous birth. Luke 1:19, *I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God; and I am sent to speak to you, and to bring you these glad tidings.* John the Baptist was prophesied by Isaiah and by Malachi, the last prophet in the Old Testament and born miraculously as a messenger or forerunner of Jesus.

He came with a special message from God to prepare the way for Jesus. He did two outstanding things. Mark 1:4, *John was in the wilderness, baptizing and preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.* He introduced immersion in water for the remission of sins. Mark 1:8, *I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.* He announced that Jesus would immerse them with the Holy Spirit. We have no record of Jesus personally immersing anyone, at any time, either in water or the Holy Spirit. Very evidently the apostles or disciples did the immersing although it was attributed to Jesus. Nowhere is there a record of the fulfillment of John's promise to the people, but the experience on the day of Pentecost is often associated with John's prediction.

Jesus' immersion. Matthew 3:13-17, Mark 1:9-11, Luke 3:21-22

The significant point in Jesus' immersion was that although He had no sins for repentance John immersed Him anyway. *so that all righteousness may be fulfilled.* Matthew 3:17, *A voice from heaven which said, This is my beloved Son, with whom I am pleased.* This voice has been attributed to the Father but scripture does not say whether it was the Father or the Mother. Matthew 3:16, *The heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming upon him.* Thus we have the approval of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, all three members of the Godhead or Trinity. This and the added fact that Jesus came for immersion before He began His ministry makes it an important, impressive and significant incident or ordinance. For those individuals who especially want to walk in His steps or follow His example it is something to be carefully considered.

The Great Commission. Matthew 28:18-20

In the last appearance of Jesus to His apostles as recorded by Matthew we have two specific commands given to them to carry out. *All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Just as my Father has sent me, I am also sending you. Go therefore and convert all nations; and baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to obey everything that I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you always, to the end of the world.*

Christ's Last Instructions. Mark's record. Mark 16:15-16

And he said to them, Go into all the world and preach my gospel to the whole creation. He who believes and is baptized shall be saved, and he who does not believe shall be condemned. The same command as recorded by Matthew is here repeated, possibly the same conversation.

The Disciple's Commission. Luke 24:46-47

And he said to them, Thus it is written, and it was right, that Christ should suffer and rise from the dead on the third day; and that repentance should be preached in his name for the forgiveness of sins among all nations; and the beginning shall be from Jerusalem. Luke does not mention immersion, but he does say that remission of sins should be preached, and as they had been immersing for the remission of sins, immersion would be implied just as legitimately as would faith and other matters of which they were witnesses which also were not mentioned.

Happenings on the Day of Pentecost. Acts 2:38

Then Simon said to them, Repent and be baptized, every one of you in the name of the Lord Jesus for the remission of sins, so that you may receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. I shall not quote further for the story comprises the whole second chapter.

The time had arrived to announce the great secret that had been concealed from the time of the first sins. Events had been happening progressively and nothing now remained except the establishment of the Church, the Bride of Christ, the kingdom of Heaven. Practically everything had been made ready. John the Baptist had started immersion in water to take the place of the burnt offerings and blood sacrifices for the remission of sins. At Jesus' immersion the Trinity had given its approval. John had prophesied the immersion of the Holy Spirit without designating when it would take place. Jesus had been crucified, thus becoming the last life sacrifice for the remission of sins under the law. He had risen from the dead, becoming the first fruits. He had ascended to the Father leaving His apostles to carry on at the direction of the Holy Spirit.

Fifty days after the crucifixion, on Pentecost, *And when the day of Pentecost was fulfilled, while they were assembled together, suddenly there came a sound from Heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and*

it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues which were divided like flames of fire; and they rested upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and they began to speak in various languages according to whatever the Spirit gave them to speak.

This has been considered by Bible students to be the immersion of the Holy Spirit mentioned by John the Baptist and Jesus. The Church had been started. One hundred twenty members constituted that first Church which included the apostles, the mother of Jesus and His brethren and other disciples.

Acts 2:6, *And as the sound took place, all the people gathered together, and they were confused because every man heard them speak in their own tongue. And they were all amazed and stunned, saying one to another, What does this mean, Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine.* Just when this crowd came together we do not know, whether on the same day or later, but it was early in the day, about the third hour, or nine o'clock in the morning. The Church was established. What the crowd was observing was not the original immersion, noise from heaven or the tongues of fire, but the conduct of those one hundred twenty members of the first Church. They were busy with the beginnings for there were many details to attend to.

But Peter answered the crowd by assuring them that what they were observing was not the ravings of drunken men but the fulfillment of a prophecy by the prophet Joel. Read the prophet of Joel 2:28-32. These signs and wonders and the pouring out of the Spirit were a part of the last days of the Jewish law and nation. These were prophesied to accompany the change to Christianity and the change was made in Jerusalem and in Mount Zion, that is in the seat or center of the Jewish religion and government. Jesus had commanded them to remain in Jerusalem until the Spirit came. This prophecy was not for the end of the world, the second coming of Christ, or of the last judgment. It was for the death of the Jewish law and the establishment of the new kingdom.

Acts 2:21, *whoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved*. The crowd called and Peter answered them. They called for help because they believed and wanted to be saved. Peter said, *Repent and be baptized, every one of you in the name of the Lord Jesus for the remission of sins, so that you may receive the gift of the Holy Spirit*. Three thousand responded.

For the first time people were preached to and taught, they prayed for help, were immersed for the remission of their sins, joined the Church and it is only reasonable for us to conclude that everything necessary was accomplished. Man did his part as commanded and God did His part. Man's sins were forgiven and he now had an advocate in heaven. He could now pray to God in the name of Christ for the forgiveness of any future sins. He was now a recipient of eternal life. He has received the gift of the Holy Spirit, or been immersed in the Holy Spirit, or by the Holy Spirit, or whatever the office of the Holy Spirit was or is. God did whatever was to be done. He was now a brother of Christ, a joint heir to all the promises of God. We know but a small portion of all that took place in this transaction, but we can rest assured that he is now a new creature, old things are passed away, the new child has been born.

Every person reacts differently when he is converted. Mental action is personal. Spiritual action is personal. But God is over all, supplying to each new child of His what is necessary. He is answering his prayers and taking care of his needs. When we have a statement in the Bible of God's relationship to man we never have a complete statement. Acts not mentioned but that are necessary are to be implied as included. The Church continued to grow. The apostles and the disciples went everywhere telling the good news.

The Ethiopian Nobleman. Acts 8:26

In this narrative we have an Ethiopian proselyte who had been to the temple to worship and as he was returning home he was reading the prophet Isaiah. Philip joins him and using Isaiah as a text or beginning point told him about Jesus. Nearly all the details of this story have been

omitted, but they should be implied as included. He must have believed or he would not have requested immersion. Requesting immersion must have implied repentance which was required for immersion. We may be assured God did His part. He always does. We can assume, and justly so, that he became a new creature, a member of the kingdom and that he received the gift of the Holy Spirit. We can also correctly assume that his inheritance was eternal life. And we find these same implications present in nearly every case of conversion we encounter in the New Testament.

We can imply these things but we cannot with authority add them to the account. Some disciple or scribe was so concerned with some of these omissions that they inserted verse Acts 8:37, *And Philip said, if you believe with all your heart you may. And he answered saying, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.* This was not in the original manuscript. It did not need to be. Even so it is probably true that some such statement may have been made. It is not out of line with the general thought and terms of salvation, but no one has a right to insert his opinions or desires into the revealed word of God.

Semon and Other Samaritans Instructed. Acts 8:5-16, 22-25

In this experience, recorded as taking place in Samaria we find a number of interesting events. Philip went down to Samaria and preached and there was great joy in that city. They were given heed because of the miracles he was performing, healing the sick, lame, palsied and casting out unclean spirits. *But when they believed Philip, preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.* Here we have a situation which seems to be the same as Pentecost. The people heard the story, believed in the kingdom and Jesus and were immersed.

It is a legitimate procedure for us to assume that events not mentioned were included as they were in the consideration of the happenings at Pentecost and with the Ethiopian nobleman. Philip was present in all

three cases. There were two Philips. One was an apostle, one was a deacon. Because of later developments at Samaria we assume that this was Philip the deacon, not the apostle.

Jesus says in John 14:16, ***And I will ask of my Father, and he will give you another Comforter, to be with you forever.*** John 14:26, ***But the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, whom my Father will send in my name will teach you everything and remind you of everything which I tell you.*** Does this imply that the Comforter is to be sent only to those who heard Jesus and could remember what He said to them when aided by the Holy Spirit, or does this promise apply to all disciples, whether they ever heard Jesus' or not. If we read the entire fourteenth chapter of John, I think that we can conclude, from the nature of His discourse, that He was promising the Comforter to all disciples. ***If you love me, keep my commandments, and I will ask of my Father and he will give you another Comforter, to be with you forever.***

If we take this conclusion then the newly made disciples in Samaria had the Comforter abiding with them the same as the three thousand who had accepted Christ at Pentecost. Acts 8:13, ***Semon himself also believed and was baptized and attached himself to Philip, and as he saw the miracles and great signs performed by his hand, he marveled greatly;*** Had Semon received the Holy Spirit like the other converts or had any of them received it? Were these converts full members of Christ's kingdom? If so, were part of the promises held out on them? I do not think so. I believe that they were full citizens in the new kingdom and had received the Holy Spirit as their Guide and Comforter. I believe that Philip had done a complete, thoroughly acceptable job the same as he did with the Ethiopian. I cannot conceive of God, through the Holy Spirit, withholding the Comforter from any group of converts. I believe the Comforter was and is the Holy Spirit.

Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that the Samaritan people had accepted the word of God, they sent to them Simon Peter and John. Who, when they went down, prayed over them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. For as yet it had not come upon them

although they had been baptized in the name of our Lord Jesus. Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit.

Here was something being done that Philip could not do because he was not an apostle. Here was something that required the laying on of hands of the apostles. What that something was is not explained, except ***Receive the Holy Spirit***. It does not say that Semon was excluded from receiving the Holy Spirit, so we assume that all were treated alike.

This conclusion is further strengthened by the statement parenthetically inserted, that the Holy Spirit had not fallen on them, only they were immersed in the name of the Lord Jesus. This is just another way of saying they had come into the Church or kingdom by the regular immersion and had not received this power, whatever it was, that required the laying on of the hands of the apostles. Philip could not do it for them.

I feel that we are keeping within the bounds of sound reasoning when we conclude that the group at Pentecost had received this special power of the Holy Spirit and that Philip had received it together with the others. In Samaria, Philip exercised a power to work miracles, cure the sick, and cast out demons. These seem to be the same acts that were being done by the original one hundred twenty. When Peter and John laid hands on the Samaritans it is logical to suppose that they also could now work miracles, could cure the sick and cast out evil spirits. This would naturally include Semon who was now able to work miracles in the name of Christ, instead of fake magic and sorcery as he had before he became a Christian. But the other Samaritan Christians were doing the same.

And when Semon saw that the Holy Spirit was given by the laying on of the apostle's hands he offered them money saying, Give me also this authority so that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Spirit. Here now we encounter a third and entirely different matter. It is the power, exercised by the apostles only of conferring upon others the working of miracles. Semon wanted it but could not get it. Philip did not have it. That power was exclusive with the apostles.

