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### Biola Hour Highlights, 1976 - 10

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# Biola Hour Highlights

Series No. 10 1976  
Featuring Edited September Messages

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# Interview with Dr. Samuel H. Sutherland

President Emeritus  
Biola College

*This September marks the fortieth anniversary of ministry at Biola by Dr. Samuel H. Sutherland.*

*Q. Tell us, when were you saved?*

DR. SUTHERLAND: I can't give a definite time, having been brought up in a Christian home. My father was a Presbyterian minister, and my earliest recollection is hearing about the loving Lord Jesus Christ. I've always, from my earliest recollection, felt that I was a Christian, knowing that the Saviour loves me and died for me.

*Q. Was it difficult to be the child of a minister?*

DR. SUTHERLAND: I guess I used to think it was. The kids in the community would call me "Preach" or the minister's son. I resolved in those early years that I'd never be a minister. I didn't want my children to go through the same persecution. Such feelings didn't last very long.

*Q. How long did it take you to decide you wanted to be in the ministry, following in your father and your grandfather's footsteps?*

DR. SUTHERLAND: From my earliest childhood I felt I would be going into fulltime Christian work. It also seemed to me that if I yielded to the Lord He might send me out as a missionary. When I was a youngster we lived up in northern California, just out of Santa Rosa. There was a great work being done among the Chinese, particularly the girls of Chinatown, in San Francisco. This was both before and after the great earthquake in 1906. My dad was very much interested in that ministry. The superintendent of the Presbyterian outreach there would bring up a group of the Chinese girls who had been rescued from the white slave traffic. They would come to Sonoma County to pick plums. Interesting but terrifying were the stories of how in Chinatown men would buy these little girls for a price, later to be sold into prostitution. I had an utter terror for Chinamen, feeling that if I yielded myself to the Lord He would send me to China. I really fought the call of the Lord until my teen years. Of course now, some of my closest friends are Chinese Christians here in Southern California. I love the Chinese people and have many friends among them, too, in Taiwan, Hong Kong and Manila.

*Q. What about your schooling?*

DR. SUTHERLAND: I finished high school at Fort Bragg in Northern California where my dad had been a pastor. Then I attended Occidental College in Los Angeles, which was identified with the Presbyterian denomination. From there I went on to Princeton

Theological Seminary. It was in the mid '20's and right at the very center of the modernist-fundamentalist controversy. Aside from my father's influence in my early life, I think it was Dr. J. Gresham Machen and Dr. Robert Dick Wilson who gave me my theological roots. These have stood even to this day. I thank God for those men and for the training I received from them.

*Q. Over these years you have had a wonderful helpmeet by your side. Tell us about your wife.*

DR. SUTHERLAND: I met her at a Princeton-Harvard football game. A very dear friend of mine was her cousin. My wife-to-be lived in Toronto and he invited her down on one occasion for this Princeton-Harvard sports clash. He asked if I would take care of this young lady since he already had a companion. That I gladly did, and have been doing so ever since. The people back in those days didn't think anything good could come out of the West, which to them was full of Indians and buffalo. So I really had to prove myself in the eyes of her parents. They were very gracious and had the love of the Lord in their hearts, accepting me such as I was.

*Q. This month you complete 40 years of ministry for the Lord here at Biola. What were your first recollections of Biola? Did you ever hear Dr. R. A. Torrey, Mr. Lyman Stewart, or "Daddy" Horton speak?*

DR. SUTHERLAND: Yes, when I was a student at Occidental College we used to attend the Church of the Open Door on Sunday evenings. I thoroughly enjoyed hearing Dr. Torrey, as well as "Daddy" Horton. There were others, too, like F.B. Meyer, William Nicholson, and C.I. Scofield. There were great spiritual giants in those days. This was when I really got into the premillennial truth of Scriptures. Biola has always adhered to the important fundamentals of the faith. There include the infallibility of the Scriptures, the virgin birth of Christ, the miracles as recorded in the Bible, the vicarious atonement of Christ on Calvary's cross, the bodily resurrection, and the Saviour's premillennial return. I believe these six fundamentals with all my heart.

*Q. How were you called to Biola to serve the Lord, having been educated for the Presbyterian ministry?*

DR. SUTHERLAND: After five years at the Grace Presbyterian Church in Highland Park, I joined a friend of mine, Milo Jamison, who was working in the university Bible club work. He had started the ministry several years before. Leaving the pastorate I served the Lord at UCLA and other schools with Bible clubs for five years. The pastor of the Glendale First Presbyterian Church, Dr. Walter Edmonds, who was chairman of the Board of Directors of the Bible Institute of Los Angeles at that time, recommended that I be asked to serve as Director of Extension and Conferences. So, in September, 1936 I joined the Biola family. This was right in the depths of the depression. We were promised \$50 a month, if the money came in. In those days we got about 9 months in arrears. We had bread to eat, but there wasn't a great deal more.

*Q. The stories of how the Lord used such men as Dr. Louis T. Talbot, humanly speaking, to bring the organization out of those dark days are thrilling to recount.*

DR. SUTHERLAND: They certainly are. Dr. Talbot had been pastor of the Church of the Open Door since 1932. When Dr. Paul Rood returned to evangelistic work, Dr. Talbot became the Interim President of Biola. He went on the air with a one million, four hundred thousand debt against the school. After about three or four years the debt

was eliminated. In 1941 the Board of Directors decreed that never again should Biola go into debt. They would live within their means if they were going to exist at all.

*Q. As a young man many years before, sitting in the auditorium of the Church of the Open Door, did you ever have any idea that eventually you would be President of the Bible Institute?*

DR. SUTHERLAND: I certainly never did! I looked upon those men as great giants, and I never even considered myself worthy to follow in their train. I still don't, to tell you the truth, and I say that most sincerely!

*Q. From the extension work at Biola where did you go in the organization?*

DR. SUTHERLAND: Well, I was in the extension department for about a year and then the Dean asked me to teach on the faculty, while heading up what is now known as the Christian Service Department. I was there until 1942 when I became Dean. In 1952 the Board appointed me to the presidency.

*Q. In the years of your service, especially as president, there were several marked things that are most outstanding as far as the school's forward progress is concerned. These would include the collegiate development, the seminary development, and then the move to the La Mirada Campus. But for a few closing moments, tell us something about your present service. In addition to your work here at Biola, not only on the radio but also in many areas behind the scenes in public relations for the school, you are also serving with the Lockman Foundation. How did this all develop?*

DR. SUTHERLAND: Well, I retired in 1970. The school had been brought up to that point about as far as I actually felt qualified to lead it, and so I voluntarily retired. The Board of Trustees stated, "Sam, you can do anything you want to as President Emeritus, but you don't have to do anything." What a wonderful, thoughtful comment. So during the intervening years I became active in public relations, speaking and preaching, as well as in various capacities representing the school. During that time I was also connected with the Lockman Foundation while its founder, Mr. Dewey Lockman, was alive. Upon his death I was selected as President of the Lockman Foundation which is the organization that produced the Amplified Bible, and later the New American Standard Bible. The Lockman Foundation is also responsible for the New Japanese translation, the Korean translation which is well under way, the Mandarin Chinese, or Free Chinese translation, the Communist Chinese translation, the Spanish translation, and the Hindi translation.

*Q. It is exciting to realize the part you have in the proclamation of God's Word in these days. It is certainly a tremendous ministry. Now, for a few closing words, how about some retrospection? Can you look back and tell us the work you enjoyed most?*

DR. SUTHERLAND: I can only say that the Lord leads in mysterious ways His wonders to perform. There were difficult decisions that had to be made, but as I look back I don't know of any major change I would have made, if I had it to do over again. There are many things I'd certainly omit, but the Lord led in ways that I couldn't understand at the time. I prayed and prayed, and when the answer didn't come down from heaven on a sheet, as it were, I just had to use what I felt was God-given common sense to move ahead. It's been amazing, as I look back through these years, to see how the Lord used what little mind and little ability I've had, all to His glory. Mine has been a full and rich life. I thank God for every moment of it. He has been so wonderful in His patience toward me, leading each step of the way. The

question was once asked by a tourist, "Have you lived here all your life?" And the Texan replied, "Nope, not yet." I sometimes feel that way. It's all been a wonderful experience up to this time. And unless the Lord comes pretty soon, perhaps the end is not near. I'm looking forward to the days that still lie ahead.

## Special Youth Panel

Ron Hafer, Jerry Root, Frank Mercer

HAFER: Our theme will be "Practical Tips in Working with Teenagers." Frank, start us off by suggesting one or two practical tips on beginning a ministry with teenagers.

Mercer; I believe the greatest need is twofold. First, one must become involved with the Word of God in their own personal study of it. Second, there should be an involvement with other young people in the church. Oftentimes we have youth groups who hardly know each other. We should know, love, and pray for each other. This is paramount before we can reach other folk for Jesus Christ. If guidance is needed, go to your pastor and ask him to give you some techniques in ministering the Scriptures. It isn't the great sermons young folk need today. They should be shown how to study the Bible for themselves, learning to feed out of the Word on a day-by-day basis.

HAFER: Some of the greatest lessons are caught rather than taught. Jerry, as a relatively young man, in your rookie year of Christian service, how have you been involved.

ROOT: I have been in an intern program at Granada Heights Friends Church in La Mirada before I became the high school pastor. I agree that one of the most important things we can do is to enable youth to become personally grounded in the Scriptures. We live in a "goalless" society. It's true, "If you aim at nothing, you're bound to hit it!" We need to show them how enriching Bible study can be to their lives. One thing we have done with our youth is to encourage them to set a goal of reading through the Bible at least once a year. On a daily priority, if they read so many pages a day, they can easily complete this profitable task. They get excited about the Word as they read it.

HAFER: Supposing there are some who aren't so motivated? What would you do with them?

MERCER: One thing that really works is if you can find one who is really enthusiastic to work with the other who isn't as concerned. Make them accountable to each other, keeping up on their Bible reading, prayer time activities, and other outreach, so that it becomes an exciting thing. They are concerned about others in the body of Christ, ministering to one another.

HAFER: Is it this idea of studying the Word of God that leads young people to think of attending a Christian college?

MERCER: That's certainly a very natural outgrowth. Sharing Christ with people gets one excited about the realization, "I don't know enough; I'd better go learn so I'll really have something to share!" One of the primary reasons why I encourage folk to come to Biola is not only its good Bible program, but also the many opportu-

nities to be involved through practical Christian service assignments. "Putting into doing" is one of the best ways to learn, so that we can relate to others what the Lord has done. This dual emphasis is missing in many Christian colleges.

HAFER: As a minister, Frank, especially when you were a youth specialist, did you have to battle the problem of time, deciding where your available moments would be spent?

MERCER: The greatest difficulty is with administration and with the people. Sometimes it is easy to get bogged down on details and not be able to get into the real needs as much as one would want. My goal has always been to get our young people, as well as adults, involved so that they can relate their personal commitment to Christ in everyday living to others. There's an old fashioned word known as "discipline." If we are going to be effective for Christ, if, say we are going to read our Bible through, we have to be willing to accept some disciplines of life. If we truly want to know God, it must be: "This one thing I do." That has to have the priority in our lives. Only then can we move ahead in the things of God. Remember that the Lord didn't spend a lot of time with those who wanted discipleship on their own terms. Consider the passage with the last two verses of John 2 where Scripture tells us that although Jesus gave of Himself to people, He didn't totally give Himself to all men. He found those who had a desire, and who were interested. He certainly had His priorities straight.

HAFER: Jerry, how do you pick your disciples?

ROOT: When I first started out in service with young people, I sought the wisdom of one particular man who had a real influence on my life. He reminded me that there are three things one has to do when working with youth. First, you have to love them. Second, you have to teach them. And, third, you have to love them some more! Discipling carries with it a lifestyle that can be effectively shared with people. You can be sure, I'm still learning a lot about this myself. I try to get together with a group of young people who seem to be interested in getting to know more about God's Word. You know, when high schoolers particularly begin to read God's Word from cover-to-cover, it provokes all kinds of fascinating questions. Their interest level very definitely increases. Believe me, this is really an exciting thing to see. These young people are teaching me things about God's Word and my own personal relationship to Him. It is beautiful just to walk together through our Christian lives. This, to me, is discipleship.

HAFER: When you decide on programming for teenagers, how do you determine what is the very best for them?

ROOT: It is really important to assess the needs of your people, which begins by having close contact with them throughout the week. Sometimes I will meet students after school and go for a "coke" together. I do this individually to see how he's doing in his spiritual life. Usually we will spend some time in prayer. We must understand the areas of special concern. The Scriptures have the answers, but we must know the needs. In this way I can then work out my structure for programming accordingly. Sometimes we should just teach through portions of Scripture since we can be sure there will be areas in our lives which will be met. We know God's Word will equip them for every situation life can throw before them. At the same time, often I find that I'm scratching where they're not itching. I appreciate the patience of others in giving me room to fail. No one is perfect, except the Lord. This is the exciting part of a growing fellowship together as we encourage each other along the way.

MERCER: It is always important as youth workers to make certain that we are in agreement with the senior pastor and the church board. We should be willing to make adjustments in our own plans when necessary, especially for the good of the entire body. Let's always make certain that our youth program is based on the Word of God and not simply on tradition. I feel it is extremely important to have a good curriculum. This might be in the Sunday school hour or the Wednesday night Bible study. At some time they should be taken into a book of the Bible, say through the Gospel of John or the Epistle of Romans, whatever might be the best direction at the time. Remember that you have babes in Christ, as well as those who attend Christian day schools hearing the Bible all week long. The latter really need to become involved perhaps more than just hearing. Each group will have some very real needs. Get acquainted with them individually and lead them along. It seems to me that it takes the cream of the crop in a youth program, who catch the vision to put their arm around someone who's a new Christian, to encourage and strengthen others. Sometimes it is wrong to take all of the more mature young people out of the program for other departments. Then those who are left are struggling spiritually, without any examples of their own age. There must be those who are alive, awake and dynamic, spiritually. This is very important in the total aspect of any teaching ministry.