We here find that there are three operations or activities of the Holy Spirit reported in the cases reviewed, and all three called the receiving or giving of the Holy Spirit, not separately designated. One is the promise of the Comforter, one is the power to work miracles and the third is the ability of the apostles to pass on to others the power to work miracles. I assume that at Pentecost all three were included in the phenomena of the filling with the Holy Spirit. But the fact still remains that the apostles received a gift of the Holy Spirit that Philip did not receive, but it evidently was received in this Pentecost filling.

Christ had said, *You shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days hence*. I think that they were immersed with the Holy Spirit at Pentecost as Christ promised, although the Bible does not say so. Was the immersion of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost an act including one, two or all three of these manifestations. It was not the special power the apostles had of imparting the working of miracles to others for their power died with them. It was not the power of working miracles and speaking in tongues which the apostles bestowed on others because they did not give this power to everyone. Even if they had given this power to every disciple whom they met, it would have died with that generation. There is only one possible operation of the three, and that is the abiding Comforter, whom the Father grants to every new born creature. That is the immersion of the Holy Spirit.

We, as human beings, loyal to the Trinity of God, have no right, authority or even ability to limit the activities of the Holy Spirit, our Creator, as they affect the lives and actions of human beings, not even our own. Neither do we have the right to call these special actions Holy Spirit immersion. There is but one immersion, but it is Spirit and water immersion, one in time, one in place, one in purpose, as Christ has revealed it to us. Our old man dies, the new one arises to walk in the new life, eternal life, with the Holy Spirit as Helper and Comforter.

Saul of Tarsus. Acts 9:3-18

And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus; and suddenly a light from the sky shown round about him; And he fell to the

ground and heard a voice saying to him, Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? You make it hard for yourself by kicking against the pricks. Saul answered saying, Who are you my Lord? And our Lord said, I am Jesus of Nazareth whom you persecute; And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me do? And the Lord said to him, Arise and go into the city, and there you will be told what you must do.

Paul arose, went into the city, blind, and waited three days fasting and praying. The Lord directed Ananias to go to him. Ananias went to him at the house, and laying his hands on him said, Saul, my brother, our Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the way when you were coming, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit. And in that hour, there fell from his eyes something like scales; and his eyesight was restored; and he arose and was baptized. Here we have three things mentioned as contributing to his salvation, prayer, immersion and filling with the Holy Spirit. It does not designate when he was filled with the Holy Spirit, whether before, during or after the immersion. We can assume that he believed, and repented of his past sins and that he was forgiven although these are not mentioned.

Cornelius and the Gentile Household. Acts 10:29-48

This story uses all of the tenth chapter and eighteen verses of the eleventh chapter. All of it should be read to get the whole story. Cornelius was a Gentile but a devout man, prayed to God and gave much alms to the people. An angel of God came and directed him to send for Peter. Meanwhile God, by means of a vision, prepared Peter for the work of telling the gospel to this Gentile household. Peter returned with Cornelius' two servants but took with him certain brethren from Joppa, ostensibly as witnesses, for he had been called to the home of a Gentile and Jewish law forbade him to fraternize with the Gentiles. Acts 10:27, *He went in and found a great many people had come there. So he said to them, You know well that it*

is unlawful for a Jew to associate with a stranger who is not of his tribe; but God has showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean. This is why I came at once when you sent for me; but now let me ask you, for what reason have you sent for me? Cornelius explained that God had directed him. *Behold, we are all here present before you, and we wish to hear everything commanded you from God.*

Then Peter explained the gospel of Christ to them. *While Simon Peter spoke these words, the Holy Spirit descended on all who heard the word. And the Jewish converts who had come with him were seized with amazement because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out on the Gentiles also. For they heard them speak with different tongues, and magnify God. Then Simon Peter said to them, Can any man forbid water, that these people who have received the Holy Spirit, just as we have, should not be baptized? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Here we have a similar scene to the one at Pentecost, with certain differences. There was no noise, no tongues of fire, but it was a like scene. In both cases it fell upon them and Peter calls them both a gift and afterward refers to them as immersion. Acts 11:16, *Then I remembered that word of the Lord, when he said, John indeed baptized with water but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.* At the home of Cornelius the gift of the Spirit came before water immersion, evidently to convince Peter that the Gentiles were eligible for salvation. At Pentecost the gift of the Holy Spirit came after immersion in water. From this it would seem that both cases were special, for in no other cases was it done either way.

We have here this special filling of the Holy Spirit called two things by Peter, the gift of the Holy Spirit and, immersion with the Holy Spirit. Also we have the necessity of the water immersion expressed by Peter when he said, *Can any man forbid water?* even after the immersion with the Holy Spirit. It would seem reasonable to me to require immersion in water for the remission of sins and the birth of the new creature, even in cases where the gift of the Holy Spirit had been received. In both cases

the gift of the Holy Spirit was used to perform miracles and nowhere is the new birth or remission of sins assigned to it as it is with immersion in water.

Lydia at Philippi. Acts 16:13-15

Lydia was Paul's first convert in Europe. There is nothing outstanding in this experience. Lydia, a praying woman listened to Paul's preaching and was immersed. The only item mentioned was immersion, not even faith. The rest must be assumed.

The Philippian Jailor. Acts 16:30-34

Paul and Silas were confined in prison in Philippi. There was an earthquake. The doors of the prison were opened and the prisoners were released from their chains. Paul assured the jailor that no one had escaped. The jailor then asked, *Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said to him, Believe in our Lord Jesus Christ, and both you and your household will be saved. And they spoke to him the word of the Lord and to all who were of his household. And he took them at that hour of the night and washed their wounds; and then they were baptized in that very hour, he and all his household.* Here we have faith and immersion.

Apollos and the Ephesian Brethren. Acts 18:24-19:7, Acts 18:24

And a certain Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, an eloquent man and well versed in the scriptures, came to Ephesus. He had been converted to the way of the Lord and was fervent in the spirit; he spoke and taught very fully concerning Jesus, but he knew only the baptism of John. And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue; and when Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they took him to their home and fully showed him the way of the Lord. Those who had heard only John needed further instruction before knowing the correct way.

Acts 19:1-7, Paul found twelve disciples at Ephesus who had been immersed by John. He said to them, have you received the Holy Spirit since you were converted? they answered saying to him, we have not so much as heard whether there be a Holy Spirit. And he said unto them, unto what then were you immersed? And they said, unto John's immersion.

Then said Paul, John verily immersed with the immersion of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him which should come after him, that is on Christ Jesus. When they heard this they were immersed in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them the Holy Spirit came on them and they spoke with tongues and prophesied.

In this case those who had been immersed by John had to be re-immersed in the name of Jesus. Why? If all the operation of the Spirit had been performed by Paul laying his hands on them, water immersion would not be required. But if the gift of the Holy Spirit was what was imparted by Paul laying on hands, and the immersion of the Spirit when they were immersed in water, then the conditions would be the same as in the other cases already discussed.

Paul's Arrest and Defense. Acts 22:10-16

Paul was arrested in Jerusalem and in his defense before the people recounted his conversion from Judaism to Christianity. *And now, why do you delay? Arise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.* Here we have again the terms of salvation quoted by Paul as applied to his own conversion. The only item mentioned was immersion and that was for the remission of sins. If there was any other immersion besides the immersion in water it was not mentioned.

Paul Before Agrippa. Acts 26:19-22

Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I did not disobey the heavenly vision; but I preached first to them of Damascus and at Jerusalem

and throughout all the villages of Judea and then to the Gentiles, that they might repent and turn to God and do works worthy of repentance. Here Paul recites before Agrippa the principal points in the religion he is teaching, but he does not include the subject of immersion at all.

Crispus and Many Corinthians. Acts 18:8

And Crispus, the chief of the synagogue, believed in our Lord, together with all his household; and many of the Corinthians hearing him believed in God and were baptized. This case shows only faith and immersion. Everything else must be assumed.

Deliverance From Sin, 6th Chapter of Romans

Read the whole chapter. *Do you not know that those of us who have been baptized into Jesus Christ have been baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; so that as Jesus Christ rose from the dead by the Glory of his Father, even so we also shall walk in a new life. For if we have been planted together with him in the likeness of his death, so shall we be also in the likeness of his resurrection. Now if we are dead with Christ, let us believe that we shall also live with Christ. Likewise you also must consider yourself as being dead to sin, but alive in God through Jesus Christ our Lord. But now being made free from sin and become servants of God, your fruits are holy, and the end thereof is life everlasting. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Reference to Scriptures Concerning Immersion

Ephesians 4:4-6, *That you may become one body and one spirit; even as you are called in one hope of your calling; There is one Lord, one faith and one baptism; One God and Father of all who is above all and through all and in all of us.* This Scripture lends weight to

the proposition that there is but one act involved in immersion, that immersion in water, immersion in the Holy Spirit, immersion for the remission of sins, immersion representing the death of the old nature, the birth of the new creature, the resurrection bringing new and eternal life to the new born babe in Christ are all one and the same, presenting to us another example of the unity and completeness of our heavenly hope through the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Colossians 2:11-13, *In whom also you are circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in putting off the sinful body by the circumcision of Christ. And you were buried with him in baptism, and by him you were raised with him, for you believed in the power of God who raised him from the dead. And you, who once were dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, he has granted to live with him, and he has forgiven you all your sins;* Colossians 3:1-4 *If you then are risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things of the earth, for you are dead, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall you also appear with him in glory.* Here again we see the comprehensiveness of the one immersion. It substitutes for the circumcision of the flesh, as commanded of Abraham and the entire Jewish nation, it is the death of the old nature and sins, it is a resurrection of ourselves like unto the resurrection of Christ, the resurrected life in eternal glory.

Hebrews 5:13, *For every man whose food is milk is unfamiliar with the word of righteousness; for he is a babe. But strong meat belongs to those who are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. Therefore let us leave the elementary word of Christ and let us go on to perfection. Why do you lay another foundation for the repentance from past deeds and for faith in God? And for the doctrine of Baptisms and for the laying on of hands and for the resurrection of the dead and for eternal judgment?*

We are to use our senses to discover the true and the false. To discover what are the foundation doctrines and thus advance from babes,

feeding on milk, to full age feeding on strong meat, leaving behind us the elementary doctrines of faith, repentance, immersion, laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead and of eternal judgment. When these things are understood and decided upon by our senses we can go forward to more advanced matters.

I Peter 3:20, And in the days of Noah, when the spirit of God had patience, he commanded an ark to be made in the hope of their repentance, but only eight souls entered into it, and were saved by its floating upon the water. You also are saved in that very manner by baptism, not merely by washing the filth from the body, but by confessing God with a clean conscious and by the resurrection of Jesus Christ., Who is taken up to heaven and is at the right hand of God.

I Corinthians 10:1, ***Moreover, brethren, I want you to know that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea; And all were baptized by Moses, both in the cloud and in the sea; And all ate the same spiritual food; and all drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them; and that Rock was Christ. But they became an example to us.*** These passages show that immersion is a saving ordinance and that immersion is a water immersion with a spiritual meaning or significance. It was a part of the plan of salvation, set up by examples and figures before its introduction by John, who also was foretold centuries before he appeared in Israel as the forerunner of the new order. We cannot separate the spiritual immersion from the water immersion nor can we separate salvation from the water immersion without doing violence to the prophecies and examples set up by God for our instruction, and to prove the authenticity of the mission of Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Gal. 3:27. ***For those who have been baptized in the name of Christ have been clothed with Christ.***

Comparison Table for Cases of Immersion

What must one do to be saved, or the terms of salvation. Cases considered for the study of immersion and the Holy Spirit. What must I do to be saved?