HAFER: To what extent should teenagers be used in the program?

ROOT: This is a vital consideration. Those who are spiritually mature can be invaluable in the total concept of service. Young people enjoy relating to their own especially. When I can call a student to visit another student, sharing with them, it seems something very special is communicated. We try to involve our high schoolers on this level. They are actually ministering to one another, sharing a concern. It isn't really that we preach concern so much as we live it faithfully!

MERCER: This isn't to say that adults aren't important. We can't be overbalanced. Those who have been in the church for years aren't to sit on the sidelines. This isn't good, spiritually, for anyone. An effective total church program, which involves the young people in a big way, must have as its emphasis the total needs of the entire body. Only in this way, as we are led by the Holy Spirit, can the ministry be blessed of the Lord.

HAFER: Suppose you come into a church situation where no one is interested in working with young people. Where do you start?

MERCER: Obviously you begin by praying that God will very definitely give to you spiritual wisdom and insight into possibilities within the church family. My experience has been that some of the best youth leaders are those who have done this type of ministry before. They have no preconceived false concepts of how to go about it. They weren't trying to act like young people. This can be very detrimental, and young people really don't want this of their youth sponsors. They want to be loved and to know where they stand. They respect fairness in discipline and direction. Who are the best candidates? Usually those who are having a daily devotional and prayer life of their own; those who want to grow spiritually. Spend time with people involved with the leadership of the church family. Share with them your convictions and concerns, that we live in a day when there's a great emphasis on gifts. This hasn't been the emphasis I have sought. My ministry is mainly geared to availability. I think a lot of adults are sitting back wondering, "What is my gift?" They overlook the fact that there are some real needs which must be met in the life of the church. Make yourself available. Let God give you the gift you need for the position He puts you into! Remember, the Spirit of God takes those who are available. Man may look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks far beyond this to the heart.

ROOT: I agree totally. Scripture tells us that the purpose for the gift is to serve the body of Christ. If you want to find out what your gift is to serve the body of Christ. If you want to find out what your gift is, the best way is to start serving. You can be sure that it will come to the surface. I had a woman come to me some months ago and confess, "I'm concerned that there isn't enough prayer for our high school students." I told her, "I'm concerned for that, too." She suggested, "Well, I'd like to do something about it. Would it be okay?" I quickly agreed. So, she took it upon herself to enlist a group of the mothers in our high school department. They get together every Thursday to pray for every high school student by name. They also have prayer cards prepared on every student. This includes names, addresses, phone numbers, parents' first names, names of teachers and principal, and even goals they have for their lives. These faithful women pray for each one of these things weekly. They pass out these cards to a prayer partner, so that every high school student is prayed for daily by somebody in the church. That's tremendous! Anybody who has a love for God, with a little bit of initiative, can do that sort of thing. This woman has had a dynamic input in the lives of our high school young people because she made herself available to the Lord. You can do the same!

HAFER: God is incredibly creative. We tend sometimes in the church to get a little narrow, packaging people in certain areas when we really need to think outside of normal dimensions.

MERCER: One of the most exciting ways we have recruited folk to work with young people is to take them along on our mission outreach trips. They come along as a cook or perhaps as a driver. As they begin to be around the teenagers, they see where the action is and get a vision of what can happen for the Lord. We are always looking for leaders of young people. This is a great need today. They need to see some real men who love God and who want to serve and walk faithfully with Him.

HAFER: If you are working with young people, allow the Spirit of God to give you wisdom. He has promised that from His Word (Jas. 1:5). Look for people who have vibrant, growing attitudes, with a spirit of willingness to serve. Seek out those who are available. Be creative in your thinking and programming. The Lord bless you as you work in your church and become involved yourself as the Spirit of God lays it upon your heart.

## Panel Discussions

Panel: Dr. Chase, Dr. Feinberg and Dr. Sutherland

Q. "Who are the witnesses referred to in Hebrews 12:1?"

A. There are two views about this passage which, incidentally, should also include the second verse. Someone has described the ensuing passage as "the Westminster Abbey" of the patriarchs of the faith. Certainly all these Old Testament personages were of great significance in the history of the Jews and their spiritual lives. Some believe that there is a great crowd of people, now gone to glory, who are more or less in the bleachers of heaven, looking down upon us still along the field along the race track. These witness what we do and say. For this reason we should want to lay aside all superfluous weights as well as those sins which so easily beset us. This creates quite an interesting illusion but it doesn't really square with other Scriptures. Rather, we should recognize that these men and women of God lived and walked victoriously by faith in Almighty God. They were privileged to see a wonderful testimony in their lives to the Lord's greatness in His faithful witnesses. Surely there is an additional great host of men and women from New Testament times of a similar nature. As we consider what they accomplished for the glory of God, "let us lay aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset us," and let us in our generation witness a strong, clean victorious race through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit. We believe this is what the inspired writer was talking about in Hebrews 12:1,2. These faithfully witnessed in their generation; let us likewise be faithful witnesses in ours!

Q. "Concerning Matthew 16:28, why would the Lord say He might return within the lifetime of some of those who were there with Him?"

A. Some have read into this such an erroneous impression. There are even some liberal writers who suggest that Jesus rather hopefully made a statement about the nearness of His kingdom. People took it too literally, and were disappointed that He couldn't fulfill His promise. This is a gross misunderstanding and misreading of the statement in Matthew 16:21-28. In this passage the Saviour begins a new phase of His earthly ministry. Note the words, "From that time forth." Christ began to show His disciples how He had to go to Jerusalem and there suffer many things from the elders, chief priests and scribes. He prophesied that He would be killed and raised again the third day. Remember Peter's rebuke of our Lord. The Saviour then tells him the cost of discipleship, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul, or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Then Jesus deals with the priority of eternal things.

Then in verse 27 we read, "For the Son of man (meaning Himself) shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He shall reward every man according to his works. Verily, I say unto you, there are some standing here who shall not taste of death until they see the Son of man coming in His kingdom." The best way

of interpretation is to allow every clause to mean exactly what the literal demands. Christ isn't quoting someone. He meant that there were some listening to His voice who wouldn't die until they saw something specific. There is nothing here at all about His return. Many people read it that way erroneously. There were some who would be privileged to see the Son of man coming in His kingdom. "Son of man" emphasizes a certain ministry of our Lord. It is a royal designation (Dan. 7:13, 14).

Matthew 17:1 gives us the completely literal fulfillment, "And after six days, Jesus took Peter, James and John, his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain privately, and was transfigured before them, and his face did shine like the sun, his raiment was as white as the light." This is definitely the interpretation of the Holy Spirit, too, in II Peter 1:15-18. We find the testimony, "Moreover, I will endeavor that ye may be able, after my decease, to have these things always in remembrance. For we have not followed cunningly devised fables when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty." This is it precisely. How do we know this is the Mount of Transfiguration? Read Peter's own words, "And this voice which came from heaven we heard when we were with him the holy mount." Now, for us today. If you are a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, you will have more than a preview! You will be right with the Saviour in the very midst of the thrilling activity as part of the Bride of Christ.

Q. "I'm interested in growing toward maturity as a Christian. What part should fasting have in my spiritual life?"

A. Your desired goal is certainly a very appropriate one! Fasting is referred to a number of times in the Old Testament, but particularly is it noted in the New. Please keep in mind, however, that a person doesn't grow to maturity by fasting. Spiritual development comes through a study of the Word of God, and by meditating upon the truths of Scripture. There are doubtless many of us who would be much better off if we would go without eating every once in awhile. That is, providing we didn't eat twice as much the next day to make up for it. There are some real values, when sensibly followed for good physical benefit to fast. It is also a good idea sometimes to fast that we might give ourselves more wholly to the study of the Word. The only trouble is there can come a gnawing sensation to our stomachs because of a lack of food. This may make it very difficult to concentrate on the things of the Lord. In the study of these passages in the Bible on the subject, no one knows how long or how often these fastings occurred. Certainly these weren't customary procedures. Fasting gains no merit for us in the sight of God. We should rather concentrate on the things of the Lord. If in the process we can forget a meal now and again, all the better. We grow to maturity by feasting on the things of the Lord.

Q. "Could you tell how Hebrews 10:26 and 38 relate to the possibility of losing one's salvation?"

A. This appears in one of the books of the New Testament to which people will sometimes turn when they become concerned and even fearful about the validity of their salvation. While there is no more beautiful book in the Bible than Hebrews, it is all too often mishandled. Its teaching isn't to show under what circumstances one can lose his salvation. These verses must be read very carefully, and especially in the light of their entire context. The warnings to be found in this book, as well as in any other portion of Scripture, aren't a terror to believers but rather to unbelievers. Such passages are meant to jolt the unsaved into an awareness of

the seriousness of their condition. Dr. C.I. Scofield used to urge, "Never use a passage that may have some doubt related to it over against a passage that has a 'Verily, verily, I say unto you.'" Think of these words from our Saviour, "I give unto them eternal life, and no man shall pluck them out of my hand." In Hebrews, the message was to those in Israel then, as now, the large majority of which were unbelieving. There was really only a small nucleus of those who had trusted Jesus as Messiah. To them this book has many beautiful statements such as 12:1,2. You can't put the believers of Hebrews 12: 1 and 2 with those spoken of in Hebrews 10:26 and 38. This would be to mix individuals and categories. Through the Spirit of God there are those who may have a claim to faith but actually don't know the Lord. Verse 38, "Now the just (that refers to the believer) shall live by faith." "If a man draws back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." God is contrasting a believer and an unbeliever. Upon whom did your salvation begin in the first place? The answer has to be God, the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. Has their work been 100 percent effective? Of course it has been. If that work of grace through salvation depends upon the Trinity at the beginning, then it certainly depends on Them to the very end. Keep in mind the important difference between one's profession of salvation, which is the case here in Hebrews 10:26-38, and those who by faith actually possess salvation (12:1,2).

Q. "When two or even more acceptable ways are open to a person, how may an individual know which is the specific will of God?"

A. There is certainly no easy answer to this. Frankly, if our foresight were only as good as our hindsight, things would be relatively simple! You will find that it is often much easier to tell somebody else what you think the will of God is for them, than it is to discover the will of God for your own life. First of all, pray very diligently that the Lord will reveal His will to us. At the same time we need to consider all the pertinent circumstances. In careful meditation one needs to weigh the pros and cons. The question should be asked, "Am I doing this for my own sake or is it really for the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. There will be some times when we have to act according to our best judgment in the light of the Word of God, believing that the Holy Spirit will guide our judgment. We should tread very cautiously so that we can back away from some course of action if there appears to be a roadblock in the way, or that a door is being shut. It is true that sometimes the Lord answers with conviction right after we pray. In other cases He seems to withhold the decision. The overriding desire should be "Not my will, but Thine be done."

Q. "In the light of what happened to Enoch and Elijah, how would you explain the verse, 'No man hath ascended up to heaven but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man, who is in heaven?' (John 3:13)"

A. On the first glance there may appear to be a contradiction. The verse in the original shows that "The Son of man, in going up and coming down from heaven, has never been duplicated." This is exactly the situation. No one has ever gone up to heaven in the same manner in which the Lord Jesus did. This certainly wasn't true of Enoch and Elijah. Neither one of them had come down from heaven. Neither one ascended with the same glory and majesty as did the Saviour. None moved under their own power. The verse about which you have asked is clearly in the form of a contrast. Enoch walked with God and was not, for God took him. The word "ascended" is very clearly pictured for the Lord only. When we deal with unsaved Jewish people, Proverbs 30:4 is one of the primary verses, "Who hath ascended up into heaven or descended?" The only answer is God. Look at the next question, "Who hath gathered the wind in His fists; who hath bound the waters in a garment; who hath established all the ends



of the earth?" Again, this could only be true of the Lord. To be sure, Christ's ascension was different altogether than that of Enoch or Elijah.

Q. "Should a local church borrow money to build its buildings?"

A. Without knowing all of the circumstances involved, this would be a very difficult question to answer with a simple "yes" or "no." It would seem that if the local church is serving the Lord, has through prayerful planning and careful consideration of all facets of the projects felt this was the thing to do, there would be no reason to hold back. To some people, borrowing money is wrong. This is a personal matter from all indications. We have seen many churches where they have borrowed a great deal, but then they have worked hard, cleared off the indebtedness and had a great victory service as a result. The church can be spiritually blessed, going on to far greater things for the Lord than ever before. There have also been other instances where just the opposite occurred. The situation isn't so much borrowing money as it is the purpose for which the loan is obtained. Is it really for the glory of the Lord, or simply to build someone an "empire?" One good practice might be if a church tithes, setting aside a building fund until they have enough cash to get started. On the other hand, with today's construction cost, waiting five years could be the more expensive way to go. With these pros and cons, a church has to be very careful to be certain of their reasons and rationale for building.