Column key:

- | | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a hearing/preaching | e immersion in water | i works |
| b prayer | f Holy Spirit/miracles | j salvation/eternal life |
| c faith/belief | g Apostolic power/laying on hands | |
| d repentance/remission | h righteousness | |

Cases considered in text	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j
John the Baptist, Matthew 3:1-12, Mark 1:1-8, Luke 3:2-16	x		x	x	x			x	x	
Jesus' Immersion, Matthew 3:13-17 Mark 1:9-11, Luke 3:21-22			x	A	x			x	A	x
The Great Commission Matthew 28:18-20	x		A	A	x			x	A	A
Christ's last instructions Mark 16:15-16	x		x	A	x	x		x	A	x
The Disciples' Commission Luke 24:46-47	x		A	A	x					A
Day of Pentecost Acts 2:38-41	x	x	A	x	x	x	x	A	x	x
Ethiopian Nobleman Acts 8:26-39	x		A	A	x			A		A
Simon and Samaritans Acts 8:4-16, 22-25	x	x	x	x	x	x		A	x	x
Saul of Tarsus Acts 9:3-18	x	x	A	A	x	x	x	A	x	x
Cornelius and Gentiles Acts 10:29-48	x	x	A	A	x	x		x	x	x

Cases considered in text	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j
Lydia at Philippi Acts 16:13-15	x	x	x	A	x			x	x	A
Philippian Jailor Acts 16:13-15	x	x	x	A	x			A	x	x
Apollos and Ephesians Acts 18:25-19:7	x		x	A	x	x			x	x
Paul's arrest & defense Acts 22:10-16	x	x	x	x	x				x	x
Paul before Agrippa Acts 26:19-22	x	x	x	x	x			A	x	x
Crispus Acts 18:8	x		x	A	x			x	x	A
Deliverance from sin Romans 6:1-10			x	x	x			x	x	x
Ephesians. 4:4-6			x		x			x	x	x
Colossians. 2:11-13,3:1-4			A	x	x			x	x	x
Hebrews 5:13-6:2	x		x	x	x	x		x	x	x
I Peter 3:20-22, I Corinthians 10:1-6			x	x	x			x	x	x
Galatians 3:27-29			x	A	x			A	A	x
Total named in 22 cases	16	8	15	9	22	7	2	12	16	16

An 'x' in each column under the proper heading when mentioned.

An 'A' for Assumed, where necessary or suggested.

Faith

John 3:16, Numeric Bible, ***For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth unto him perish not but have eternal life.***

Faith is a thought. Faith is a conviction of things not seen. Faith is the assurance of things hoped for. Faith is not an act, it is a thought. Faith is belief with some proof. Faith is the impression made upon the mind by evidence received through its receiving channels, the five primary senses, the less recognizable senses, the decisions of the conscious and subconscious minds, as well as the intangible sensations of the primary spirit emanations.

Ordinarily we do not classify as faith but a small part of the sensations we receive, but they are all just as truly faith as the part we choose by our conscious minds. Faith is the conditioning brought about by every sensation received from every source, from the first moment of infancy, until death in the material world, and throughout eternity in the spiritual world.

Many religious tenets have been based upon supposition and group decisions, and not upon the word of God, material, spiritual nor natural law. They become faith for an individual when he accepts them as being truths; largely because of their acceptance by others. They may be right. They may be wrong. Many acts based upon faith have proven false. The faith of our first parents, in the statements of Satan, proves that faith may be wrong.

Every act from infancy throughout life is based upon faith, upon decisions and impressions. In this way we learn to walk, to eat, to speak, to react to the world in which we live. Faith is not reality. The act based upon that faith is the reality. To believe in swimming is not the reality, but the act of swimming, in which the functions of the body react to the

habits and conditioning of the mind is the reality. Faith must be first, but without action a person will drown.

Faith justifies an individual in the acts he performs that are based upon his decisions; but the benefits, the results of that faith are brought about by acts, either of the conscious or the subconscious. James 1:19; Even the demons or evil spirits have faith, but their acts based on that faith are not correct acts. James 2:26, *Faith without works is dead.* James 2:18, *Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.* What kind of works? What works? This is the essential question. Read the second chapter of James and the Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews, chapter eleven.

1. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, and it is the evidence of things not seen.
2. In this way it became a testimony concerning the elders.
3. Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen came to be from those which are not seen.
4. By faith Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice to God.
5. By faith Enoch departed—because—he pleased God.
6. Without faith man cannot please God.
7. By faith Noah—made an ark to save his household.
8. By faith Abraham—obeyed—not knowing where he was going.
9. By faith he became a sojourner in the land which was promised him.
10. He looked for a city—whose builder and maker is God.
11. Through faith also Sara—was delivered of a child—because she was sure that he who had promised her was faithful.
12. By faith Abraham—offered up—his only begotten son.
13. By faith in things to come Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau.
14. By faith Jacob—blessed both of the sons of Joseph.
15. By faith Joseph—made mention of the departure of the Children of Israel.

16. By faith Moses—forsook Egypt—kept the Passover.
17. By faith they passed through the Red Sea.
18. By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they had been encompassed seven days.
19. By faith Rahab—did not perish with those who were disobedient
20. Acting through faith conquered kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions.
21. Acting through faith quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword—became strong in battle, routed the camps of enemies.

Here we see an array of acts performed, all based upon faith. But Hebrews 11:13, *These all died in faith, not having received the promised land. but they saw it from afar.* Hebrews 11:39-41, *Thus all these, having obtained a testimonial through faith, did not receive the promise. Because God from the beginning provided for our help, lest without us they should not be made perfect.*

What new thing was provided for us that had not been available to those mentioned in Hebrews? What new act based upon faith was possible? The list of works seems to include about everything. Not until the coming of Jesus was this new act revealed to man. Not until Jesus had died and returned again to His Father was it fully understood. Not until the gospel was proclaimed by the power of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost was it acted upon by the people.

Acts 2:37, *Our brethren what shall we do?* They did not ask, what shall we believe? They asked, what shall we do? Peter said, by the power of the Holy Spirit, *Repent and be baptized, every one of you in the name of the Lord Jesus for the remission of sins.* For this is the promise to all people. God, in the person of the Holy Spirit, had guided or directed Peter. The crucified Christ was now the blood sacrifice for all people, for all who had through the sacrifices been rolling back their sins from year to year, for all who would now be immersed, and for all who were afar off, everybody.

Whosoever will may come, Jew, Gentile, bond, free, every race and color, every person, saint or sinner, old or young. All who believed on Jesus could become a new creature, a brother of Jesus the Son of God, and a joint heir with Him of all the heavenly blessings, the supreme blessing being eternal life. Acts 2:39-41, ***And those men among them who readily accepted his word and believed were baptized, And about three thousand souls were added in that day.***

Christian Baptism or Immersion

The word baptism or baptize comes from the Greek root which means to dip, plunge under, completely cover, submerge or immerse. It is used in Greek writing in both sacred and secular language, and in both the substantive and verbal forms. It does not appear in the Old Testament portion of the Bible which was written mostly in Hebrew.

The Children of Israel, beginning with the exodus, were governed under a theocracy. The laws were both sacred and secular and we find them interwoven so closely that their differentiation is very difficult. Beginning with Saul they become a monarchy, but the dual purpose laws in force at the time of the change were retained as sacred or religious laws. Secular laws of the monarchy were often given religious meanings and the existing theocratic code continually influenced the government and the social customs. The unity of the sacred and the secular continued as a national ideal after the abandonment of theocracy, and persisted, even under subjugation by the Persian, Syrian and Roman governments as long as they existed as a nation and also after the final dispersion.

Christ was born about the beginning of the last century of Jewish national life. The nation at the time was under Roman subjugation but still retained its national ideal of sacred and secular unity. In this complicated situation Christianity was born. Christianity was about forty years old, when the Jewish national life came to an end by the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple by the Romans under Titus.

Christ was God and His appearance was not a secular matter, only in so far as it was connected in time with the preparation for His advent, beginning with the call of Abraham. Christ's advent was for a world wide purpose, to present to mankind the true relationship between man and God, and to bring man into this true relationship. Christ was concerned with this relationship. Christ was concerned

with secular matters only in so far as they affected the object of His mission. He did His work in the prepared situation then existing in the Jewish nation and culture. To understand His work we must first know what part of this culture was universal or true God man relationship. The great bulk of the Jewish law and culture was secular and had little or nothing to do with godliness.

The first law given to the theocracy was the ten commandments of Moses. Not even all of these were basic God man relationship laws.

Basic law as given in this code was—

First, Thou shalt have no other God before me. Christ expressed it in these words, Matthew 22:37, *love the Lord thy God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment.*

Second, Matthew 22:38, *And the second is like to it, Love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang the law and the prophets.* The remainder of the Jewish law is either secular or social modifications of customs and habits based upon these two laws. Christ emphasized and repeated these, and added one modification to the second law.

Third, John 13:34-35, *A new commandment I give you, that you love one another; just as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this every man shall know that you are my disciples, if you have love one for another.*

Some other portions of the law Christ recognized both by observation and by quotation. Some He condemned. Most of them He does not notice at all. Very important among these is the blood sacrifice and the burnt offering for sin. This sacrifice for sin, recorded in the Bible first in connection with Cain and Abel is nowhere sanctioned or approved by Christ. Nowhere does Christ say that men are born sinners. Nowhere does Christ approve of the intricate laws and ordinances set up by the Jews for observing any of the sacrifices for sin. There are other features also not mentioned by Jesus, but that the Christian world considers basic in their doctrine and that we accept without Christ's approval. One such is the doctrine of the

Trinity. Another is the inspiration of the New Testament. Another is the practice of meeting once a week for Church services, and many others. Christ in His teaching did not tell us what man should do to free himself of his sins. He did not even tell us that we must free ourselves of them. He did not say that the Jews were cleared of their sins by the sacrifices. We do not for this reason deny or abandon all those features which Christ did not see fit to mention.

Why do we accept as truth so much knowledge about things that Christ did not state nor command? Because of faith. Faith is our mental decision based upon our judgment, which in turn is based upon the knowledge we obtain from many sources.

In my own religious experience the greatest faith I ever had I consider to be the inspiration of the Bible, especially the New Testament. I have this faith because of my mental judgment regarding evidences which I have encountered and not because Christ said or even indicated it to be true. Because of my faith that the Bible is the word of God, I have acquired a faith in many matters contained therein which are just as precious and profitable to me as if Christ had said them. Faith opens up to me an entire universe of law, beauty, brotherly love and sincerity. Ephesians 4:13, ***Until we all become one in faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God, and become a perfect man according to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. It is through him that the whole body is closely and firmly united at all joints, according to the measure of the gift which is given to every member, for the guidance and control of the body, in order to complete the edifying of the body in love.***

The law of God is perfect. Its many joints fit together into a perfect unity. My faith is so possessive of my judgment that I must accept these various parts which fit together to make up God's law regardless of their origin. Some may be from the Old Testament which Christ did approve, some may be the very words of Christ himself, some may be from the New Testament written after Christ returned to heaven, some may be science, history or something else. My faith leads me to the inevitable conclusion that God's laws are a harmonious unity regardless of the

source of their knowledge and content. My faith tells me that God had a plan of salvation for man, that man can discover this plan, and that if he complies therewith he will attain eternal life in heaven.

The first item is the first and greatest commandment.