Q. "In Ezekiel 37:16, do the two sticks refer to the Bible, or perhaps to some other book?"

A. The answer is that they aren't related to either one of these entities. In the first 14 verses of this chapter we see the figure of a worldwide cemetery coming alive. This refers to the resurrection of the nation of Israel (vs. 10). This valley of very dry bones was all disconnected, fragmentized, separated, and with no cohesion nor harmony whatsoever. The exceeding great army they became is all through the power of God. Some would have us believe that this prophecy has already taken place in ages past. Such is definitely not the case! Ezekiel shows here that he is to take two sticks. One of them represents the northern kingdom of Israel and the other the southern kingdom. These are brought together so that there is no space between. Verse 20 gives us the very words of the Lord, "Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the nations to which they are gone and will gather them on every side and bring them into their own land; and I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel. One king shall be king to them all, they shall no more be two nations." The division will now come to a close. That sovereign monarch in that day will be none other than the Lord Jesus Christ. No, these two sticks don't refer to the Bible nor to some other book. They symbolize the two parts into which Solomon's kingdom was divided. If you visit the Holy Land today you will be impressed with the remarkable emphasis on all 12 tribes. You may be sure that every aspect of prophetic truth will literally come to pass, because God said so.

Q. "Since the unsaved generally have no interest in hearing a Bible teacher, do you think it's scriptural to use other lures or methods to get them under the sound of the Gospel such as musical programs and films? Didn't Jesus and the apostles use miracles to gain an audience?"

A. There is no recorded instance when our Saviour, nor the apostles, used miracles to gain an audience. Miracles often occurred in the presence of audiences, or people assembled quickly as a result of a miracle. At the same time we don't believe it is anti-scriptural to use methods. (The word "lure" doesn't seem too appropriate.) Under the proper circumstances, and with a design motivated by the Holy Spirit, certain

of these things can be very useful. They may not be an end in themselves, but a means of teaching the Word of God. In the final analysis nothing can really replace the faithful proclamation of the Bible itself.

Q. "A friend, who is a member of a group which claims to be Christian, is convinced that God the Father has a physical body. Is this taught in the Bible?"

A. Scripture rightly has to be the final authority. The Bible teaches us that there are three Persons in the Godhead: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. No one has ever seen a person except in a body. This is why, when we say God the Father is a Person, people immediately conjecture a body. Remember that the Church is a habitation of God through the Holy Spirit (Eph. 2). Before the Lord Jesus Christ became incarnate in the virgin Mary's womb, He had no body. The essence of God is Spirit as we see in John 4:24. John 1:28 throws a tremendous amount of light on this question, "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has shown Him forth." Christ is the exegesis of God. The Bible therefore doesn't teach that God has a physical body. In Old Testament times, whenever God wanted to manifest Himself on earth, He did so through the Angel of the Lord. This was the pre-incarnate Christ, and such occurrences were known as theophanies. God the Father doesn't need a physical body because, as Colossians tells us, all the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily in our Lord Jesus. Thank the Lord, our very bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 3:16;6:19).

Q. "What does it mean in Luke 2:52 that 'Jesus increased in wisdom and in favor with God'? From the time of His physical birth, wasn't He God as well as man? How can God the Son increase in wisdom and in favor with the Father? Aren't They already One?"

A. This verse tells us that Christ grew mentally, physically, socially, and spiritually. In certain capacities He acted as God while in others He acted as Man. No ordinary man could do the miracles that Christ performed. Certainly no man died on the cross in the manner that our Lord died. It was Jesus as Man who increased in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and man. These important facts must be kept in mind when we consider the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Q. "We read about the furnishings and hangings for the temple and the tabernacle. How many thicknesses of material were used in the veil (Exodus 26 and II Chron. 3)?"

A. There were three main specific areas: the outer court, the first part of the sanctuary, called the holy place, and then the holiest of them all, the inner sanctuary. These were the same in both the temple and tabernacle. As to the veil there were two of them. The first was the outer veil, the other the inner. In the 25th chapter of Exodus there is the making of a dwelling place on earth for God. It means to "tabernacle." Then in John 1:14 we read, "And the word became flesh and dwelt among us." That word "dwelt" in Greek is "tabernacle." The tabernacle is God's panorama of redemption. Do you know the Bible gives us more on the tabernacle than on the creation of the physical universe? When the service of the temple or tabernacle began, the godly Israelite came from the outer court inside. When God provided our redemption the process is rightly reversed. The inner veil was the one that led into the holiest of all. It was this which was torn from top to bottom when our Lord Jesus delivered over His Spirit sovereignly and majestically unto the Father. This veil was so thick that there was no entrance nor aperture into the holiest of all through the middle of it. It was all one piece. The high priest one day in the year would push it aside, filling the holiest of all with fragrance from off the golden altar of incense. The Bible gives no indication of how thick the material was. Most

of the information we have is from the historian Josephus. He tells us that the material hung in beautiful folds that were so thick it would have taken the sharpest sword to even penetrate all the way through. Two yoke of oxen driven in opposite directions, couldn't have torn it apart. Yet it was rent asunder, not from the bottom to the top, but from the top to the bottom. This symbolically shows that as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ we now have immediate access into the presence of God.

Q. "How do you feel about saying grace before a meal if one is dining at a restaurant?"

A. If we are thankful for the food, why not tell our Heavenly Father? Grace is first of all and primarily to express our thanks to the Lord. We can do that in our own mind and heart as we bow before Him. We should also do this because it is a worthy testimony to others. We can give this witness as to Whom we belong and Whom we seek to serve. If you are dining out with a person who has no interest in the things of Christ, always ask first, "Do you mind if we bow our heads and I just return thanks for this food?" You will probably never be rebuffed. This, too, can be a good testimony.

Q. "What did Paul mean in I Corinthians 7:6 when he declared, 'But I speak this by permission, and not of commandment'?"

A. This is on the subject of marriage and its different phases. Statements like, "I speak this by permission, not by commandment" don't even begin to mean that the Apostle Paul is talking about something that isn't inspired of God. When he declares, "I'm speaking this by permission" he means it isn't contrary to the will of God. If you look back in the Gospels to the things of our Lord you will find no such commandment. Paul isn't saying that his teaching isn't valid. Of course, the Apostle would never negate anything the Lord Jesus taught.

Q. "Do you think it would be proper to take gifts for charity out of one's tithe money?"

A. You should define the word "charity." Given, for example, to an aunt who is poverty stricken, would be charity. This certainly shouldn't come out of your tithe. If you give to some secular purpose, such as the Boy Scouts, YMCA, cancer fund and the like, this certainly shouldn't come out of the tithe. The tithe is the money which belongs to the Lord. It should be invested in the purpose which will directly be effective in the Christian ministry. Obviously there are some grey areas. Remember that there are many people who will give to philanthropic purposes who would never think of giving to a missionary cause. The world will take care of its own. While we want to do our civic duty, yet our primary responsibility is to give to the work of the Lord. This is where our tithe money should definitely go.

# This We Believe

INTRODUCTION  
Dr. J. Richard Chase  
PRESIDENT

In 1962, "The Biola Hour" presented a special series of messages centered on the theme, "This We Believe." Several of the faculty members shared at that time some of the important doctrinal truths upon which our organization has been based historically. Themes such as "The Bible as the Word of God," "The Trinity," "The Deity of Jesus Christ," "Justification by Faith," "The Resurrection," and "The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit," were a few of the stimulating topics. This year similar themes are developed as professors from Biola College and Talbot Theological Seminary explore the riches of God's Truth. We have asked faculty members from a wide range of academic backgrounds to share with us. Our doctrinal statement primarily focuses upon the Bible as the Word of God, and Jesus Christ as the necessary and only Saviour for mankind, desperately in need of eternal salvation. We take each of these commitments seriously. You can be sure, when it comes to theological issues, everything isn't "up for grabs" at Biola. We have that necessary fundamental and foundational commitment to the Word of God and to Jesus Christ.

In the third chapter of II Timothy we can see the importance of beliefs in the Christian life. Such realistic concepts provide a firm base for progress amid a confused and complex world. As an example, most of us get all kinds of magazines and materials flooding our homes. Some we simply glance through very quickly. There is a great deal of material published today. When it comes to what we read we have to be selective. A friend of mine will pick up a magazine and always turn to the index. If it doesn't have an index, he immediately tosses it aside. His viewpoint, "I don't have time to just flip through a publication if I can't be assured of its eventual value." A prior commitment of this type allows him to cut through the tremendous maze of confusing material flooding his desk. I have been trying to do the same thing. Otherwise there simply isn't enough time in the day. Even so, beliefs provide a firm base for progress.

The Apostle Paul tells, us "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come" (vs.1). Reading on he begins to catalog some of the difficulties Timothy and those in his generation would face. He summarizes and catches the essence of this in the emphasis, "But evil men and seducers shall become worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived" (vs.13). For some people, only reading that far, would suggest, "Timothy, you may as well throw in the towel! There's no way to be successful in the Christian ministry. How do you know where to begin?" Thankfully, by the Holy Spirit, Paul doesn't leave Timothy there. He indicates the firm base upon which one can build, even in the midst of these perilous times.

Here is the firm base for spiritual progress, "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them"(vs.14). From this point he goes on to spell out the position, "That from a child thou hast

known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (vs. 15). Finally in verses 16 and 17 Paul points out that the Scriptures themselves are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness. It is through these Scriptures that men and women of God are prepared to accomplish what the Lord has for them.

Let me give you an illustration. There were a lot of competing views as to just what electricity is. How do you define it? Certainly very few meaningful discoveries could be made while people were simply arguing over this phenomenon of "electricity." From the research of Franklin and others, men began isolating a working definition which finally opened the door to modern technology. When individuals find a firm foundation for belief and move forward on the basis of that, tremendous progress is possible. Virtually in all walks of life, when an individual is in a state of total uncertainty, very little good progress can be made. But when an individual comes to grips with that which is meaningful, then real growth can be experienced. So, where there is confusion and uncertainty effective progress is impossible.

Many of you may be in the same situation which faced Timothy. He was confronted by all kinds of evil, doubtless the potential for confusion by all the voices might easily be felt. Paul urged him, "Turn to the Word of God; use that as your foundation." Only with such fundamental truths can you build a life which will have a measure of peace, joy, and contentment. At the same time, you will be able to explore the other problems of life in a manner compatible with God's design for your life.

Suppose you decide to go to a grocery store, but don't take any shopping list. You only have a vague idea of what you want to buy. Without a prior commitment you will be buying some things that are probably poor buys financially and maybe even nutritionally. It is the same way on a much higher level with life itself. Unless a person has a prior commitment to a base of belief he will struggle with life ending up with much that isn't beneficial to him. In the spiritual realm, firm commitment to the Word of God is basic. It alone provides the proper launching base for a positive Christian ministry.

Without a prior commitment upon which to evaluate life, people normally end up doing some rather foolish things. First of all, there are those who deny they have any problems. They may wake up too late, finding their life or business in financial ruin. (Some cities in our country have come to such a sad and unfortunate situation!) There is a final day of reckoning! Denial definitely isn't the way to confront problems.

There are others, constantly confronted by problems, who simply comment, "My, what a mess we're in!" Yet they have no clear understanding of what God wants of them. They don't know how they can use their abilities and talents in a wise biblical fashion. As a result they start "daydreaming" about the past. Nostalgia to some is a means of escaping the problems of the present. They live in the past since they aren't equipped to confront the present.

Still others have a tendency to simplify situations. They may resolve the conflict for themselves, but they haven't reached any final conclusion. They have only swept under the carpet that which will eventually come back to haunt them in the future.

The Word of God primarily solves the soul's problem and its relationship to Jesus Christ. At the same time it also gives us a tremendous foundation for relationships with others, and for the use and development of our own talents and abilities. This makes us effective people, through the Holy Spirit, not only in the local church, but

also, through the development of those talents, we will be able to touch other lives, relating to them in a wise, biblical fashion.

Paul summarizes his thoughts to Timothy by his avowal, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man (or woman) of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (II Tim. 3:16,17). The word "perfect" doesn't simply have the idea of maturity behind it. In the original it is a word which means that if a person uses the Word of God, he will be ideally suited for the age in which he lives. With the problems confronting him there will be solutions to bring relief to the personal ache of a soul whom he might meet. In this manner he can move out, ready to do the Lord's bidding. It is an educational term in a sense. The Bible ideally educates an individual, giving him a foundation and perspective of life which allows him to sift through the tremendous array of confusing, stimulating ideas floating around this world. Notice the last phrase, "thoroughly furnished unto all good works." This definitely speaks of preparation, indicating that the Word of God, properly used, is going to provide the foundation for an effective life.

As we launch our series, "This We Believe," you will be learning from our professors who have all found a common and sure foundation in the Word of God. With this commitment, definite spiritual progress is possible. What about your life? Do you have a place to stand today as you turn to the Word of God? As you analyze and sift through the threads of life, you will soon discover that the Scriptures can give you a foundation for progress. That firm commitment must be to the Word of God. A firm set of beliefs is a sure way of experiencing continuing progress in a confusing, distorted, and complex world. Certainly, this is the kind of a world we live in today.

# SATAN

By: Robert Morosco  
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It isn't unusual to receive questions related to the Bible, including those which concern the unseen world of spirits. Especially frequent are inquiries regarding one of the few given a name in Scripture which is Satan. We at Biola believe in a real devil. He may well be one of the most mysterious personages in the Bible, and yet certainly least properly understood.

Satan was the very first sinner in the universe. He is credited with bringing sin into the human race. Even today, Peter reminds us, the devil prowls our planet like a hungry lion, looking for someone to devour. It is imperative that Christians know and understand such a real and ferocious enemy. You can't defeat someone you don't understand.

Ancient Jewish tradition teaches that the devil and the woman had a common origin. Both are said to have come from the hole left by the removal of Adam's rib. Before God had a chance to close it up, according to folklore, the devil came from there. While none of this is biblical, it does demonstrate man's intense interest in this evil spirit.