Love the Lord thy God with all your heart

The second is like unto the first.

Love your neighbor as yourself

The third was added by Christ.

Love one another; just as I have loved you

This is the universal law of God for all people who desire to be law abiding, the first two before Christ, the third added by Christ.

The fourth law. For the individual who sinned a fourth was given. We find evidence of this fourth law in history, both in the Bible and in secular history but not in the teaching of Jesus. Nevertheless we accept it as a true law of God. The fourth item or law.

The individual who sins must have a sacrifice of an animal life made for the remission of his sins. This law was universal throughout mankind.

From a study of the Jewish law we learn that this remission of sins was for a limited period of time and must be repeated throughout the lifetime of the individual. We find this law being obeyed in Palestine during the life time of Jesus.

Eternal life was not promised nor made available to the obedient. Eternal life or means of obtaining it is not included in the Jewish law, nor was it accessible to any people upon the earth before the coming of Christ. The last book, Malachi, in the Old Testament was written about B.C. 400, so this law of sacrifices for sin had not changed for four centuries. Malachi 3:1, ***I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me; and he for whom you are waiting shall suddenly come to the temple of the Lord, even the messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight; behold he shall come, says the Lord of Hosts.***

What was the condition of the Jews in their relationship to God at the time the messenger, John the Baptist, appeared upon the scene? In this last Jewish prophecy, four hundred years before, we find these quotations which describe their relationships with God at that time. Malachi 2:1-2, ***Now therefore O priests, this commandment is for you. If you will not obey, and if you will not lay it to heart to give glory to my name, says the Lord of Hosts, I will send curses upon you, and I will curse your blessings because you have not laid it to your heart.*** They are here condemned by God for ignoring and breaking the first commandment. Malachi 2:8-10 ***But you have turned aside from the way; you have caused many to stumble at the law; you have corrupted the covenant of Levi, says the Lord of Hosts Therefore have I also made you contemptible and humiliated before all the people, because you have not kept the ordinances, but have been partial in the law. Have we not all one father? Or has not one God created us? Why then do we deal treacherously every man against his brother by profaning the covenant of our fathers.*** Here we see that they were breaking, not only the second law of love, but also the special covenant God had made with the Jewish people. It would seem also that the religious leaders, priests and Levites, were foremost in this wholesale breaking of God's laws.

Hundreds of years had passed, nearly all of which had been lived in servitude. The great bulk of the inhabitants had been carried away into slavery. Ten tribes had been almost entirely lost. Judah only remained in any considerable numbers, with a few Benjaminites and a few Levites. During the centuries Palestine had really changed, from a Jewish to a cosmopolitan country with a mixed population from most of the nations of the world. The religious situation had steadily grown less spiritual and the secular government had been taken away from them entirely.

Gentiles living there who desired to become affiliated with the Jewish religious system and practices were required to submit to a ceremony of adoption or initiation into the Jewish religion. This ceremony required the making of oaths and vows, the circumcision of males and the

immersion of all candidates. These Gentile converts to Judaism were called proselytes.

Into this cosmopolitan civilization suddenly appeared a last prophet for the Jews, after a silence of four centuries. He was legally authenticated to the Jews by their own prophecies. Why did this last and greatest of the Jewish prophets attract so much attention? We find the reason in the nature of the message and the undoubted authority for its delivery. All classes of people flocked to hear his preaching.

First, John preached against the sins of the individual against God, not the breaking of the laws and ordinances secondary to the basic laws. Thus his preaching reached every individual, high and low, the common man of any race or religion, as well as the Pharisees, lawyers and scribes.

Second, by not attacking the secondary laws, ordinances, rules and customs he was able to concentrate on the individual's sins, in his own spiritual relationship to God. Matthew 3:9 ***Do not think and say within yourselves, we have Abraham as our father; for I say to you that God can raise up children to Abraham from these stones.*** He brought home to them the fact that each is accountable to God for his own sins.

Third, He called upon them to repent of their sins. Repentance always carries with it the desire and effort to turn away from the sinful life and practices and to mould one's faith and acts upon righteousness. John was stressing the regenerated life to them.

Fourth, He immersed them for the remission of their sins instead of sending them to the temple with a burnt offering. This was an absolutely new spiritual act, in fact a rebellious act against the temple worship. They were familiar with the immersion of proselytes for the purpose of bringing them into the proper relationship with the Jewish religion. John used the familiar act to remove their sins, thus producing the same results as obtained by the blood sacrifices.

John thus bypassed the entire law of Moses and the great mass of ordinances and rules, including in His preaching only the basic laws of love and neighborliness applicable to all the people in this crowd that came to hear him. He used immersion to do the same act as the blood

sacrifice before the blood sacrifice laws were repealed at Christ's death. During the life and teaching of John and Jesus both methods were in force and authority.

After being immersed by John, Jews were in the same position as if they had offered a blood sacrifice, excepting they were not changed under the Jewish law, nor forgiven for breaking Jewish rules and ordinances. This breaking of Jewish law was not a sin. Sin was an offence against God's laws, not against the Jewish laws. Eternal life was not promised nor offered under the Jewish law, nor even under the universal basic laws of love, so all who were immersed by John had their sins forgiven up to the time of their immersion. During John's immersion the benefits of Christ's sacrifice were not yet available, nor was the immersion of the Holy Spirit. Both became available at Pentecost.

Fifth, John's action brought both Gentile and Jew into the same class relieving them of sin against God and bypassing the strictly Jewish laws, ordinances and traditions. Both needed to be immersed at Pentecost or later.

Sixth, John did not designate his immersion as final, but said that Jesus would immerse them in the Holy Spirit. This was a transition period.

Seventh, John did not offer them eternal life at his immersion but he did inform them that the kingdom of heaven was at hand. He called their attention to the prophecies that had been made regarding the Messiah through whom the Jewish people hoped for redemption.

The redemption the Jews were looking for was both spiritual and secular, and they did not separate the two redemptions in their thinking. Most of them associated the establishment of the kingdom of heaven with the reestablishment of the secular Jewish kingdom or theocracy. The kingdom of heaven was established at Pentecost, but the Jewish theocracy never was reestablished.

Jesus was immersed by John but they both knew that it was not being done as the others. Jesus had no sin and was immersed to fulfill all righteousness. It might also be said that it was an example of correct

procedure and that by so doing was authenticating the act of John in changing the Jewish blood sacrifice to immersion in water.

Eternal life and immersion in the Holy Spirit both became available at Pentecost. Before this the disciples and apostles did not preach eternal life as available, but that the kingdom was at hand, or soon to be established. Jesus did not teach that eternal life was available at that time either. When questioned regarding the matter He answered each query with the answer applicable to that particular case or situation, but did not give universal conditions for all to follow. Christ left that to His chosen representatives who were guided in their work and instructions by the Holy Spirit. Only at Pentecost or thereafter can we find stated conditions for eternal life or the immersion of the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 19:16-26, *Then a man drew near to him and said, O good teacher. What is the best thing that I should do to have life eternal?* Jesus evidently sidestepped the question and answered, obey the commandments. But the man was seeking a definite answer, *Which ones?* Jesus, still sidestepping the chief question named the commandments. But the young man came back at Him a third time. *What do I lack? Jesus said to him, If you wish to be perfect, go and sell your possessions and give them to the poor, and you will have a treasure in heaven, and then follow me.* Jesus still sidestepped the main issue, but answered him according to the individual obstacle which was holding him back. But the young man went away sorrowful; for he had great possessions. He would not meet the requirements. Neither His disciples at the time nor very many Bible students since think that Jesus was giving universal terms for obtaining eternal life. These were given first at Pentecost.

Matthew 25:46, *And these shall go into everlasting torment, and the righteous into everlasting life.* Christ here gives a partial answer to the question.

Luke 10:25, *And behold a scribe stood up to test him, and he said, Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?* Christ allows him to answer his own question. *You must love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with*

all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself. Christ accepted this partial answer as correct, but the lawyer was not satisfied and questioned Him regarding his neighbor and Christ told him the parable of the Good Samaritan. Christ again had allowed him to answer his own question, and did not give him the terms for obtaining eternal life. It was reserved for Pentecost. Although both eternal life and the forgiveness of sin were reserved for Pentecost, nevertheless Jesus also forgave sins individually for many according to their own needs as He ministered to them, but He did not forgive their future sins, or make provision for them to be forgiven. The plan for this was reserved until He had ascended back to heaven and the kingdom was established.

In the third chapter of John we have an account of a conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus, a Pharisee and a ruler of the Jews. From the conversation we conclude that Nicodemus came to Jesus for an explanation of the new teachings of Jesus. Jesus went into detail to explain to him the establishing of the new kingdom. *If a man is not born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus said to him, How can an old man be born again? Jesus answered, If a man is not born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*

Jesus then told him that physical phenomena are readily understood, but that one cannot so readily detect the actions of those who are born of the Spirit. Nicodemus questioned further for a more complete explanation. *How can these things be? Jesus answered, You are a teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things?* Then Jesus explained how the Jewish prophecies, His sacrifice, eternal life and the new birth in water and the Spirit are so closely linked together. *For God so loved the world that he even gave his only begotten Son, so that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life.* All these matters were the subject of the same conversation, an explanation by Jesus to a ruler of the Jews.

After these things Jesus and his disciples came to the land of Judea; and there he remained there with them and baptized. John also was baptizing at the spring of Aenon near to Shalim because there was much water there; and they came and were baptized. Then

we have related closely following in the same chapter John's witness and testimony that Jesus is from God, speaking the words of God.

For he whom God has sent speaks the words of God; for God did not give the Spirit by measure. The Father loves the Son, and has placed everything under his hand. How can we, two thousand years later, separate the various portions of a single conversation of Jesus, and say that being born of water is one thing, and being born of the Spirit something else, and receiving eternal life something else again. They are all included in the same explanation.

The Spread of the Gospel

Let us look at the recorded cases where people were converted from the Jewish or other religions, accepted the new gospel and became new creatures.

Acts 8:5-13, ***Philip went down to a Samaritan city and preached to them about Christ. Read the eighth chapter of Acts. When the people of that place heard his word, they gave heed and listened attentively to everything Philip said and, when they believed Philip concerning the kingdom of God in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Semon himself also believed and was baptized and attached himself to Philip.***

A man of Ethiopia who had come to Jerusalem was returning, sitting in his chariot reading Isaiah the prophet. Philip said to him Acts 8:30, ***Do you understand what you are reading? and the Ethiopian said, How can I understand unless some one teach me? And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.*** Philip told him the good news of Jesus. And as they went along the road they came to some water ***and the eunuch said, Behold here is water; what prevents me from being baptized? And he commanded the chariot be stopped; and both went down into the water; and Philip baptized the eunuch. And when they came up from the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away and the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing.*** We notice how obediently Philip was immersing those who believed the gospel of Christ.

In chapter nine we have the account of Paul's conversion. He was stopped on the road to Damascus by Jesus and directed to go into the city and wait for instructions. Jesus had made him blind and his companions led him into the city. There he waited and fasted for three days. Jesus in a vision said to a disciple in the city, ***Arise and go into***

the street which is called Straight and inquire at the house of Judah for Saul of the city of Tarsus; for behold he is praying, and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in and laying his hands on him to restore his sight. Ananias was frightened, but Jesus said, Arise and go; he is the agent whom I have chosen for myself; Then Ananias went to Saul, restored his sight and Saul was immersed. Paul was then a new creature having been born a new creature by a birth, or a resurrection from a watery grave. Paul immediately began to preach the gospel to others and we shall see that he preached and practiced the same gospel as the others who had been instructed on the day of Pentecost by the Holy Spirit, through the preaching of Peter.