The Bible itself is relatively silent on Satan's origin. It does offer several important glimpses such as Isaiah 14:12-14. Here he is called Lucifer, the star of the morning who fell from heaven. Perhaps he was originally an angel but rebellion caused his outcast. Matthew 25:41 also indicates an angelic origin of the devil. It is similarly confirmed in Ezekiel 28:14, where Satan is referred to as "the annointed cherub."

Without question, the devil was originally an especially picked out cherub. His was a vicious and blatant act of rebellion, sinning against his Maker. He made at least five declarations, each beginning with two words, "I will." He wanted to make himself like the Most High. He wanted to become God. Paul even points out that he is "the god of this age." The devil's sin was pride. Such, unfortunately, is man's sin as well. Instead of becoming like God, such human pride turns man into a ravenous and pathetically sad animal. Satan had been privileged to minister before the glorious throne of God. Still, he wasn't satisfied.

Today there are those who foolishly deny that there is such a being as Satan. Teaching that there is a devil, they say, is outdated, outmoded, primitive. The famous psychiatrist, Freud, felt that the devil was a religious fiction, just a way to explain evil. Still Freud was at a loss to explain the quantity and quality of evil in the world.

Others are content to ignore the influence of Satan in this very evil planet. They would invent a more socially acceptable devil to account for man's dastardly deeds. Society and environment are to blame. When any representation of the devil is presented in the media, it is usually in jest. Advertisements have picked up on this sympathetic attitude toward the devil. Today he is used to sell products ranging from sports cars to apple juice. This is why Satan is so tolerated today as a symbol. If evil is less strong today, it is so only in man's mind. Or, to put it another way, the devil becomes a joke as man becomes a devil!

We should also note that some people today take the other extreme. They blame Satan for every inconvenience in life. If they miss the bus, the devil caused it; if the toast burns, this supremely evil spirit has to be seen through the smoke and ashes. A contemporary comedian captures this thinking with his gleeful phrase, "The devil made me do it!" This is nothing more than a cop-out on personal responsibility.

The important thing to understand is what the Bible has to say about the devil's work today. A movie was made a few years ago about satanic possession of a young girl. Since then there has been the trend to see the devil's main work today as occupying human bodies and controlling personalities. The gospels show how Jesus cast out demons from those possessed. It should be noted that the New Testament never once warns Christians about satanic or demonic possession. The Bible does warn us about satanic temptation. This is his primary function in enticing people to sin.

Satan's work is the same as it has always been: providing opportunity for men and women to rebel against the will of God. Remember, he is called the tempter (I Thess. 3:5). One can gain victory over Satan by following the example of Jesus Christ. Very simply, He said "No" when temptation arose. This is what Adam should have done in the Garden, but he didn't. Our victory is through Spirit-filled resistance.

Peter tells us, "Be sober, be vigilant. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour" (I Pet. 5:8). Peter's subsequent instructions are to be firm in our faith. James urges the same, "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." When Jesus resisted Satan's enticement the devil left Him. This is God's promise to us as well.

While Satan flees the resisting believer, it isn't a fleeing forever. You may be sure that he will be back. He must be resisted again and again and again. After Christ had resisted Satan's temptations in the wilderness for 40 days, the Bible adds, "The devil departed from Jesus until an opportune time." As with our Savior, Satan will return in an attempt to find a weakness in the believer's armor, hoping next time there will be no resistance. We must be on guard at all times, like soldiers in a heavenly army, daily in hostile territory.

There is glad news to remember. We don't have to face an eternity of struggle before this powerful foe. The devil's end is clearly and joyfully declared in Scripture. Jesus Christ affirms Satan's eternal prison in Matthew 25:41. Hell was prepared specifically for him and his angels. The eternal fire of judgment has been created not primarily for man, but for Satan and the host of demons. The fulfillment of this prophetic statement is previewed in Revelation 20. The devil will be thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone and will be tormented day and night forever and ever. Unfortunately, a good portion of mankind is going to join Satan in this eternal state of fire. Over the centuries of time he has managed to entice a large segment of the human race to join him in his act of rebellion.

Even as Jesus Christ defeated Satan, so now our Savior seeks to free all people from

the devil's grasp. This is why it is the believer's function to share the good news about Jesus Christ with all who will listen. So they can be snatched from Satan, bringing them to the victorious army of Jesus Christ. The victory is God's. The devil is definitely a defeated foe! Let us hold fast to God's military orders for us. Resist the devil, firm in your faith. Ours is the assured victory through an even more powerful Lord and Savior!

#### THE GREAT COMMISSION

By: Dr. Lloyd Kwast  
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In this country of ours we are living in an atmosphere of increasing social and political ferment. Most people want to be informed on the issues of the day, being aware of national opinion and trends. The issues confronting us are many, varied and often extremely complex. There are crime and violence, international tensions, terrorism, blackmail, war, racism, poverty, social injustice, moral decay, inflation, drug abuse, population explosion, hunger and starvation. The list seems never to end. There doesn't seem to be any one answer anyone has devised, other than salvation, for curing the political, moral and social ills of our world.

When God speaks, we must listen. When He declares, His opinions must stand as true. Without question there is injustice, moral decay, dishonesty, hatred, and war all about us. Scripture tells us that all of these stem from a much deeper root problem which is sin. The Lord has graciously offered a sure solution for sin. It isn't open to political debate. Cleansing forgiveness is available through the blood of His Son, Jesus Christ.

Our heavenly Father has a program for the saved in which we can reach out around the globe with the message of the Gospel. It was this program of world evangelization that occupied the mind of the Saviour just before His ascension into heaven. Probably some of the most important words Christ ever spoke to His disciples were shared just prior to His leaving this world to return to the right hand of God. They were given to us and His followers in the form of a command. It is a sacred commission to believers, to be heard, heeded, believed, and obeyed. We are to act on it implicitly.

These last earthly words of Christ are known as the Great Commission. They are so important that all four of the gospel writers include them in their writings, plus a reiteration in Acts 1:8 by Luke. One of the immense tragedies of church history is that the Great Commission has been more debated than obeyed, more criticized than communicated.

To Bible-believing Christians, the Great Commission has far-reaching implications. It constitutes an identification of believers with Christ in accomplishing His divine purpose. We are privileged warmly and compassionately to draw men and women to the Lord everywhere. The Church has been given its marching orders. We are to reach a lost and dying world, preaching the Gospel to every creature. We are given the divine

authorization to be ambassadors of Christ to every nation. Do we have a concern for world evangelization?

The one central purpose of our Lord is to gather to Himself a people from among the nations to constitute the Church, the Body or the Bride of Christ. To accomplish these goals God intends to use His own children, disciples who are Spirit-equipped and Spirit-filled, purchased by the blood of Jesus Christ. The Lord certainly could have used angels as His messengers. Rather His divine strategy counts on you and me. As a matter of fact He could even have used stones to cry out the praises and glories of His grace. Instead He employs the lips of mere mortals, expressing the most splendid message ever conceived. When Christ committed us to this task He did so to such unsteady and unseasoned hands that on the surface it would seem doomed to failure. Can the world be evangelized by a struggling Christian church?

God's program of redemption is the biggest, most elaborate, most difficult, most expensive program ever undertaken in the history of the cosmos. It was outlined and planned before the foundation of the earth was laid. It cost the lifeblood of the Son of God to purchase our redemption. It takes all the power that heaven and earth can muster, the very resurrection of Christ Himself, for this program to operate.

This is big business indeed. Are we equal to the task? The barriers are immense and the opposition is ferocious. Ephesians 6 reminds us, "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." To counter this, Jesus avowed in Matthew 28, "All power and authority is given unto me in heaven and in earth." This is why we can go into all the world.

The power for world evangelization is available (Acts 1:8), and it rests squarely on the authority of Christ. Let me assure you it would be doomed to dismal and inevitable failure if it didn't rest on His power. We must abide in Him, for without Him we can do nothing (John 15). This divine power can turn men from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God.

The Great Commission provides for very specific strategy (Matt. 28:19,20). The imperative is that we are to make disciples of Jesus Christ, persuading men everywhere to be His followers. We must be on the move for Christ if the Great Commission is to be fulfilled. In the book of Acts it is said of the early Christians that they were scattered abroad everywhere, gossiping the good news wherever they went. Messengers of the Gospel must go into a world of spiritual darkness and blindness (Rom. 10:13). This is crucial to the strategy of God. Tragically, this is precisely where the project often breaks down. So few of those whom the Lord calls are willing to go.

Secondly, we are to baptize those who become followers of Christ. This means to enfold them into the fellowship of believers, the local gathering of the Body of Christ. Too much evangelism fails to understand the importance of the church in spiritual nurture and growth. Fellowship in local congregations is essential.

The third point is "teaching them to observe all that Christ has commanded." There is an urgent need for good, sound Bible teaching for new converts. How can babies in Christ be expected to grow unless they regularly and consistently feed upon the milk, as well as the meat of the Word of God?

The Saviour offers us an incredible commitment to be with us everywhere at all times (Matt. 28:20). If we are obedient to the task of the Great Commission, we can always be assured of this reality. We never work alone. We will never struggle without

Someone at our side. The word "always" in the Greek is better literally give "all the days."

Many may wonder if such a goal of world evangelization for this age is achievable. Scripture reveals clearly that it will end in great success. People out of every nation will gather at the consummation around the throne of God. What a glorious day of victory that will be! The whole redemptive purpose of God is completed when the Lord's chosen will be gathered. We will raise our voices with the angels to proclaim, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and might, and honor, and glory, and blessing. To Him who sits on the throne, to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."

The risen Christ has given us the Great Commission. We believe it with all our hearts. More important than just believing it, however, is the fact that we must act upon it in obedience. Christians of an earlier generation were faithful. They went, and because of it, we have heard. Now the torch has been handed to us. It isn't for us to hold it, nor to keep it, nor to drop it. It is for us to carry, and to pass on to others. May God help us to do just that!

#### THE RETURN OF CHRIST

By: Dr. J. Vincent Morris  
Dean of Student Affairs  
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Nearly two thousand years ago the Lord Jesus Christ gathered His close and intimate disciples into the upper room in Jerusalem. There He announced that on the next day He would go to the cross to bear the sin of the world. At that time He gave a comforting word of His return. John records His wonderful message, "Let not your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. In my Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (Jn. 14:1-3). This is the hope of the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. He came the first time to put away sin; He is coming the second time to effect eternal salvation, taking to heaven those who have trusted in Him as Saviour and Lord.

The Apostle, writing to Hebrew believers, announces this truth that today the Lord Jesus Christ is preparing a place in heaven for every believer in Him (Heb. 9:28). There are those who would challenge this truth (II Pet. 3:1-10). They are foolish mockers who don't understand God's loving dealings with mankind. There is a "steadfast hope" for the believer (I Jn. 3:1-3).

The book of First Thessalonians is very practical with personal words of encouragement to the Church. Chapter one is addressed to the Church which is commended for her work of faith, her labor of love, and her patience of hope. In the second and third chapters the Apostle addresses the subject of himself as a minister of the Gospel as well as a brother in the Lord Jesus Christ. In chapter four he concerns himself with conduct of the believer, specifically in relation to his morals. In 4:13 the Apostle

addresses the subject of the return of the Lord. He continues the treatment of the coming of the Saviour.

Paul, writing by the inspiration of the Spirit, addresses himself to words of comfort. The Apostle is answering a direct question that was brought by Timothy from the Thessalonian church. Believers in Thessalonica were concerned about their loved ones who had passed from this life. They wanted to know, "Paul, you taught us a great deal about prophecy in general when you ministered to us. We believed and were converted. You instructed us that we would be partakers of the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ when He comes. Now some of our number have died. Of our loved ones and friends who have departed this life, what is to happen to these believers when Jesus Christ comes? Is it a disadvantage to have died and to be in the grave when Jesus returns?" Paul speaks to this question pointedly.

The manner of death is given the tender term of "sleep." Sleep in the New Testament refers to believers only. There are a number of passages which support this proposition such as the case of the death of Lazarus in Luke 11. Incidentally, the reference is to the body, not to the spirit. Sleep always means the body which dies and goes to the grave. We aren't to grieve as the rest of the world which has no hope. This thought is continued in verse 14 specifying the participation of dead believers in the return of Jesus Christ.

The Rapture is referred to in verse 15, "For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first." The order of resurrection is taught in these verses: the dead will rise first; those who are alive and remain at the coming of the Lord will momentarily, instantly upon the resurrection of the dead, be caught up together. Both resurrected believers and the living believers will unite with the Lord in the air. Christ will take all of His Body, His Bride, to heaven. This passage climaxes, "Wherefore, comfort one another with these words."

All who know Jesus Christ as Saviour need the comfort of the return of the Lord. While we are assured of the event, we are never told the specific time.

In verses 1 to 11 of chapter five, Paul speaks concerning the confidence in relation to the coming of the Lord which the Christian should have. Paul had taught them concerning the matters of prophecy from the Old and New Testaments. He says, "You don't need to know any more about the general times and epochs, or particular periods of time. You yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night." Here he relates the beginning of the day of the Lord with the return of Christ in the air. "The day of the Lord" is a period of time in which God will judge the world and individuals for their sin. The Rapture is the identifying commencement of the day of the Lord which continues on through the thousand-year millennial reign as recorded in the book of Revelation.

In verse 3 Paul continues concerning this matter of confidence. He says to unbelieving Gentiles, "While they are saying, 'Peace and safety' then destruction will come upon them suddenly like birth pangs upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape." We as Christians aren't in darkness, that this day should overtake us like a thief.

Paul continues in verses 5 to 8 to address himself to the children of the day. We have no part with the event of the day of the Lord, which is a time of judgment,

wrath and darkness. Let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober. The hope of the children of the day, identified as believers, is the translation, the rapture of the Church.