Peter had been confining his work to the Jews alone but in the tenth chapter we have an account of how he was made to understand that the gospel was also for the Gentiles, everyone not just the Jews. Chapter 10, Cornelius was a Gentile, and after Peter had preached to them and they believed the gospel. The Holy Spirit fell on them like it did on the Jews on the day of Pentecost. Then Peter declared, *Can any man forbid water, that these people who have received the Holy Spirit, just as we have, should not be baptized. And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.* So they became new creatures the same as the Jews.

In the sixteenth chapter as Paul proceeded with his work of preaching the gospel he was directed to cross over from Asia to Europe. There they converted a woman named Lydia at Philippi. The Lord opened her heart to give heed to what was said by Paul. *And she was baptized together with her household, and she begged us, saying, If you are sincerely convinced that I believe in our Lord, come and stay in my house;* They accepted the invitation. So the first converts in Europe were immersed into the new way by Paul.

Paul continued to preach in Philippi and soon got into trouble, was arrested and thrown into prison. Read the story in the sixteenth chapter of Acts. Paul preached to the jailer, and when he had believed he was immediately immersed the same hour of the night.

In the nineteenth chapter is an account of Paul's' preaching at Ephesus where he stayed two years. He found there a group of about twelve disciples. When questioned he discovered that they had not received the Holy Spirit, in fact had never even heard about it. ***By what baptism then were you baptized? They said, By the baptism of John. Then said Paul, John verily baptized the people with the baptism of repentance, saying to them that they should believe on him who should come after him, that is, Jesus Christ. When they heard these things, they were baptized in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.***

Notice particularly that these disciples were not acceptable to the Holy Spirit just upon their faith. Not only did they believe but had been immersed by John. It is not the act of immersion in water that is commanded. Immersion in water by John had removed their sins, up to the time they had been immersed, but this had not made them new creatures, not given them eternal life. The plan of salvation was quite plain and easily complied with, but it had to be complied with. There are no substitutions possible. No church nor group can legislate for God.

The Evidence of Common Sense Reasoning.

It is very evident to me that there are points in this problem which must be settled by common sense. This is concerned largely with harmonizing the facts or truths which have been established by various means but which seem to contradict each other.

Let us first clarify our understanding of the kingdom. There are not several kingdoms, with different laws and different terms of citizenship. There is a God, and the entire expanse of the universe is His realm. But God is three personalities, so speaking particularly there can be the kingdom of Jehovah, kingdom of Christ, and kingdom of the Holy Spirit. Also there can be the kingdom of Heaven and the kingdom of Earth. And if there are other inhabited planets there could be kingdoms there to be considered with the other names. But the three personalities of the Trinity of God are one God, and the entire universe is the realm, so there is but one kingdom.

Let us look at the kingdom of God, the greatest kingdom in the universe. When we stop to think about it we are amazed at its simplicity. It is not even as complicated as the United States government. The kingdom is sometimes considered as a whole, which includes every spirit in the universe.

I Chronicles 29:11, *For thine, O Lord is the greatness and the power and the glory and the beauty and the majesty and the honor; for thou art the ruler over all that is in the heaven and on the earth.*

Sometimes the spirits in heaven, 2 Timothy 4:18, *And my Lord shall deliver me from every evil work and will give me life in his heavenly kingdom; To him be glory for ever and ever.*

Sometimes the spirits on earth, Revelation. 11:15, *And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great rumblings of thunders, saying, The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever.*

Sometimes the kingdom is referred to as being God's people on earth. Matthew 13:19, *Whoever hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away the word which has been sown in his heart.* Matthew 13:24, *The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field.* Matthew 13:31, *The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field.*

Sometimes the kingdom refers to the Church on Earth. Luke 22:29-30, *And I promise you, just as my Father has promised me, a kingdom, that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom.*

Sometimes it is called the kingdom of God. Matthew 6:33, *But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.*

Sometimes it is called the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 3:2, *Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.*

Sometimes it is Christ's kingdom, or my kingdom. John 18:36, *My kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world my servants would have fought so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now my kingdom is not from here.* There are many other

references to the kingdom similar to those I have quoted. There is but one kingdom, but in this kingdom which God rules are good, bad, men, angels, demons, worlds, galaxies of stars and all the elements and parts that make up the entire creation.

The Bible does not reveal everything to us. That would be impossible. We do not need to know everything. We could not even if we wished. God has already revealed to us what we really need. We need not understand what has been revealed.

Relationships of the Physical and Spiritual Bodies.

As has already been discerned, man has two bodies, the physical and the spiritual. The association of the two is close and inter-dependent. The physical body is the animal and is known to us by its appearance and its personality. This personality is the sum and substance of the mental development. The spiritual body is a perfected duplicate of the physical, and its personality is the sum and substance of the mental development of the spiritual mind.

During the lifetime of the normal person the physical mind and personality are in control. After death the spiritual mind and personality are in control. When the physical and spiritual bodies are separated from each other during the lifetime of the physical body, each retains those attributes which are its own and also the mental development which the two have attained while in normal association.

Each body has a mind. These minds function together during their association in the physical lifetime as do the bodies of each. This composite mind contains both the conscious and subconscious minds. When the two bodies are separated each mind retains the complete record made while the two were in association. While separated the records made are entirely different, each having its own experiences.

This is an abnormal situation, and when the normal situation is restored there exists a difference between the two records. From the spiritual mind is missing the record of the feelings and emotions of the physical which

were not recorded. The acts performed and decisions made by the physical were recorded, but not the emotions and feelings. From the physical mind is missing the entire record of the spiritual made in absence.

After restored association the spiritual has access to the physical record, but the emotional unrecorded portion is lost to both minds. The conscious mind, while associated and in control, has access to the record of the spiritual made while absent as well as when in association. While the two bodies are separated the physical mind is actuated by the decisions already made between the conscious and the subconscious, but the spirit now being absent, all new decisions are made without its cooperation.

With man the subconscious mind has been created with a quality, attribute or function which was not given to animals or plants but was a later creation, after the creation of the animal world. No animal possesses this human attribute. Man was created in the image of God, and this image of God is spiritual. This image of God is the spiritual body of man containing the mind of the spirit. An attribute created with, or a part of this human spirit mind is the ability to attain to eternal life.

Animals were not created in the image of God. The animal subconscious mind does not possess the attribute of attaining to eternal life. Extension of life is a fact or law of God, a natural original law of creation. We see it in nature about us. The laws of extension of life do not imply that the extension will be to eternity. Animals do not possess a spiritual body. Their minds do not have a spiritual counterpart. Conscious and subconscious records are made upon the physical mind.

The extension of life as observed in plants is not eternal life, even though that life may extend to thousands of years, or be transmitted from one generation to another a myriad number of times. The existence of nerves in plants, nervous action, nerve centers and reflex actions resulting from stimuli is a working of the natural laws governing nerve action and not an indication of animal life, transference of life from mineral to vegetable, from vegetable to animal, nor the extension of any form of life to eternity.

There is only one source of authoritative knowledge of eternal life and that is the revealed word of the Creator of eternal life, the Bible. The Bible does not reveal that eternal life was given to any form of mineral, vegetable or animal life, including man, nor is it anywhere promised or made accessible or obtainable to anything except to the image of God himself, which are the spiritual bodies of men. This spiritual body, containing and controlled by the spiritual mind of man has been given the opportunity of obtaining eternal life. Nothing else has. This spiritual body is the spirit of man. It has a body. It has a mind. It has a personality.

This eternal life is not a gift. It is not a creation. Man is not born with it. If he does not obtain it he dies without it the same as all other animals. The wonderful, miraculous, almost unbelievable fact regarding eternal life is that it has not been given, created with nor forced upon people, but is made available to all upon easy terms.

For God so loved the world, that he even gave his only begotten Son, so that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

No mineral, plant or animal believes in Christ and therefore cannot have eternal life. No provision is made in the Bible for their eternal life. When they die that is the end of their life. They do not possess a spirit. Only man possesses a spirit and that spirit is the only earthly creation that ever attains eternal life.

Special Powers Given to the First Church

Acts 2:4, ***And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they began to speak in various languages, according to whatever the Holy Spirit gave them to speak.*** Here was a special power or miraculous ability imparted to every member of the original one hundred twenty members of the Church.

Acts 2:6, ***And as the sound took place, all the people gathered together, and they were confused because every man heard them speak in his own language.*** This multitude which heard and understood every member of the Church speaking in tongues was not the Church members. They were the mixed crowd which gathered to satisfy their curiosity about what was being rumored around the town. Each person in the crowd heard them speaking in his own native tongue, in a big gathering, without any interpreters needed.

About three thousand of this mixed crowd joined the Church that day after hearing the gospel explained to them in their own language. Other thousands who heard and understood those who spoke in tongues did not join the Church.

Acts 8:29, ***And the Spirit said to Philip, Go near and keep close to the chariot.*** Acts 8:39,40, ***The Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away and the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing. Philip was found at Azotus; and from there he traveled and preached in all the cities till he came to Caesarea.*** We find Philip exercising another power which was bestowed upon the original group of one hundred twenty. Acts 8:6, ***And the people of that place heard his word, they gave heed and listened attentively to everything Philip said, because they saw the miracles which he did. Many who were mentally afflicted cried with loud voices and were restored; and others who were paralytic and lame were healed.*** This

power which was given to the first Church by the Holy Spirit was not given to every convert. It was not a universal gift. It was not a gift that always accompanied the immersion of the Holy Spirit.

Mark 16:16, *He who believeth and is baptized shall be saved; and he who does not believe shall be condemned. And wonders will follow those who believe these things. In my name they will cast out demons; and they will speak with new tongues. And they will handle snakes; and if they should drink any poison of death, it will not harm them; and they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will be healed And they went out and preached in every place; and our Lord helped them and strengthened their words by the miracles which they performed.* Jesus was here talking to the eleven apostles, and they did perform the signs and wonders, and this was for establishing the gospel.

Matthew 7:22, *A great many will say to me in that day, My Lord, my Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name cast out devils and in your name do many wonders? Then will I declare to them, I have never known you; Keep away from me, O you that work iniquity.*

Christ tells us about two kinds of wonderful works being performed by man. One kind is the miracles being performed by those authorized by the Holy Spirit, and the other kind is the works, call them miracles if you wish, that are performed through the spiritual power of the individual. He may or may not be a Christian. Even his claim to be doing the works in the name of Christ does not make it true. Christ himself says so in unmistakable words.

In non Christian lands and through the so called power of their heathen religions, in India, Arabia, Hawaii, Africa and the islands of the sea there are miracles, so called, being performed, evil spirits being cast out, the lame and sick healed. In America we have religious bodies healing the sick. In France there are many cases on record of miracles performed at the Catholic shrine at Lourdes. These are happening now, all over the world, and in almost every culture, both heathen and civilized. Because the heathen attribute their cures to

their gods of mud, stone or paper does not make it so. Because the cures at the shrine in France are attributed to the Virgin Mary does not make it so. Because Christian Science cures are attributed to their acceptance of the theory of the non-existence of evil does not make it so. Because Christian healers claim to heal through faith in Christ does not make it so. Their claim is no more legitimate than the claim of the Hawaiian Kahuna or the medicine man. We would like to believe these Christian claims to power because they lie within our own cherished ideas of religion.