Verses 9 to 11 conclude, "For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ." It is our appointment to obtain salvation, that is the ultimate redemption of our bodies. If you don't know Jesus Christ as personal Saviour, you are among the children of darkness. The day of wrath will overtake you unless you accept Christ by faith. Respond positively to the Gospel of redeeming love and grace. Christ came to this earth to live sinlessly and to die a holy, infinite death for the sin of this world, that we might all come to know Him, whom to know is life everlasting.

For the believer, this teaching of the return of the Lord before the day of the Lord, or before the Tribulation, should be an encouragement as you are built up and help to build up others. May the return of Christ be indeed a blessed hope, a steadfast hope, a comforting hope, and a purifying hope in your life today and until Jesus Christ comes again.

#### THE LORD'S RETURN

By: Nickolas Kurtaneck  
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The events of our time, seen in the light of God's Word, suggest the nearness of the return of Jesus Christ for His Bride, the true Church. In view of the possibility of the Rapture occurring in our lifetime, this should cause definite attitudes for true believers. Two extreme positions seem evident. One is represented by those extremists who have withdrawn from society and responsibility because they think the Lord's coming is so evident. The other end of the spectrum is to adopt a stoic indifferent and apathetic attitude since no one knows when Christ will come. Such individuals give no serious thought, except for themselves. Obviously, both ends of the pole are entirely erroneous. What then should be our lifestyle relative to the possibility of Christ's return in our generation?

There are four significant admonitions in the New Testament on the subject. First, believers are exhorted to watch for the Saviour's return (Matt. 24:32). Jesus rightly pointed out, "You know not what hour your Lord might come." The Rapture of the Church precedes the kingdom revelation of Christ when He is seen bodily on the earth. It is to be noticed that the word "watch" is in the present tense. This is an imperative verb, stressing the urgency of our Lord's command. It is something God's children should be doing continuously and consistently. "Watch", which normally speaks of being awake from sleep, has the further idea of being vigilant, attentive and alert. As those who have been born again we should be cognizant of the times in which we live considering the light of Scripture. There are many signs we can be observing, relating to the nearness of that great day.

Consider several of these fascinating signs. The Bible teaches that before the Lord's

return, apostasy will occur in professing Christendom. Second, there will be an increase of cultism. False prophets will appear upon the earth. Third, there will be a widespread increase in demonic activity. Such will be manifested in Satan worship, witchcraft, and drug addiction. Then, there is the fact that there will be distress of nations, with political, social and economic unrest (Luke 21:25). Warfare, bloodshed, anarchy, lawlessness, murder, inter-racial hatred, disrespect and disregard for parental and governmental authority are but a few of these unfortunate incidents of such distress. In the fifth place, the Word of God indicates there will be a rise in power by Russia. Communism will come to worldwide prominence (Ezek. 38,39). There is the emergence of the common market in Europe. Many prophetic scholars believe this may be the group of nations which make up the ten-kingdom confederation comprising the government of the antichrist (Rev. 13,17, and 18). Last but not least, in fact perhaps the greatest sign of our times, is the rebirth of the nation of Israel. This has happened since May 1948. For these and other reasons, we as children of light should be alert and vigilant intellectually. As informed Christians we must interpret the events of history through the light of the Word of God.

The Bible indicates that while we are watching for the Lord's return we are also to be involved in working for Him. We are to serve Him as our Lord has indicated (Luke 19:13). Our admonition is, "Occupy until I come." When He ascended to heaven the Lord Jesus Christ gave gifts to the Church. Every Christian has been given a specific talent by the Holy Spirit. Some have been given several, others some which may seem even more important from a human standpoint. Ours is the greatest work in the world through evangelization and discipleship. Our gifts are also to be used to edify new Christians, building them up in the faith, assisting in the process of spiritual growth. This goes on in the life of every true Christian from the time of regeneration until the very moment of glorification.

As those who are saved by grace we should become more active in serving the Lord in the light of His coming. The Bible makes it clear that as Christians we are to live responsible lives. We are to be good citizens, obedient to our government, faithful to our homes and loved ones. We are to be involved in a constructive, productive life; one which can be used for the glory of God.

The third admonition appears in two New Testament verses, Philippians 3:20,21 and Titus 2:13. There is a significance in the "looking" in Titus and then in Philippians where we read, "For our citizenship is in heaven, from whence we look." Both emphasize the blessed truth that while we are watching for the Lord's return, occupying the time until He comes, we are to be living each moment of every day with the fact that Christ may come at any moment. Realizing this, our hearts can be filled with a deep yearning for His return. The idea is stressed that we should look away from the things of this earth, turning our attention toward heaven. Here is where Christ is presently seated at the right hand of God. We are to fasten our attention upon Him so that our hearts yearn for His coming. Thereby, may we say with the Apostle John, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

There is a day soon coming when we will be glorified. This means we will never again live sinfully, but rather will have a perfect nature. The fact that Christ will complete our salvation should fill our hearts with a real desire for His return. We are a part of this life which Paul describes in Romans 8 as "groaning and travailing together in pain until now." We are waiting for the adoption when saints will receive their resurrected and glorified bodies (I John 3:2).

Then last but not least, the Word of God teaches that while we are watching for His

return we are to be abiding in Him. This truth is brought out in I John 2:28. The Apostle gives us this admonition, "My little children, abide in him, that when he shall appear, you will not be ashamed before him at his coming." "Abide" is a present imperative verb, stressing that this is something we should be doing continuously. It also is a command, not something optional. The word "abide" comes from a root which signifies, "to be at home." Home is where your loved ones are. There you can rest, recline and enjoy the comfort of familiar surroundings.

Moment by moment, we should be experiencing the intimacy of the Saviour in such a way that whatever we are going through it is sealed with the reality of Christ. Because Christ is in it He transforms every situation, no matter how difficult, into a joyful one. The constant presence of Christ takes that which is passing away in the realm of time. He translates it into something that is eternal and enduring. It can never diminish. This is why the Word of God urges, "Abide and continue to abide in Him; be at home in Christ, and find in Him the fullness of joy, peace and satisfaction." Remember that we can only live our lives one moment at a time. We can't cram into today a whole lifetime. God wants to guide us one step at a time.

*God has not promised to guide us year by year,  
Nor even day by day.  
But step by step our paths unfold  
As He directs our way.*

*Tomorrow's plans are never sure,  
We only know this minute.  
But He will say, "This is the way,  
By faith now walk ye in it."*

*And we are glad that this is so,  
For today's are ample to bear,  
And when tomorrow comes around  
His grace transcends all care.*

*We shall not worry, then, nor grieve  
For God, who gave His Son,  
Holds all our moments in His hand  
And gives them to us one-by-one.*

This is the biblical attitude towards the possibility of Christ's return in our lifetime.

The Bible teaches that we are to watch for our Lord's coming. We are to occupy our time for His glory until He comes. Let us be looking for the Saviour who shall change our foul body and fashion it like unto His own glorious body. May we abide in Him so that there will be no need to be ashamed before Him at His coming.

#### JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

By: Dr. Reinhard J. Buss  
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The theme of justification by faith deals primarily with God's thoughts and deeds of grace. It is sometimes known as the Christian declaration of independence. Certainly it forms a cornerstone for great spiritual truths which exist for our spiritual strength and maturity. This subject emphasizes our relationship with God, that which can be established by anyone who is willing by faith to accept the Lord's free gift of grace.

First of all, faith is essential to our right relationship with God (Heb. 11:6). This is the foundational element which makes possible all other Christian graces (II Pet. 1:507). Though love may be the greatest of the triad of Christian graces (I Cor. 13:13), faith is that which brings all the others into focus.

It has been my privilege to become a naturalized citizen of this wonderful country. I was born in Japan of German missionary parents. I didn't set foot in this country until a late Spring day in 1951. I had an abiding faith in this great Nation. My contact with things American goes back to the World War II years in Japan. I vividly recall the first bombing raids on Tokyo by the Doolittle fliers. I remember seeing the many B-29's glistening in the sky as they streaked toward their targets. At the end of the War, I witnessed the entry of the United States' occupation forces and the reconstruction activities under the guidance of General Douglas MacArthur. Although I had never been to the United States before, I decided at the first opportunity here is where I wanted to settle. This illustrates to me that there is a natural faith or belief of which all of us are potentially capable. It rests in hearing trustworthy evidence concerning something. There is a clear parallel in the spiritual realm, too. The Bible teaches us, "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." Therefore, faith is the first and simplest step in the Christian life.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the object of our faith. His willing death on the cross and resurrection from the dead are the Good news of Salvation. These events have been recorded clearly in history. They form a most important part of our spiritual heritage. If you have placed your faith and confidence in the Saviour, you are pleasing to God. This is the positive meaning of Hebrews 11:6. He has enabled us to join the family of God (Gal. 3:26).

While the Scriptures represent faith as a gift of God they also emphasize human responsibility. Some may wonder, by what means or power are we made pleasing to God? This has puzzled human minds ever since man's alienation from the Lord through his rebelliousness in Adam. Job, which may be the oldest book known, raises the same question, "How should a man be just before God?" (Job 9:2). The notion of justification presupposes guilt. There would be absolutely no problem in a court of law



if a man could gain a sentence of acquittal and vindication. Such, however, isn't the case. The entire race has become guilty through willful rebellious sin and wickedness, having been alienated from God. The beauty of the Gospel resides in the divine method by which we can gain acceptance and fellowship with God.

Whereas man justifies the innocent only, the Lord, through human faith, justifies the guilty. Man justifies on the ground of merit; God justifies on the ground of mercy. In order to obtain mercy, you must accept responsibility of wrongdoing, declaring yourself guilty before God. "For Christ hath not come for the righteous, but to redeem sinners." The act of justification is a manifestation of God's compassionate attitude towards us in His revealed grace. There is nothing we can add to it. "It is God that justifieth" (Acts 1:33). The depths of this spiritual principle are past finding out.

By way of further illustration, I came to this country as an immigrant having been born of parents who belonged to a government which waged war against the United States. That wasn't too many years ago. Yet today I share with you in all the blessings of this great land. The past isn't held against me. When I return from abroad, I feel that I am coming home. There is no other place I would rather desire to reside permanently. What have I done to be privileged to live in this great republic? When you come right down to it, I have done nothing to deserve the freedom and blessings characterizing the institutions of our land. They were here long before I came on the scene.

In the spiritual realm, the act of justification was planned by God long before we were born, in eternity past. All we can do is to accept or reject His grace. Justification is an objective spiritual truth, a clearing of every charge of guilt by means of a price that has already been completely paid. This gift can be claimed subjectively and individually, by faith, through the merits of Christ's death and resurrection. There can be no justification without faith (Acts 13:38). "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God" (Rom. 5:1).

Justification is one of the outstanding themes of the New Testament. Its rediscovery in the 16th century led to the upheavals of the Reformation changing the course of the Western world. It is difficult to comprehend how such a key spiritual truth, forming the main theme of Romans and Galatians, should have been pushed into the background for so long. Unbelieving man has always been trying to find a way to God on his own terms. There is absolutely no other way to be justified than by faith. Jesus testified, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no one cometh unto the Father but by me" (John 14:6).

If you are like I am, you have probably heard messages on justification by faith many times over. Martin Luther, however, had been brought up on an entirely different concept. His theology had been instruction in justification through human merits. Goodness it was believed, could be pooled. The concept was that all the venerated saints, the virgin Mary and Christ were better than they needed to be for their own salvation. It was as though there was a balance sheet of sorts on which the positive merits constituted a vast treasury which was transferable to cover those accounts that were in arrears. Such credits were conveniently regulated by the church. This is what is known as indulgence. Martin Luther tried his best to keep accounts balanced by giving his life wholeheartedly to the service of the church. There was constant prayer, pilgrimage, fasting, and other forms of deprivation. Still he could find no peace. The question that deeply troubled him was how one could be sure beyond any doubt that his sins were covered. He wanted to make certain things balanced out.

Martin Luther came to the realization that the problem of sin involved a whole person who needed forgiveness. It wasn't just for one or the other of his sins. No one can stand before a holy God and claim purity from sin. He was right! It makes no difference before a holy God whether we are law-abiding citizens who go to church every Sunday, or, on the other hand, that we have been convicted of breaking the law many times over. Before the Lord, we are all guilty, "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23).

One day, in the year 1513, light broke through for Luther as he was studying the shades of meanings for the words "justice" and "justification" in the Greek. He later wrote, "I greatly longed to understand Paul's epistle to the Romans and nothing stood in the way but that one expression, 'the justice of God.' I took it to mean that justice whereby God is just and He is justly punishing the unjust. My situation was that. Although an impeccable monk, I stood before God as a sinner. Night and day I pondered until I saw the connection between the justice of God and the statement that 'the just shall live by faith.' Then I grasped that the justice of God is that righteousness by which, by grace and sheer mercy, God justifies us through faith. Thereupon I felt myself to be reborn, and to have gone through the open doors into paradise. The whole of Scripture took on new meaning." Luther at this point had made the most important discovery of his life. While it was intellectual, it was coupled with a strong emotional response to the correlation of faith and justification. They had come together to become inseparably linked. His life was revolutionized by the affirmation of the forgiveness of sins through the entirely unmerited grace of God. This became his Christian declaration of independence, giving him inner freedom and peace.

When Luther was in protective custody in 1522, he set about the monumental task of translating the Bible from the original languages. As he came to Romans 8:28 he added the German word "only." This means his version reads, "Therefore, we conclude that a man is justified by faith only, without the deeds of the law." In his best-known hymn, "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God," the idea of faith only, showing our inability to add anything to make us acceptable before God, is expressed,

*"Did we in our own strength confide,  
Our striving would be losing,  
Were not the right Man on our side,  
The Man of God's own choosing.  
Dost ask who that may be?  
Christ Jesus, it is He.  
Lord Sabaoth is His name,  
From age to age the same,  
And He must win the battle."*

God is still in the business of changing, shaping, and redirecting lives. After yielding to justification by faith, Martin Luther was at peace with God and with himself. He could stand fearlessly before the Emperor himself at the Diet of Worms in 1522, declaring the truth of his discovery and commitment. He had remarked to friends that wouldn't be afraid of going to Worms, even if there were as many devils there as there were tiles on each roof. Perhaps this is why in his hymn he was lead to express,

*"And though the world with devils filled  
Should threaten to undo us,  
We would not fear for God has willed  
His truth to triumph through us.  
The prince of darkness grim,  
We tremble not for him.  
His rage we can endure,  
For lo, his doom is sure.  
One little word shall fell him."*

Very rarely in the course of history have men encountered God in as dramatic and sequential a way as a Moses, Paul, or Luther. The Lord hasn't appeared to me in a fiery bush, a flame of light, nor even given me such an insight into spiritual truth by studying a scripture which might shake the world. Those words Luther struggled over, "justification by faith," I have heard as long as I can remember. The danger is that they might lose their meaning, failing to make the proper impact on my experience.

The Lord has continued to speak in a still small voice. One day I came to the realization that there is a big difference between knowledge and experience, lip service and commitment. Each of us needs to make certain that we are justified personally before God by faith. Remember, there is only one way to be made pleasing to the Lord. It is through faith in the merits of His Son who came to take away the sins of the world. If you haven't already done so, take this step just now!

#### DISPENSATIONALISM

By: Gordon Kirk  
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In considering one of the distinctives of Biola, it is important to understand the system of biblical interpretation known as dispensationalism. There are people at both extremes of a dispensational position. Some denominations have gone so far as to identify it as a heresy. Others tend to regard the issue as not important, while another group would exclude any from the faith who don't rigidly adhere to this system of teaching.

To give us a sound scriptural standpoint, let us look at Luke chapter 16. In the first few verses there is recorded a parable given by our Lord concerning a rich man and his steward. Our English word "dispensation" comes from the Latin which means "to weigh out." The idea of a steward is of one who distributes or manages. Consider an apartment manager who administers for the owner. He carries out specific responsibilities and requirements. With dispensation the concept is more that of responsibility. It is management with some type of requirement.

This certain rich man of whom Jesus speaks had a steward who had been squandering the master's possessions. As a result he was called to order for his philandering. He had to give an account of his stewardship. There are several crucial features in this relationship. First, two parties are involved. In this case it is the rich man and the steward. Each of them has specific responsibilities. Accountability is noted in verse two. With the steward to be stripped of his position, we see that dispensations likewise signify a potential change. "Give an account of your stewardship for you can no longer be my steward" (Luke 16:2). The "dispensation" or "stewardship" is really a distinguishable outworking of God's purpose.

In the Old Testament God dealt with Adam and Eve giving them certain responsibilities. They were told not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and to tend the Garden. Today we have different responsibilities. We aren't given the same

commands for this is now what we can call "The Church Age."

In Ephesians 3 Paul also uses the word "dispensation." Showing his responsibility to the Gentiles he affirms, "If indeed you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace which was given to me" (Eph. 3:2). Notice, in the King James Version this is actually translated the "dispensation which was given to me of God's grace." In verse six of the same chapter, he testifies, "to be specific, the Gentiles are fellow-heirs and fellow-members of the body, and fellow-partakers of the promise in Jesus Christ through the Gospel." In verse nine he shares, "to bring to light what is the administration...." This is again the same concept. The Jews and Gentiles are fellow-heirs by faith in this Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Moving through dispensations there are a basic seven which are listed in the Scofield Bible: innocence, conscience, government, promise, law, church, and kingdom. Throughout those times there were different responsibilities individuals had. Still, this isn't a "chopping-up" of God's plan. Dispensations in no way declare that people were saved in different manners. Revelation emphasizes the fact that there is an eternal Gospel even being preached during the Tribulation. This has to do with one's relationship to his faith in the Messiah. There aren't many ways, nor even a few for salvation; there is only one!

Most all of us would agree that we aren't now in the Garden of Eden, nor are we the nation of Israel coming out of bondage. Responsibilities in those instances from the Old Testament days wouldn't fit us today. One important distinction as a school here at Biola is that we hold to a dispensational understanding of Scripture. In other words, we believe in dispensationalism.

Dispensationalism has two key important features. First it requires a literal interpretation of Scripture. Biola College and Talbot Theological Seminary hold to the system of dispensationalism as it completes our task in understanding the inerrant Word. In other words, we believe in a normal system of interpretation. We believe that there is a definite future for Israel (Ezek. 36, 37; Jer. 31), yet to be fulfilled. We view that, too, in Romans 9-11 where Paul talks about the restoration of the nation of Israel. We would hope that we are seeing those last days as the bones are beginning to be pulled together (Ezek. 37). We believe in the premillennial return of Jesus Christ. He will come back again bodily. We are related to the kingdom of God, but there still is that literal, earthly kingdom that the Old Testament prophets promised. In a very real sense dispensations are important to us as a school.

The second feature that we hold to here at Biola is that of a definite distinction between the Church and Israel. During this hour of God's extended grace, we are baptized into the body of Christ through faith. There is a distinction, as God's Word clearly reveals, between the Church and Israel. Daniel's seventieth week (Dan. 9) is yet to be fulfilled for Israel. By way of application in our Church Age we are called "stewards." Are you being faithful at this particular time, exercising your spiritual gift, sharing the Gospel, the Good News that Jesus Christ has paid for the sins of the world? These are the distinctives we feel are important to Biola College and Talbot Theological Seminary in relationship to holding to a dispensational system of biblical interpretation.

## A PERSONAL TESTIMONY

By: Dr. Patricia D. Kissell  
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As a relatively new member of the Biola faculty I have found a totally new experience of teaching on a Christian campus. I have been used to the large secular university where one's experience in the faith really has little relevancy or meaning as far as the academic community is concerned. There, one is only judged by teaching abilities.

By way of testimony I feel the Lord has been preparing me over the years through a very broad secular university as well as with a solid evangelical background. Now, here at Biola I endeavor to put this understanding into some very practical approaches for my students. Teaching at Biola is really a great privilege, as well as an important responsibility. As a faculty member I feel the need to be a good example to all of these wonderful young people. At the same time I want them to know how very human I am.

When I wasn't long into my doctoral program I realized that while I might not be getting many more answers, I was learning where to go for the answers. Over these last few years I haven't hesitated on necessary occasions to admit, "I don't know. Let's find out." I feel it is my responsibility to help each student to learn in the best possible and most lasting ways. Whether on campus or off, I question, "Have I done or said anything today that would reflect positively for Jesus Christ, as well as upholding the proper standards of Biola College?" There should be a continual awareness of the fact that we are constantly on display before the people of this world.

The responsibilities of a Biola faculty member include being a top-notch person in one's profession. There is absolutely no reason why Christians shouldn't achieve in their area of service, whatever that might be. Then, there should always be intellectual stimulation. I enjoy nothing more than sitting with students and bantering back and forth about mutual ideas. I don't hesitate to ask the young people to go to the library and look things up for themselves. I know thereby that they are going to remember it a great deal longer! My great desire in teaching is to impart to those students enrolled in courses I instruct the love I have for my profession, which is nursing. It isn't just a case of requiring certain theories as much as it is a desire to become involved.

I am learning to ask each morning of the Lord if He would give me the wisdom to work with the students. If my "humanness" is part of it, then all the more to help the young person. I direct and sing with the Nurses' Gospel Team here at Biola College. We have to learn to understand each other, knowing that we have different personalities. This is an extremely rewarding experience and opportunity.

There is also a very important responsibility I feel toward my fellow faculty mem-

members. I left a large East Coast university where I was used to three levels: the baccalaureate, the master's and the doctoral level students and faculty. I feared coming to Biola because it was primarily an undergraduate school. Would the intellectual stimulation suffer as a result? At one of the first faculty meetings I attended here at Biola, we were challenged with the idea of sharing intellectually as a community of believers. Everyday I make a commitment to myself that I won't get buried in my own department with my own work. I want to find out about others, and to show them the same interest I would desire on their part for my work. Believe me, I have found a very receptive audience. This is a peer relationship in being able to share with others. There is the wonderful idea of fellowship with those in the body of Christ and relating mutual problems as well as distinctives.

Another role of the faculty member on a Christian campus is the aspect of one's relationship to the administration. To be a good employee, someone who is earning an honest day's living, supportive of the College's ministry and yet not be overwhelmed with any legalistic system. Realizing that administrators, like faculty members, are human beings, we seek to work together in our common care and love for individual students.

It was a little more than a year ago that I made the decision to come to Biola College, leaving a secular university. I have learned a great deal about myself, about my reactions to other people and about other Christians. I sometimes become very perturbed with Christians whom I find narrow-minded. It is always thrilling to have the opportunity of sharing the problems in my life, especially when someone is willing to promise, "I'll be praying for you!"

The greatest blessing here at Biola is in working with students, learning to take them as they are, to spend time with them, and at some points even to cry with them. I know I don't have all the answers, but I realize the depth of biblical promise as we take the opportunity to study and apply it to our own hearts.

I try never to overlook my paramount responsibility to the Lord Himself as I fulfill my position on this Christian campus. I want to live a life that is circumspect. This may not always be easy. Sometimes I look at my friends on secular campuses and think that they have it much easier. Their lives aren't always being scrutinized as they would be on a Christian campus. Each day, as I fulfill my responsibilities here at Biola, I have more strongly come to realize that the Lord has been preparing me for this position. I am convinced that the Saviour Himself can use my life in working with students, faculty, and administration.

## RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

By: Dr. Clyde Cook  
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Biola College

It is my privilege to write about the resurrection of Jesus Christ. This would be absolutely impossible if there weren't any resurrection. In fact, there wouldn't

be any Biola College or any Talbot Seminary without the resurrection which is the central teaching and theme of Scripture. Dr. Wilbur Smith pens, "If you lifted out every passage from the Bible which refers to the resurrection, you would have a book so mutilated that what remained couldn't be understood." The resurrection is the calming certainty of the sure salvation provided by a wonderful and loving heavenly Father. Without the resurrection, as Paul frankly puts it, our faith would be in vain and our preaching would be emptiness.

As a professor at Biola and Talbot, I would like to share with you "The Three 'R's' of the Resurrection." First there is the revelation of the resurrection. At this point we should each re-read Matt. 28:1-7. This gives us the scriptural narrative. Christ had died. Pilate marveled that He was dead already since crucifixion rarely took less than 36 hours. We know that He was obviously dead because the soldiers didn't break His legs. Death was also confirmed by the blood and water which came out of His side. We know that He was buried by Joseph, who wrapped Him in linen cloth and placed Him in his new tomb. Then a stone was rolled in front of the opening. The chief priest and Pharisees got worried about the prospect of the resurrection so they asked for guards to seal the stone and set a continual watch. Towards dawn there was an earthquake. An angel descended to roll away the stone. The guards became like dead men. Do you realize that we know more about the burial of Christ, and all these facts, than similar information about any other person in ancient history?

Then there is the reality of the resurrection. There is one definite point on which everybody has to agree: the tomb was empty Easter morning! This fact is accepted by Christian and unbeliever, Jew and Gentile. There have been all kinds of explanations down through the years. Jewish authorities in the early days said the disciples stole the body. Several facts militate against this. First of all, how could these unarmed disciples overcome the well-armed guards? Some said that the soldiers were asleep. Can you imagine what would happen if they reported this to their commanding officer the next day. The penalty for sleeping on the watch was death. They would be taking their lives in their hands with such a testimony. So the elders even sought to bribe them. Such a possibility doesn't really make much sense.

Another prominent teaching has been explained as the "swoon theory." Such adherents teach that Christ didn't really die on the cross, but rather just swooned or fainted. It was in the chill of the tomb that he revived. Consider the facts before you accept such a ridiculous claim. Hardened, professional executors testified that Jesus Christ was dead. The chief priests certainly wouldn't have let anyone take Christ if He were still alive. Loving friends wrapped Him in many yards of linen cloth. When Lazarus came back from the dead Jesus said, "Loose him, and let him go." How did Christ get out of these wrappings? Then, too, He had to roll the stone away, after He was so weak. It was probably up a small incline. This boulder was doubtless a wheel of granite eight feet in diameter and one foot thick, weighing more than four tons.

If Christ didn't die as the Bible tells us, then, when did He expire and under what circumstances? Another idea is it that the reason for the empty tomb that day was because the women and disciples went to the wrong burial place. Blinded with grief they just stumbled on the wrong location. This is really a ludicrous idea. Joseph's tomb was a private burial place. How could there be a mistake when the angel declared, "Come, see the place where the Lord lay." Others have tried to explain the empty tomb by saying the disciples really just saw an hallucination or vision. This theory argues that Christ wasn't seen bodily of His disciples, but only through a vision of His Spirit. They also declare that all the post-resurrection appearances

of Christ were only figments of the mind. Remember, though, that the disciples handled Him. We recall Thomas declared, "I'll not believe until I touch Him." The simple explanation is that Jesus Christ did arise from the dead. The reason the tomb was empty was that the Saviour had indeed risen bodily from the dead. Paul reasons, "Why should it be thought an incredible thing with you that God should raise from the dead?" (Acts 26:3). Luke affirms, "To whom he also showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs" (Acts 1:3). In the original the word used in the Greek for "infallible" is the strongest possible proof imaginable.