All miracles are of God, yes, all of them, for God created the world we see, from that which could not be seen. He made the laws. He made man. Everything that happens is through God by His use of the spiritual power of the universe. God made man in His own image. Man is dual. He is animal and spirit. Every man possesses spiritual power, given to him by God when he was created, but the end results of man's use of this God given power is not a God produced miracle, but a man produced miracle, using the spiritual power with which God created him.

Christians; and by that I mean those who are born into the family of God, new children of the Holy spirit, joint heirs and fellow workers with Christ; recognizing the sacrifice and redemptive powers of His love, legitimately attribute their spiritual power miracles to God, for God, through the Holy Spirit, angels and other God directed activities has aided in the work.

Christ says, these signs shall follow them that believe, in my name shall they—do all these healings and miracles. Yes they shall do them, because they are spiritual beings in the family of God, because they are possessed of the power within themselves and are helping God in the administration of the law of love; not because of their faith, nor the faith of the sick person, nor because of the special power of working miracles given to the first Church by the Holy Spirit. Yes, there is a difference between the gift of the Holy Spirit, and the spiritual power of man.

Special powers given by the Holy Spirit at Pentecost

These special powers were used in the establishment of the early Church.

1st—*A sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.*

2nd—*There appeared to them tongues which were divided like flames of fire, and they rested upon each of them.*

3rd—*They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and they began to speak in various languages according to whatever the Holy Spirit gave them to speak.*

4th—*All the people gathered together, and they were confused because every man heard them speak in his own language. How is it that we hear every man in our own native language? Parthians and Medes and Elamites and those who dwell in Mesopotamia, Jews and Cappadocians and those from Pontus and Asia Minor, And those from the region of Phrygia and of Pamphylia and of Egypt, and of the regions of Lybia near Cyrene, and those who have come from Rome, both Jews and proselytes. And those from Crete, and Arabians, behold, we hear them speak in our own tongues of the wonderful works of God.*

This first manifestation of the Holy Spirit included these seven items which were peculiar to the first Church, miraculous.

1. A mighty sound filled all the house.
2. Cloven tongues like fire appeared and sat on each of them.
3. Every Church member was filled with the Holy Spirit.
4. All spoke with other tongues.
5. The Holy Spirit gave all of them their utterances.
6. All who listened heard them talk in their native language.
7. All who heard them understood it without an interpreter.

This seven fold miracle was never repeated, or, if so, not recorded.

The First Recorded Christian Sermon.

And afterwards Simon Peter stood up together with the eleven disciples, and lifted up his voice and said unto them, Peter delivered a sermon in tongues to the multitude, his speech being the utterances of the Holy Spirit. Three thousand obeyed the commandment given by the Holy Spirit uttering her words through the apostle Peter. *Repent and be baptized, every one of you in the name of the Lord Jesus for the remission of sins. And about three thousand souls were added in that day.*

1. Peter preached to the multitude in tongues.
2. The Holy Spirit gave Peter his utterances.
3. The Holy Spirit stated the terms of salvation.
4. Three thousand souls responded to one sermon.

The four fold miracle was never repeated. So ended the day of Pentecost. Two miracles had been performed by the Holy Spirit and three thousand were added to the Church that day.

Then followed a period of getting settled into a life of fellowship and every day living and worship. During this period they did not worship or commune as a big congregation in a single church building, but went every day to the temple to pray and went from house to house each day to break bread. Many signs and wonders were done by the apostles but none are mentioned specifically. But those that believed stayed together and had all things in common. How many years this period of worshipping in the Jewish temple continued we are not told. No mention is made of healings, signs or wonders performed by any one except the apostles during this period.

Now Peter and John went in together into the temple at the hour of prayer, and a certain lame man whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple to ask alms, seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms. Peter said unto him, Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have give I thee; in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise

up and walk. He took him by the right hand, and lifted, and immediately His feet and ankle bones received strength, and he leaping up stood and walked and entered with them into the temple, walking and leaping and praising God. And as the healed man held Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them greatly wondering. When Peter saw it he preached a sermon to them about their crucifixion of Jesus and exhorted them to repent and be converted. Many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand.

This is the first miracle specifically mentioned after the Church had been established although the apostles had been performing other signs and wonders. It does not say so but I believe that the circumstances of this sermon are very similar to the first one, that is, the Holy Spirit was in charge and it may have been in tongues, although that was not necessary as only Jews were allowed in the temple.

The authorities arrested Peter and John and after threatening released them. When they returned to their own company the next day they joined in prayer and praise to God. *And the apostles testified with great power concerning the resurrection of Jesus Christ; and they were all greatly favored.* The place was shaken and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. I assume that this shaking they received was supernatural and out of the ordinary, and that the filling was also. It says that they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. Who is included in the word All? Does it mean the five thousand new converts were the ones filled or does it include the apostles, the original one hundred twenty, or possibly the first three thousand converts and others who had joined the group during the months and years since Pentecost? If this included everyone, then some were receiving a second filling. If so why did they need a second filling? If so, how often did they require to be refilled? Or how effective was a filling by the Holy Spirit?

What was the purpose or object of this miraculous demonstration? It does not say that this filling imparted the gift of the Holy Spirit, the gift of working miracles nor the power to speak in tongues as at Pentecost.

Were the apostles filled again? They evidently were full the evening before for they talked to the converted five thousand men.

What I think happened was that all the five thousand were filled with the Holy Spirit. The others already had received the Holy Spirit. This was another special miracle performed in establishing the Church. It was entirely different from Pentecost and it also was not repeated. Up to this point in the history of the establishing of the Church, none but the apostles were using the power of the Holy Spirit to work miracles, signs, healings or tongues. It was not the practice of the Church members in general.

In Acts 6:8 it says that Stephen, one of the seven deacons, did great wonders and miracles among the people. In Acts 8:5 the work of Philip, another of the deacons is told and he likewise did wonders, cast out evil spirits and cured many. No other Church members were performing miracles during this formative period. If so it is not recorded in the Bible.

The tenth chapter of Acts records the work of Peter, an apostle, as he establishes the Church among the Gentiles at the home of Cornelius. This work of Peter is filled with miracles from beginning to end as were the events on the day of Pentecost. In this case the Holy Spirit was poured out on the Gentiles. I assume that this was the same as the filling on Pentecost, as Peter decided it was. Here we have Church members, not apostles, speaking in tongues for the first time. These were not Jews, but Gentiles.

In my thinking I have always placed this scene at the home of Cornelius with the events of Pentecost and with the conversion of the five thousand as being parts of the one transaction of establishing the Church and laying the foundation for the work of converting the world to Christ.

The miraculous part of the work was being done by the apostles. In the ninth chapter of Acts, Paul is added to the apostles, especially to carry the message to the Gentiles. This act and the miracles connected with it I also place with the establishing of the Church. In this account we have another man, not an apostle; Ananias, through whom was performed the

miracle of restoring sight to Paul. But it seems that the sight as well as the filling was performed by the Holy Spirit. We do not hear of Ananias performing any other miracles.

In the thirteenth chapter Paul and Barnabas were chosen by the Holy spirit and sent forth. But the miracles on their journey were performed by Paul, an apostle, not by Barnabas. Paul found twelve men at Ephesus whom he immersed and they spoke with tongues, but no further mention is made of their working miracles. Acts 19:11, ***And God wrought great miracles by the hands of Paul.*** In Acts, chapter twenty, a young man fell from a window and was killed. It was Paul, an apostle, who restored him to life. Paul was arrested by the Romans and sent to Rome, but he still was performing miracles even as a prisoner. I find no other cases where those present at Pentecost performed miracles. Those Church members that were not apostles did not exercise the power, with the exception of the two deacons, Stephen and Philip.

I have not taken time to reread the remainder of the New Testament to see if there were other Church members who worked miracles under the special power given at Pentecost, but I do not believe that I would find many more.

In answer to the question, “What miracles did the apostles do which ceased with them?” I would answer, “I do not find a record of any in the Bible that were continued beyond the apostolic age.”

In answer to the question, “what miracles were used to establish the Church?” I would answer, “Speaking in tongues, casting out evil spirits, healing the sick and infirm, restoring the dead to life, and in one case making a blind man see.”

There are many cases of wonder working in the world, both in the past and the present, which from the evidence available seems to be due to supernatural or at least superhuman causes. Must we accept the claims of those who perform these acts as to their cause without investigation or research into their probabilities? I think not.

From the Bible and from science we have learned that man is a dual creature, material and spiritual. Through the spiritual subconscious mind man has access to superhuman or ultra human sources of power. It

is a reasonable supposition that these little recognized agencies may be the elements that would furnish the correct solutions.

Each man, through his spiritual subconscious is in contact, or able to contact, other spiritual powers. This is a natural, not a religious condition. Every individual attributes this spiritual contact, help or power which he recognizes to some agency. In the case of a heathen it is to the god of his religion, the sun or some natural element, a god of stone, wood or paper, a good or evil spirit as understood by his religion, according to the educational conditioning of his spirit brought about by his conscious mind. In a more advanced state of civilization he attributes the spiritual power to more definite deities, such for example as the Grecian mythology or the gods and goddesses of the Romans. In a Roman Catholic civilization he often attributes his spiritual help to some saint of the Church, to the Virgin Mary, or some other personality with a human connotation. In a Christian civilization he attributes his spiritual help to the sources taught him by the particular creeds or faiths of the group to which he belongs, or adheres to, the same as in all other civilizations. The pattern of human conduct remains the same. It is nature. It is scientific. It follows correctly and unerringly the patterns of actions of the human mind as have been discovered in the science of psychology.

But there is within this Christian civilization elements or truths which science, including psychology, has not yet recognized or acknowledged. Man is a dual personality. He has a spirit and a spiritual mind. It is possible for this spirit of man to be born again, a new creature. This spirit, the real man, becomes a child of the Father and the Mother and an heir with Christ, His Brother and Advocate.

This new birth comes according to the will of God, when a person accepts Jesus Christ as their Savior, repents of his sins and is buried in water in the name of God, the Trinity, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, for the remission of sins.

Then and only then may he truly and legitimately claim the help or aid given spiritually to the children of God. Only then may he perform in the name of Jesus Christ. Others may claim to perform in the name

of Christ, but in the day of reckoning, when the wheat and tares are separated. Christ will say, ***I have never known you; Keep away from me, O you that work iniquity.*** Only the child of God has a legitimate claim to His help in a special manner that is different from His help to the others in the world about him.

God is a present every day help and power in the world. The Holy Spirit has supervision of the spirits who are doing the work necessary at all times in the entire universe of the Creator. They work with every person. What is good and what is evil all fall under the natural laws. In the final judgment of man the good will be separated from the bad.

If you take the position that God is doing it because he is helping, then anyone who desires may say that he is performing miracles through the power of God, in the name of Christ, or by the power of the Holy Spirit. But when they do this they take it outside of the Christian civilization as well as within it, for God is no respecter of persons, and He loves every man in heathendom as well as every man in Christendom and He treats them all alike according to the universal laws.

If you claim power through Christianity and have never been born a new creature through Christian immersion, your claim is no more true than the claims of the great mass of humanity outside Christianity. They as well as we have access to the spiritual powers of the universe, and the use of it to perform miracles. If the present animal life is our supreme aim, then we might with profit study the methods used by the non-Christian in arriving at their temporal blessings.

I Corinthians 12:8-10, ***For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another the means to distinguish the true spirit; to another different languages; to another the interpretation of languages.***

Here we have nine gifts given to the early Church by the Holy spirit, especially for the purpose of helping to establish the Church of Christ; wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, diverse tongues and interpretation of tongues. These nine special

spiritual gifts were used by the apostles and early disciples during New Testament times to plant the Church upon a proper and firm basis. All of these gifts ceased with the establishment of the Church and the writing of the New Testament. They have not been given to disciples of Christ since that time, are not now, and were never intended to be. Today disciples of Christ do not speak in tongues, interpret tongues, prophesy, work miracles or heal miraculously. The Church has been given to the world, the gifts of the Holy Spirit have been discontinued.

Present Day Religion

The Spiritual Situation

Let us look at the condition of the world after almost two thousand years of teaching a mixture of truth and falsehood. Immersion in water replaced the blood sacrifices and eternal life was promised to those who obeyed. Forgiveness through prayer by Christ's sacrifice and mediation could make that life certain.

God's part in regeneration is the giving of eternal life to the new born creature when he arises from the watery grave. God has no more part in the feelings of joy that come over a repentant sinner in the realm of religious belief than he has over the feelings of joy experienced by people in other matters of great importance to the individual such as the winning of an athletic event, baseball, football or a political office. Enthusiasm and pleasure are purely material and human actions and reactions and are no more God given than are the results of rainfall or other material phenomena, which apply alike to all people, saint and sinner alike.

Christ told Nicodemus, You must be born of the water. If and when anyone who believes in Christ is born of the water he receives eternal life and not before. Nowhere in the Bible have I been able to find any command or intimation that a person had to believe in immersion. The command was to do it, not to believe it. It is an action, not a belief.

At the present time, A.D. 1950, we find the world made up mostly of people who are not new creatures, not heirs of eternal life, not really Christians. The Catholic and Protestant churches that reject immersion are keeping the people from becoming Christians, while at the same time calling themselves Christian. It is quite common to call our civilization a Christian civilization, our country a Christian country, and our achievements Christian accomplishments.

Christianity today is a sort of moral habit practiced by people who belong to churches. They have little in common except the name Christian and the proposition that each individual has religious freedom to believe whatever he chooses.

About the only claim they have in common to the use of the name Christian is that they believe in Christ. But that claim is doubtful for their belief in Christ has few points in common. They agree on little else except possibly that his mother's name was Mary. They do not agree on who was his Father. Many of those who believe that God was his Father believe also that God is their Father, that they also are sons of God, and that by living the kind of life adopted by their church they can finally achieve a status similar to His. They look upon Christ as a man who was able to live superhumanly, and that they by following His example can become like Him. No man can ever become a God.

What has this miscellaneous religious background called Christianity done to our civilization during the past centuries and what is it doing at the present time? Christ, Christianity and the original Churches of Christ, brought into the world a few definite and easily understood laws. Among them were: love of God, love of our neighbors, love of our enemies, remission of sins through immersion, help of the Holy Spirit to live and act righteously, and help in the teaching of others, with the goal of eternal life in heaven as a consummation.

But actually what has been done? The first years, Church people in general followed as closely as they could the pattern Christ had given them. They loved God, they loved their neighbors, they loved their enemies. None of them would harm anyone, even those who persecuted them. None of them would fight in an army because that would be killing your enemy instead of loving him. They used love instead of force to win people. Their religion was freedom, love and righteousness.

Then the Roman nation took over the church and made the Christian Church a national religion and institution. It was no longer a religion of freedom and love following the pattern given by the apostles and early

disciples. It became a compulsory adherence to the beliefs, practices and government as decided by the councils of church and state. It was then a criminal offence not to be a Christian, and disbelief was followed by imprisonment and death. The persecutions and deaths under the state church were many times more severe than ever they had been while the church remained free. Millions of people were tortured and killed because they would not obey the edicts of the church. Thus the church became a non-Christian church and has remained so to the present day for the most part.

The Unreasonableness of Protestantism.

Protestant doctrines are a mass of contradictory creeds and statements; which have made of Christianity a meaningless religion. No one knows what a Christian believes, or how he is to live and act, not even the Christian himself. And the results? Look at the world today. There are hundreds of different kinds of Christianity, a group made up of just about every point of belief that they could find. Man will never agree in these man made doctrines. The Bible and the Bible alone holds the truth and the way to eternal life.

Let us drop all these statements about church doctrine and church claims. Anyone can certainly see that man cannot make laws for God. God's laws are laws of nature, all of them; those of his spiritual nature just as those of his material nature, the same as all the laws of nature about us.

These laws, all of them, were created by God. They are fixed from the time of creation to eternity. Man cannot change nor modify them. All man can do is to discover and use them. And moreover, man's belief about their operation has nothing to do with it. They operate exactly the same whether man believes it or not.

Also, strange as it sounds to some, belief in God, belief in Christ, belief in Mohammed or any other belief has very little to do with it. Fire will burn, water will drown, flowers will smell fragrant, a cup of cold water will relieve thirst, love will overcome fear, music hath charms and

all the universe operated just the same with or without belief; belief in anything or belief in nothing.

Scientists know this, and recognizing the true facts have tested, experimented, proven and used these laws of God in thousands of ways, to the wonderful advancement of the civilization and happiness of man. It is no wonder to me that scientists reject this unnatural, unscientific religious legislation. They ought to. So should the rest of us.

The common sense thing to do would be to study and discover the spiritual laws underlying the spiritual world and the spirit of man. It is all wrong to try to legislate by creeds and councils what these laws are. It is as impossible as for material laws. No scientific advancement was made until belief was thrown out and man left free to act. Since belief was ruled out astrology died and astronomy advanced, alchemy died and chemistry advanced, witchcraft died and psychology advanced. This same advancement is found everywhere in the realms of man's life when the tyrannical rules of the group beliefs have been discarded and just plain common sense allowed to operate.

When Christ said in the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 7:12, ***Whatever you wish men to do for you, do likewise also for them; for this is the law and the prophets.*** Luke 6:31, ***Just as you want men to do to you, do to them likewise.*** He was giving a summary of the natural moral or spiritual law which has existed from creation. This same law, or summary of the law, which is commonly called the 'Golden Rule', was not given to man by Christ during His earthly ministry. It is not Christianity. It is natural law. It had formally been given to the Jewish nation by Moses. Leviticus 19:18, ***You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*** But even then it was not really a new law given to the Jewish nation. It was natural law. It is to be found repeated in all the old civilizations of the world thousands of years before Moses.

Paul makes mention of this summary of the natural moral law in his writings. Romans 13:8-10, ***Owe no man anything, but love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law. Which says, Thou***

shalt not kill, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not covet; and if there is any other commandment, it is fulfilled in this saying, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Love does not work evil to his neighbor because love is the fulfillment of the law.

The fulfilling of what law? The natural law which has existed all over the earth from creation for every man. It has always been binding, and is not a Jewish law, a Chinese law, a law of India, or Africa or of any of the nations or religions of the world. It is not Christianity, but it is included in Christian teaching because it is a true natural law. It is law which must be obeyed and all men who obey that natural law receive the benefits of that obedience whether Christian or heathen just exactly as when they obey any other natural law.

If any man, Christian or other, obeys the laws of health he becomes a strong healthy man physically. If any man, Christian or other obeys the laws of mental development he becomes a strong man mentally. If any man, Christian or other, obeys the law of love, or moral and spiritual development he becomes a strong man spiritually. Spirituality is by no means a Christian monopoly. Great development spiritually is found among all races and in every age since creation.

Great physical development, great mental development, great spiritual development does not give any man eternal life or salvation. Eternal life is not obtained by obedience to the material laws of the universe. Salvation does not come by works. No man however good he is can earn eternal life. It cannot be earned. Christianity is not works. Christianity is not moral living. Christianity is not giving to the poor. Christianity is not building great churches, creating great foundations, schools, colleges or even hospitals and orphanages. Christianity is not living up to the creed or discipline of any church or group, whether they claim to be Christian or not. Man is not saved by works. Christianity is not a development, an attainment, an education, a condition, a state of mind, prayer or worship.

These things are possibilities open to all human beings. And whether or not this is distasteful, some of these which we hold so dear apply to animals as well as to human beings. People have long known about

the development of affection by animals; horses, dogs, cats, cattle and in many cases of other animals. These are not spiritual attributes or development, for animals do not have spirits. They have a subconscious mind which controls their involuntary thoughts and actions in very much the same manner as man. Many of these good works we teach as Christian behavior are displayed by animals as well as men. But that does not make them Christians, nor does it give the animals eternal life.

Those religions of man which include animals in the cycle of growth of the spirit of man from the original pure particle of spirit in space, through minerals, original elemental life, vegetation development, water, animal life, birds, beasts, humans and finally many stages of human perfection until the stage is reached that gives us eternal life, are manufactured religions just inventions of man's imaginations.

Psychologists study the mental behavior of animals and thereby learn much about the mind and how it works. But there is a great difference between the mind of an animal and the mind of a man. Man is a dual personality, an animal and a spirit. The spirit has the power, the right or opportunity of eternal life. This eternal life is a continuation of the life of the spirit of man after the death of the material body. Animals' minds die when their material body dies.

This spiritual ingredient in the mind of man does not exist in the minds of animals, in vegetable matter or in any of the elements which compose material substances. The spirit was a special creation, differing from all other creations, and governed by different laws, for it was created in the image of God, after the creation of the animals. The laws governing this special creation are natural laws in the sense that they are the same always, made at the time of creation, and will continue the same. But they are nevertheless applicable only to the spirit of man. These laws do not apply to angels and the great host of spiritual beings that continually carry on the work of the Creator in the universe. They do not apply to animals.

There is this difficulty underlying the position of man as it exists in the world today. The field of human activity is governed by natural laws which apply not only to man but to all nature about us, to the universe of

space, stars, moon and sun, gases, atmosphere, mineral, vegetable and animal life. Our human life, development and happiness, depends upon our observing and obeying these laws. These laws govern everything that is not spiritual. If man were just an animal he need concern himself no further. But we have a spirit and spiritual laws must be obeyed if we are to obtain eternal life. We must observe both codes of law. This is where the difficulty comes in.

We must observe both codes of law and as we are living just one life here on earth we must intermingle the two laws. We want to have natural material comfort, enjoyment and happiness while we live here on the earth. As a matter of scientific fact we must maintain obedience to these laws even to live in freedom in the society or company of other human beings. Upon this background we build our character and personality. In reality this is just another way of saying that we condition, control or educate our conscious and subconscious minds.

For most people in the world I believe that obedience to natural law is about the limit of conditioning that their mind receives. But there is the spiritual law to take into consideration by those people who wish to avail themselves of the opportunity of obtaining eternal life. Most people do not pay very much attention to it.

God made the spiritual laws as well as the material laws, so we may call them both natural laws. Material laws and spiritual laws overlap in the objects sought, or the ends to be achieved by their observance. We find many points common to both laws.

The Commandments of Moses

The ten commandments of Moses as given to the Children of Israel are given as spiritual laws. Let us examine them and see what we find.

First, ***You shall have no other Gods except me.*** This is a strictly spiritual law. Its observance has nothing to do with material law. It cannot be proven or disproven by science or reasoning. We cannot identify this God by any natural means. If we obey this law it must be entirely by faith. It is entirely spiritual.