First of all, the tomb was empty. The Jews didn't question at all. The early church was built upon the teaching of the resurrection. All the enemies of Christ would have to do was to produce His body and Christianity would have immediately died.

Then there are the grave clothes. The body was completely wrapped. If men had stolen the body at night, it is doubtful that they would have removed the grave clothes and folded up the napkins. There are at least 11 post-resurrection appearances of Christ. These were in full daylight. The witnesses who saw Him fulfilled the three requirements to make a testimony trust worthy. They were competent eye-witnesses; they were sufficient in number; and third, they were of good reputation, faithful and honest in all their dealings.

Consider another proof of the resurrection. There were the transformed disciples. Their grief was turned to joy; their fear to boldness. Peter, who had three times denied his Lord before a young servant girl boldly accused all Israel of the death of Christ without wavering from his belief in the resurrection. Tradition tells us that all the disciples except John died a violent death. They didn't waver from the belief in the crucified, resurrected Saviour. Consider the conversion of Saul. Here was a man of the race of Israel, the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, a Pharisee, seeing the risen Christ and being transformed.

Then finally, the results of the resurrection. What can it mean in our lives today? Certainly it confirms and validates the truthfulness of Christ's teaching. He said He would die and rise again, and He did. For this reason we can accept everything else He has said as equally true. I can readily believe Him when He promises that His blood was shed for the remission of sins. Paul tells us in Romans 1:4 that Jesus Christ is declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead. It also attests to His deity and to His work, "He was raised for our justification" (Rom. 4:25). The resurrection confirms the truthfulness of Christ, His Person and work, as well as the resurrection of believers. This gives us a living hope, assurance, and comfort. When someone is dying, what does the atheist have to say? The resurrection influences the believer in his present life. We are to be living day-by-day in the power of His resurrection (Rom. 6:4,5).

These are all wonderful truths. God has revealed the resurrection to us through His Holy Word. It is an incontrovertible reality. My prayer is that the risen Christ may be revealed also in our lives so that there might be eternal results for His glory. John, on the Isle of Patmos, saw the risen Lord and heard Him declare "I am He that liveth, and was dead, and, behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen."

## CREATION PART I

By: Gerald L. Gooden  
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God has given man the tremendous responsibility and awesome freedom to decide individually whether or not He is all-powerful and in complete control over the affairs of man. Science can't make this decision for us. Each individual has the privilege of deciding for himself. If it were overwhelmingly obvious that God created the earth and man, would we then have the choice to accept or reject God? The answer is, of course, that we would not. To be responsible before God, we must be able to examine the physical world as objectively as possible.

God has chosen not to overwhelm man with His power. Rather He graciously dignifies man by giving him the responsibility of choice. The order, beauty, and immense power displayed in the universe has clearly pointed men to the existence of the Almighty. God proves Himself to an individual only after that person has chosen by faith to accept personally the Lord's revelation about Himself. Science can't relieve anyone of his personal responsibility.

The Bible is a guide to the applicability of science. The reverse isn't the case. Certainly science is a method of obtaining useful knowledge of proven value. The designing and building of our vast technological society is ample proof of the validity of applying scientific principles in the world. The extension of scientific laws into the past or future must be predicated upon the condition that everything has always operated and will continue to operate just as it does today. This idea has been called the uniformitarian assumption or the cosmological principle.

In contrast to this, consider the biblical record. There was a period before the flood when men lived in excess of 900 years. This is dramatic evidence that the world at that time was vastly different than it is now. The Bible also reveals in II Peter 3 that there will be a time in the future when there will be new heavens and a new earth. Considering these accounts of a different world in the past and a new earth in the future, we should be cautious about extending today's scientific techniques. The historic accuracy of the Bible can be investigated scientifically but not the miracles recorded therein. We accept or reject the accuracy of the Bible on the basis of whether or not we accept or reject the omnipotence of God. The validity of a biblical account can't be decided upon the basis of current scientific ideas.

Christians should keep in mind that Jesus Christ is identified as the Word of God. Rejection of clear, biblical teaching in any area, including those pertaining to science, is in a sense a rejection of Christ.

When God created the heavens and the earth, He incorporated a spiritual message into the laws of science which is identical to the biblical one. A dominant theme throughout Scripture is the utter helplessness of man. When the laws of science, and in particular the laws of thermodynamics, are used to predict the future of man, the conclusion is that there is no hope of survival. The laws of science give no solution to the tragedy of individual death. There is no law or evidence that would ever even remotely predict the possibility of everlasting life. Therefore, the ultimate hopelessness of every individual is the prediction of science.

The fact of the exploding population and diminishing resources lead to the conclusion that the world itself will eventually not be able to support life. Even if some of the immediate energy needs can be supplied by yet undeveloped technology, science predicts that eventually the sun will burn out and the earth will then be a cold, lifeless planet. Without the supernatural provision of God, each individual in the human race is lost. Man is utterly lost without the supernatural intervention and providence of God.

The biblical doctrine of creation is introduced in the book of Genesis, expanded somewhat in other books of the Old Testament (Job, Psalms, Isaiah), then picked up and further explained in the New Testament (John, Colossians, Hebrews and others). Besides corroborating the Old Testament account, the New Testament names the Agent in creation, who is Jesus Christ (John 1:1-3; Col 1:15-18).

It is amazing how many people have assumed that scientists have proven a beginning, either separate from God, or in conjunction with Him as being a logical explanation. Evolution has been called by some "God's handmaiden to aid Him in the task of bringing life to the planet earth." In the wake of such erroneous teaching, the importance of the doctrine of creation has received less emphasis than it deserves.

The Biola faculty and administration is dedicated to teaching the biblical doctrine of creation. This is central to the literal and plain teaching of the Word of God. One cannot accept the clear teaching of the Bible and harmonize it with the false hypothesis of evolution. Some theologians and philosophers have tried to link the two together by coining terms like, "theistic evolution," "threshold evolution," and "progressive creationism." Such teachings are diametrically opposed and can't be reconciled.

"God created," and this we accept by faith. He left the details, along with the means, unexplained. This separates those who would believe Him, accepting His Word, from those who refuse His revelation. "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear" (Heb. 11:3). This principle of instantaneous creation by the word of God settles the problem of beginnings for the believer. Man was created in the image and likeness of God, not from some amoeba nor ape. Man was appointed to rule and reign over the earth, not to be a cog in the mechanistic universe, devoid of God's care and concern. The Bible places man as number one among the creatures of the earth. This doctrine of creation is a critical point of dividing mankind.

Let no one believe that the evolutionist has given up his program of indoctrination. The false system takes on religious fervor. The acceptance of the hypothesis requires the faith of the adherent. Its thesis hasn't been demonstrated in the laboratory.

The scoffers say, "Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation" (II Pet. 3:4). The answer is, "For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by

the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water, whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished, but the heavens and the earth which are now by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men" (II Pet. 3:5-7). These verses tell of creation, the flood, and the present world. In verse 12 we are urged, "Looking for and hastening unto the day of the Lord, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." There is a world system yet to appear in the future.

The doctrine of uniformitarianism or that the present is the key to the past, is basic to evolution. This idea is totally contradicted by Scripture. Evolution assumes a progression from simple to complex and from chaos to order. Contrariwise, the Bible teaches that God created every form and aspect of life. He announced that it was good before Adam's fall. The only possible reversal of the fall is the event of the new birth which comes through faith in Jesus Christ.

The doctrine of creation is so central that to view it skeptically leaves one in the camp of rejecting both the inspiration of Scripture and the inerrancy of Christ's statements. There is no way nor need to try to reconcile Scripture with evolution. The latter is an unproven hypothesis, contradictory to the clear teaching of the inspired Scriptures. Biology, genetics, and the fossil records all support the biblical teaching of the different kinds of life created by God, reproducing after their kind.

Look out on the heavens and the beauties of nature asking the question, "Who is the Creator of all that?" Genesis 1:1 through 2:3 gives the answer in simplicity, accuracy and authority. God is the effective cause, Designer and Sustainer of the material universe. It is dependent upon the Lord alone. This explains why man is both dependent on God and is responsible to Him. Yes, the biblical doctrine of creation is foundational and fundamental, even as the inspiration of Scripture, the deity of Christ, His virgin birth and His substitutionary death on the cross. It is man's choice to accept it by faith or to believe foolishly the fantasy of evolution. We believe God's Word!

#### CREATION PART II

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Several terms, "cosmological principles" and "uniformitarian assumption," should have further explanations. The idea behind these terms is exactly the same. Used commonly by geologists "uniformitarian principle" is "the concept that the physical

and chemical laws governing geologic process have operated uniformly throughout earth's history." Notice that this doesn't say that conditions on the earth have always been the same. It is only that the physical and chemical laws have operated uniformly.

This concept of the universal applicability of physical and chemical laws over all space and throughout all time is called by astronomers the cosmological principle. We believe that the uniformitarian principle isn't valid during creation. God isn't limited by physical laws. Rather He instituted them for His purposes in His own time. We believe God created the heaven and the earth and then ordained the physical laws by which they operate. The physical world we observe is now subject to these laws.

We know God's primary intention for giving us the Bible is that He might reveal Himself and His redemptive work through Jesus Christ. The Lord alone knows all He had in mind as He gave us the Book. We believe the Bible to be the expression of truth. If the Bible teaches some aspect of biology, anthropology, genetics, geology, language, or whatever, the information given will be the truth. Remember that creation, or the beginning of all things, isn't science at all but rather revelation. The act of creation and the method God used can be known only from Him.

Some wonder whether if science succeeds in creating life in a test tube that might affect our faith. The Bible tells us that life reproduces after its kind. Therefore, if man creates life in a test tube it naturally should reproduce after its kind. Something which evolved, however, would not be a possibility. The Bible doesn't tell us that life can be carefully constructed but rather the reverse is true. Life requires a creator. Man, with his God-given ingenuity, may be able to so organize atoms that they form a reproducing organism. This would only support the Genesis account. Life, once made, only reproduces after its kind. It doesn't of itself evolve into more and more complex organisms.

It would be good to understand the terms "theistic evolution" and "progressive creationism." A simple definition is rather difficult. On the surface, combining the two terms would lead one to believe that perhaps God, and the process of evolution, worked together to bring life into being. "Theistic" refers to God and of course "evolution" is the theory that all forms of life have been developed over millions of years from a single cell up to and including man. The original single cell was produced in some unknown way from non-living material. This false compromise has trapped some Christians into accepting an idea alien to the Bible.

Theistic evolution is still nothing more than evolution, but with an apology for divine help. The term means that God started the process of upward development, but then allowed natural selection, mutations, survival of the fittest, and time to work, shaping and molding life into organisms that could survive in the environment in which they found themselves. God then intervened at strategic points to help the development along by giving directions to the process or new material. These divine interventions weren't frequent enough to crowd the process with too many difficult-to-explain miracles. In the system of the theistic evolutionist by and large the laws of nature were allowed to work out their own results over millions or even billions of years.

"Progressive creationism" is also far too complex to define in a sentence or two. Summarizing briefly, in this system God is given the credit for bringing the raw material, or seed of life, into being by the word of His mouth. Then He implanted His plan into nature in the form of a pattern. Nature now takes this newly created

matter and, in obedience to God's plan, works the matter into the predesigned pattern with the end product appearing on the six successive days of creation, culminating with man. The days were not 24-hour days but rather eons of time. Notice that the emphasis is on the fact that the completed product is at the end of the process, not the commencement.

Contrary to both these views is the Scripture. It states clearly that God instantaneously spoke the universe into being and it was complete. This is the most obvious meaning of Genesis 1:1, where it says, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Then further in Psalm 33:6 it is recorded, "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made and all the hosts of them by the breath of his mouth." In John 1:3, speaking of Christ, who is the agent of creation, it says, "All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made." This we believe to be the truth and the method of creation.

Biola's position is certainly that God didn't use evolution to produce man or the diversity of animals. The Bible makes it quite clear that plants were made on the third day of creation and they reproduced after their kind. Fish and fowl were made on the fifth day, and they reproduced after their kind. On the sixth day God made cattle, creeping things and beasts, which reproduced after their kind. He also made man on the sixth day.

From this description we believe that there is the possibility of many changes within a kind, but transformation by evolution or any other means from one kind to another is impossible. For example, we believe that changes are possible among the fish kind, but it is quite impossible for a fish to become a bird. Because of the clear language used in Genesis 1 which distinguishes kinds and states that these kinds will reproduce only after their kind, we cannot believe that God used evolution in any way whatsoever.

A belief in God and in the accuracy of the Scriptures is essential to a belief in creation. The evolutionist, by and large, doesn't believe in the omnipotence of God nor the literal truth of the Bible. A person who believes in and is committed to the transforming work in a person by the new birth in Christ will readily accept the teaching of Scripture and the power of God as the Creator. We at Biola stand firm in our affirmation of the revealed facts of the creation of the heavens and the earth by the word and power of God alone. There is a biblical doctrine of creation which states that creation was complete by the spoken word of God and was instantaneous.

The following is a suggested list of books for your library on this subject.