Second, ***You shall not make for yourself any graven image; you shall not worship them, nor serve them.*** This is a mixed law, not entirely spiritual. There is no law either material or spiritual governing the making of articles of various materials or metals, either after original ideas or in the image or likeness of objects already in existence.

The portion which forbids worshipping these objects or images is both material and spiritual. It is material because the act of worshipping is a submission of the mind of the individual to the will or the supposed will of the image. As there is no life, mind or will in the image this purpose of worship must be supplied from other sources. There must be an incorporeal purpose and this purpose may be supplied by the individual's own thoughts, imagination or inventions. It may be, and usually is, supplied by the group to which the individual belongs, original purposes being quite rare.

This material portion of the law is further complicated by the fact that there are included in these invented purposes some which do not even have a material object or image, but just an incorporeal purpose. These purposes, which are the real objects of worship are so mixed and intertwined by the group customs, habits and association that it is difficult for the individual to distinguish them. Even when the true facts and relationships have been discovered many individuals would rather

submit to the conditioning of their subconscious minds than to act in a manner differing from the group.

It is spiritual because the subconscious mind of man is so closely related to his spirit; that which is capable of attaining unto eternal life. God gives eternal life to man when his spirit is conditioned and developed according to His purposes and not when it is developed according to man's. When the will and purpose of man are also the will and purpose of God, then the spirit becomes a child of God and an heir to eternal life.

The spiritual implications of this second commandment are not easily discerned. There is so much of it which seems just material that people are drawn into its meshes almost without knowing what is happening to them. Much of it is passed up as a lot of foolishness. For this reason the group purposes gradually get a stronger hold upon the spirits until in many cases it becomes impossible to throw it off.

Let us see how it works in real life. Why do people carry a lucky piece or coin in their pockets? Why do we attach a certain importance to an opal as an object of personal adornment? Why are birthstones so popular today? Why does a bride wear something white and something blue, something old and something new? Why, for so many things? For exactly the same reason that primitive people began wearing amulets, bracelets, anklets, ear rings, nose rings and make up.

This is submission to a form of worship and recognition of spiritual values in their simpler forms and to group practices and religion as they become fastened upon the group. As time passed incorporeal values were assigned to definite objects and later to images which were supposed to represent those values. In this manner idol worship came into the world.

If there were no God nor Creator, as we know Him through the revelations of the Bible, then all this rabbit's foot, lucky piece, images, crosses and worship of saints, gods, devils, cows and crocodiles would make sense. It would be a simple case of conditioning the subconscious minds of people to bend them to the will of the group.

But there is a God. Man does have a spirit. Man can obtain eternal life. God still lives and rules and still dictates the law man must follow.

The same creation, the same God, the same, law, the same obedience from the beginning to the present time. It is material only to make an object but it is spiritual when you attach spiritual values to it. For true understanding we must divide the second commandment into two parts. Man may make images but he must not attach to them any spiritual significance, either of his own invention or that dictated by the group.

Third, ***You shall not take a false oath in the name of the Lord your God*** This is entirely spiritual but is not a separate or different commandment. Jesus said, Matthew 22:37, ***Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. This*** third commandment is necessary to keep as a help or part in accepting, honoring and giving first place in our spiritual personalities to God. It is one part of the great commandment.

Fourth, ***Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.*** This is a commandment given only to the Children of Israel or Jewish nation. Its purpose was to keep alive the worship of the true God in this nation and to assure its continuation until the perfected spiritual law of forgiveness of sins and eternal life had been established through the teaching and sacrifice of Christ. It had not been observed previously as a group spiritual conditioning act. It was not repeated by Jesus nor any of His disciples. The early disciples met on the first day of the week to pray and commune, not by commandment of either Moses nor Jesus, not because the Jewish Sabbath was changed into a Christian Sabbath and moved forward one day; but because Christ had requested them to observe communion. A number of factors evidently helped in the selection of the first day of the week for this observance but there is nowhere a commandment to this effect. It is not Christian.

There is one factor which must surely be taken into consideration in every detail of the establishment of the early Church, and for which there is found no logic or human reason for the answer. That is the guidance of the Holy Spirit. She had direct charge of the establishment of the Church, and whether Her reasons are the same as we decide is merely a matter of conjecture. At all events, one thing is sure and certain, the

Holy Spirit did guide them in their work, but never gave them a single commandment or reason for Her actions.

Some of the reasons for communing on the first day of the week may be, Jesus arose from the dead on the first day of the week. The disciples were Jews and were observing the Jewish Sabbath. They might have taken the next day as the most convenient opportunity. The first day of the week began at sun down on the Sabbath and this may possibly be the time communion was observed by the early disciples; an extension of the Jewish Sabbath being used while they were still at worship. The disciples did not immediately drop their Jewish religion or habits and many things took time to change. The practice of having one worship day every seventh day may have been the reason why the disciples adopted it. As far as human judgment is concerned one day is as good as any other for worship, congregating or for communion; whether every seventh, tenth, ninety days or any other regular time or even no regular time. It is practicable and profitable for the mind to be conditioned to a regular time, but no spiritual significance can be attached to any of the details or arrangements for these worship periods. Keeping a Sabbath or any other day sacred is not Christianity.

Fifth, ***Honor your father and your mother; that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God gives you.*** This is the first commandment with a promise of reward. This is an example of group conditioning, the forming of habits in the immediate family group. It is spiritual in the sense that man's mind is closely associated with his spirit. As far as present day science and sociological concepts are concerned it is purely material. Love as the basis of right relationship between God and man, and also between man and man is the real basis of this commandment. It is the first and most important of the group relationships.

These group relationships presented to us in the last six commandments are material laws common to all human beings, and applicable to every race and condition of man, not just the Jews. These group relationships carried their own rewards or punishments, had from the creation of man, and God's concern was in the natural and

material benefits to man when he obeyed them. God did not promise either punishment or eternal life to man for their observance. The growth and development of the desirable social qualities of man's spirit was the real concern of God. Man was created to live eternally with other spirits, both human and heavenly, angels, helpers, workers, creation forces and manifestations as well as to be companions of Jehovah, the Holy Spirit and Jesus.

Sixth, ***You shall not kill.*** (Man, created in God's image.) Not spiritual but a natural material law for the preservation of the human life of man. Even the first murderer, Cain was not punished for the murder but for breaking the great commandment of love for God and man. God will forgive any transgression of man, the breaking of any natural or material law or commandment except the rejection of the Holy Spirit. Genesis 1:27, ***So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him.*** Man was created a couple, a pair, a male and a female, with the first command ever given, to raise children, a family. Gen. 1:28, God was the real family, the first family, the male and female creation, with a son whom we came to know as Jesus.

God said Genesis 2:24, ***Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh.*** Man was made in the image of God. Jehovah and the Holy Spirit were the first and perfect male and female. The only item in the commandment of love that God will not forgive is the non-recognition of that oneness of spirit, personality and relationship of God and the Holy Spirit. Without that love man is lost forever. It is the unpardonable sin.

These last six commandments, being material, and beneficial to man in his group relationships, have brought about a very grave error in the present day churches. There have been spiritual values assigned to them far beyond common sense, logic, reason or basis in the Bible.

Seventh, ***You shall not commit adultery.***

Eighth, ***You shall not steal.***

Ninth, ***You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.***

These three are purely material matters, the relation of man to man in the group. They are not spiritual excepting that they affect man's spirit and help condition it. These should be observed by all even if there were no God, and humans were just animals, as most people believe today. Breaking these laws breaks the second half of the law of love, that for our fellow man. This sin can be forgiven by prayer after a man becomes a new creature. God does not forgive sinners until they love Him enough to accept His Son as their Savior.

After a sinner is born a new creature of water and the Holy Spirit he is a child of God, joint heir with Jesus, and God hears his prayers for the forgiveness of his sins. While he is still dead in his sins, before he has been born of the water and the spirit, God does not forgive him his sins. Through the burnt offerings sins were rolled back from year to year, but were not forgiven. The same action takes place between faith in Christ and immersion; sins are rolled back after one has faith in Christ and are forgiven when he becomes a child of God.

Tenth, ***You shall not covet your neighbors house, you shall not covet your neighbors wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is your neighbors.*** A simple statement would be, "Thou shalt not covet." Covetousness is excessive or immoderate desire. It is the only one of the Ten Commandments which is neither spiritual nor material. It does not affect a person's relationship with any other person or with God but is wholly and completely self contained, self conditioning. It is one of the many qualities with which the spirit of man may be trained which will make of him a desirable personality, character and companion, not only of other people but of God and the spirits with whom he might live throughout eternity.

There are many more of these desirable qualities of the spirit which help make of man the perfect being God desires. We will mention a few. Galatians 5:22-23. ***Love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control, there is no law against these.*** There is no law for them either excepting the law of love. II Peter 1:5, ***Giving all diligence add to your faith virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self control, patience; and to patience,***

godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness, love; for when these things are found among you and abound, you are not empty nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he who lacks these things is blind. Be diligent; for by so doing, an entrance shall be given freely to you into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Philippians 3:14, *I press toward the goal to receive the prize of victory of God's highest calling through Jesus Christ. Therefore let those of you who are perfect think about these things.* Philippians 4:8 *Whatever is true, whatever is honest, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is any praise, think about these things.* Ephesians 5:1-19, *Walk in love as Christ also has loved us. But let not immorality or any uncleanness or covetousness be heard of among you as become saints; Neither cursing nor foolish words nor insults nor words of flattery, none of which are necessary, but instead of these, let thanks be offered. Watch therefore that you live a glorious life, not as foolish men but as wise. Redeeming the time because the days are evil. And do not become drunk with wine, wherein is intemperance; but be filled with the Spirit. Speaking to your souls in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, sing with your heart to the Lord.*

There are many other commandments and recommendations for man to follow for the conditioning of his spirit along proper and helpful lines, to prepare his spirit for the life eternal, as well as to help him live properly in his present social environment. These are not overt acts of either sin or righteousness but are primarily training of the individual.

This overlapping and intermingling of so many laws, rules and commandments and doctrines have made of religion a confusing matter. The laws of God, spiritual laws, natural laws, material laws and scientific laws are fixed. They are the same yesterday, today and forever. It is the privilege of man to discover and use these laws. If man chooses to attach undue importance to some of them, to use them wrongfully, to confuse or ignore them, then he must encounter the results.

But there is a bright side to this matter today. There has been a great deal of deep study, scientific investigation, careful experimentation and recorded results along many contributing and analogous lines. The world is learning how great masses of people are being conditioned by small minorities, and little by little are finding the means of resistance or counter attack. The final permanent solutions to many of these problems are still to be found and put into practice but progress is being made.

In the province of war man is learning slowly but surely that the natural law, ***You shall not kill***, is not just a saying but is a primary fundamental law. We have passed through two so called world wars in which millions of people were killed. The purpose behind these was the acquisition of power by a minority for the purpose of extending advantage over great masses of people.

We are slowly learning that love of our fellow man is much more desirable than hate. Cooperation is much more desirable than competition. We are trying to build up cooperation against war. A new emphasis has been placed upon the old law of conditioning the mind of man. War is being extended from the physical killing of the body to control slavery by education and training of the mind. Religious forces are still being used very much as they have been in the past to prepare the spirits of the warriors and keep them in condition. Organized religion, its machinery and personnel are used. Ministers and specially trained men are sent to war with the armies as advisors, priest and chaplains.

The uselessness of trying to reconcile, 'Love your enemies,' with 'Kill your enemies,' is gradually and surely demonstrating the lack of Christianity in most present day religions.

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