- Evolution and Christian Faith, by Bolton Davidheiser
- The Twilight of Evolution, by Henry Morris
- Biblical Cosmology and Modern Science, by Henry Morris
- The Wonders of Creation, by Alford Rehwinkel
- The Early Earth, by John Whitcomb
- The Genesis Flood, by John Whitcomb and Henry Morris

## THE HOLY SPIRIT

By: Dr. Robert L. Thomas  
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The world is blessed with a few people who seemingly can do any and every type of work very well. They are pleasant company and quickly become a vital part of our lives. The eighth chapter of Romans tells of One who exceeds them all in this respect. This is a favorite portion of Scripture since it significantly presents the Holy Spirit's prominence throughout. Here we learn that the Spirit liberates, gives life and peace, indwells, produces righteousness, puts to death the unwholesome deeds of the body, leads, imparts a spirit of sonship, gives confirmatory testimony, guarantees future redemption of our bodies, helps us in our weakness, and prays in and for us. What a rich treasure house of blessing these verses provide.

How can anyone ever question that the Holy Spirit is a Person at work in this world today? Still there are those unwilling to grant Him this recognition. They simply refer to Him as a "force" or an "influence." They deny Him His rightful place in the Trinity alongside the Father and the Son. Even some who pay "lip service" to the Spirit deny His reality by their actions. This isn't proper since He possesses all the elements of personality and is vitally involved in all the events of today's world.

In studying Romans eight we see some of the Holy Spirit's characteristics. We know that He has limitless intellectual capacity (Rom. 8:26). To compensate for our lack of knowledge, He joins in our prayer experience, supplying necessary insights into our intercession. The Father, to whom the prayer is addressed, reads the mind of the Spirit as a result (vs. 27). Because of the Spirit's unlimited knowledge, our prayers conform perfectly to the will of God. Thus we are assured of their answer.

The Spirit also has emotional involvement (vvs. 23,26). His capacity for feeling can more vividly be seen in verse 15. Here we learn of the "spirit of adoption," or sonship, which creates in Christians the realization of family closeness and awareness toward the Father. The cry of "Abba, Father," wells up in the believer because the Spirit dwells within him. This can't be equated with the emotional excesses seen in the modern-day pentecostal movement. Speaking in tongues is human emotional activity. I feel this type of activity grieves the Holy Spirit. Certainly the groanings mentioned in Romans 8 are unrelated to tongues mentioned in I Corinthians 12-14.

The Holy Spirit furthermore has the capacity for decision-making. We read, "All who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God" (Rom. 8:14). As believers the Holy Spirit chooses for us, determining the course we should follow. This third person of the Trinity obviously has a will of His own, a will which always coincides with the Father's divine desires. Otherwise He couldn't habitually

intercede for the saints according to the will of God (8:27). The Holy Spirit knows, feels, and decides. We humans, whenever crises arise, must draw upon natural resources. Thankfully, in receiving Christ, we eliminate the need to be entirely on our own. Remember, if anyone doesn't have the Holy Spirit of Christ, he doesn't belong to Him (Rom. 8:9). As saved individuals the Holy Spirit is present to uphold and lead us in every difficult situation (8:10). With this support, we can successfully meet whatever challenges this life may present.

Since we are living in the age of the Spirit, we can naturally expect to find an abundance of the Spirit's activities about us. In centuries past, His was the responsibility to inspire men to write the Word of God, both Old and New Testaments. He filled Jesus from the earliest moment and was the Agent through whom Christ preached so effectively, performing so many marvelous works. He presently ministers in the world of unsaved people to show them their need of the Saviour. Many have been and are being persuaded to respond affirmatively to the invitation for forgiveness through the Lord.

It is the Christian's privilege to walk according to the Spirit (Rom. 8:3). Doing so we live the right kind of life, measuring up to God's requirements in every respect. Any human being is totally incapable of this on his own. The Holy Spirit supplies the needed strength. This is what Paul calls elsewhere "the Spirit's 'filling'." By yielding to His control, we can gain the victory over the degrading desire of the flesh.

Without Christ, a person's plight is pitiful. He is in constant slavery to sin and fear. He obeys their every whim. Because of their dominance, the non-Christian finds it impossible to please God. Indeed, he is even hostile toward the Lord. Any attempt at self-reformation meets with repeated defeat. He is absolutely helpless to do good. Sin is his master and king. After being born again the Holy Spirit imparts new life to replace spiritual death. One dies to sin by becoming identified with Christ in His crucifixion. The Spirit enters a transformed life offering His services as Liberator. We are set free from the law of sin and death (Rom. 8:2).

The filling of the Holy Spirit shouldn't be confused with another function He performs, that of bestowing gifts or special abilities on individual members of the body of Christ. This latter function is seen in the 12th chapter of I Corinthians (12:11). The Spirit imparts to every Christian a special ability or abilities, enabling him to serve effectively the rest of the Body of Christ. No one gift can be possessed by all the members, as some have assumed. In fact, certain of the gifts, such as apostleship, healing, and tongues, were limited to the first generation or two of believers. These were specialized gifts adapted to supplying the body with its own authorized teachings comparable to the Old Testament, then already completed. Through some of these early gifts the Spirit supplied divine revelation, while through others He confirmed it. The gift of tongues wasn't a sign of the Spirit's filling. It was rather a confirmation of what God chose to reveal under differing specialized circumstances. When this revelation was completed, tongues and the other confirmatory gifts were no longer necessary for the body's continued growth.

Just as the Spirit's filling is not equated to the presence of tongues, neither is identifiable with the Spirit's baptism. I Corinthians 12:13 records, "By one Spirit we were all baptized into one body." Through this purely spiritual act of baptism the Holy Spirit places each Christian into the body of Christ at the moment of conversion. It happens to every single believer. Whereas, the Spirit's filling comes only at that moment of the believer's life when he is cleansed and available for the Spirit to control. Thus, the baptism of the Spirit in no way can be justified

scripturally as a work of the Spirit subsequent to conversion.

Gifts of the Spirit come to the child of God at the moment he is baptized by the Holy Spirit into the Body of Christ. The speaking gifts operated in the church today are teaching, pastor-teaching, evangelism, and exhorting. The auxiliary spiritual gifts that provide a setting for speaking gifts are helps, showing mercy, giving, and administration. Clearly, these ministries attain maximum effectiveness when Christians are filled with the Spirit. The possession of these capabilities is on quite a different basis from the Spirit's filling.

The Holy Spirit's filling is desirable. His control over Christians is a very vital and important activity. He empowers, enables, and sustains through the greatest difficulties. He witnesses with our spirit that we are God's children. He imparts life and extends our prayer capacity far beyond what is humanly possible. He more than compensates for our weakness. He only can generate within the Spirit-filled one the love for others which Christ demonstrated for us at Calvary.

We are brought under the Holy Spirit's control by allowing ourselves to be. James 4:5 reminds us that "He longs over us jealously." He is anxiously waiting for us to yield. He wants us to "set our minds on Him" (Rom. 8:6). He awaits our decision to cease walking according to the flesh and to begin walking according to His will (Rom. 8:4). The Holy Spirit will be satisfied with nothing less than all our lives.

At one of the conferences between the northern and southern states of America during the War of 1861-66, representatives of the southern states outlined what portion of territory they were prepared to give up if, in return, the Federal government would grant independence to other portions of land in the South. As each offer was made and rejected by the Federal government, more and more attractive offers were proposed by the South. The portions being given to the Union were increased and those being retained proportionately decreased. All the offers met with a steadfast refusal. At last President Lincoln placed his hand on the map, so as to cover all the Southern states and emphatically delivered his ultimatum, "Gentlemen, this government must have the whole." What President Lincoln meant was the Constitution of the United States was at an end if any part was allowed to become independent. This was a vital principle. No exceptions or degrees could possibly be allowed. Even so is the claim which God, by the Holy Spirit, makes upon each believer. He cannot share us with the world. No matter how much we offer Him, if it isn't all. He can't do His work in and through us. Even if we offer the smallest part to His rival, our relationship will be violated. His government must have the whole. May I suggest full appreciation of the Spirit's Person and working in your life awaits such an unqualified committal from each of us. Why not let Him be your strength for day-to-day?



## AUTHORITY OF WORD

By: Dr. Robert L. Saucy  
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Is the Bible the infallible, inerrant word of God? This question has again come to the forefront in our day. For 18 centuries this wasn't an urgent question in the church because practically everyone accepted the full inspiration of the Scriptures. Within the last few hundred years, the Bible has been under constant attack by its critics. Some may feel the answer is unimportant. History reveals, however, that when this question is answered negatively, sooner or later there comes a weakening of other beliefs, until in some cases true faith is extinguished.

One can simply look at the nature of the Bible itself and see that it is a supernatural Book. There is no other book like it in the world. It was written over a period of 1600 years by over 30 authors from all walks of life: from Amos, a herdsman, to Peter a fisherman, to David and Solomon, who were kings, and to Luke a physician. The places of writing varied from prisons to the wilderness and were scattered over three continents. With all this there is still one unfolding story: God's redemption of mankind. No Book has withstood more persecution than the Bible. From the days of the Roman emperors to present-hour communism, it has been burned, banned, and outlawed. Voltaire, the noted French infidel, who died in 1778, said that in 100 years from his time Christianity would be swept from existence. Only 50 years after his demise, the Geneva Bible Society used Voltaire's house and printing press to produce stacks of Bibles.

From the earliest period of church history, some 300 years after the time of Christ, the Roman emperor Diocletian, issued an edict to destroy Christians and their sacred Book. Only 25 years later, the emperor Constantine, who succeeded him, commissioned Eusebius to prepare 50 copies of the Scriptures at the expense of the government. The attackers eventually go, but the Bible still stands.

The content of the Bible reveals its supernaturalness. No other book in human history has predicted hundreds of years into the future the destiny of nations and men with the results all coming true to the letter. Someone has counted 332 distinct predictions in the Old Testament literally fulfilled through Christ. There is absolutely no possibility that these could all be fulfilled by chance. They had to be authored by God, who not only knows, but also controls the future.

Ask yourself, "If God didn't write the Bible, who did? Wicked men couldn't have authored such a book. Who of them would pen such a holy line as, 'Blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven'? What wicked man would describe himself as the Bible pictures, 'For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.' 'All our righteousness are as filthy rags'? When a person writes a biography he usually likes to omit the wrong deeds, erasing the defects. We all like our photographs to be touched up. What wicked man would condemn himself to eternal destruction? Such people couldn't have authored the Bible.

If wicked men didn't write the Bible, what about good men? Again the answer is "no." How could good men proclaim the name of God by continually declaring their words to be those of the Almighty? Over two thousand times in the Old Testament alone the writers begin their statements with, "Thus saith the Lord." The only possible answer is that God, through His Holy Spirit, used human authors to pen Scripture.

On every count, by external evidence, the Bible appears to be a unique Book. In it we find the record of the great events of God's acts in Christ. If the Bible has proven reliable as a record of the Saviour, as well as the message of salvation, it must also be reliable on what it teaches about itself. In other words, if we use the Bible for all the great doctrines of the Christian faith, we must also heed its teaching concerning inspiration (II Tim. 3:16).

The word "inspired" really means "God-breathed." Some today would seek to separate that portion of the Bible which concerns Christian doctrine and practice from the statements about history. "Those statements dealing with faith and practice, are inspired, but the other parts aren't," they claim. Note that the Apostle states, "All scripture is inspired." The Bible never makes a distinction between some parts being inspired and authoritative while others are not.

Another clear teaching concerning the Scripture is that of Peter. He affirms, "No prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God" (II Pet. 1:21). This verse pictures the human authors of Scripture as being borne along by the power and direction of the Spirit, like the wind bearing a sailboat in its force. The Scriptures aren't simply the writings of men. They are ultimately the result of the direction and power of the Holy Spirit.

The climax of the evidence comes from our Saviour Himself. Jesus lived by the authority of the Word of God. When Satan thrust his fiery darts at Him, His shield was "It is written." Three times He repelled the devil with a citation of Scripture. When the lawyer came to Jesus with a question about inheriting eternal life, the Saviour responded, "What is written in the law? How readest thou?" Again, when the Sadducees tried to trap Him concerning the resurrection, His response was "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures."

Our Lord founded His life on the Word and interpreted His ministry as the direct fulfillment of Scripture. He explicitly gave us His opinion of its trustworthiness, "Scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35). It cannot be annulled, nor its authority denied. He explained His sacred mission on earth, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill; for verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." This "jot" refers to the smallest letter of the Hebrew alphabet. The "tittle" is simply any little stroke that distinguishes one letter from another.

It certainly isn't going beyond the teaching of Jesus to say that the Bible is verbally inspired. This means inspiration in the very words that are used. The Jews of Jesus' time considered two things to be very sacred: the temple and the Scriptures. Although they accused Him of speaking against the temple when He predicted its destruction, they never once found occasion to accuse Him of uttering one word against their holy Scriptures.

Everyone who has ever put their faith in Christ has found Him to be absolutely trustworthy in all His promises. It is therefore only fitting that we trust Him in His statements about Scripture. It is recorded that Martin Luther, who brought the

light of the Scriptures to the darkness of the church in the Middle Ages, had these words of the Psalmist written in charcoal on the walls of his room, "Forever, O Lord, Thy word is settled in heaven." If there was ever a day when we needed this same engraving in our minds, it is today.

When I was in the service, I spent some time in an artillery unit on the crew of a 105 millimeter Howitzer. In preparing to fire, part of the setting up process was to place an aiming stake several yards out in front and to the right. This stake was there so that whenever the gun moved, either through the recoil of firing or through redirecting our aim, we would always have a permanently fixed point from which to correct or to take new aim. In this present world, with its swirling chaos of thought, there is only one fixed aiming stake for one's life. That is the unchanging and unchangeable Word of God. May we not only recognize its final authority in faith, but also recognize it by submitting to its truth in our daily lives.

#### THE CHURCH

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There have always been people who have rejected the importance of the church. Recently there seems to be increasing numbers of this persuasion. For several years well-known denominations have been reporting decreasing attendance as well as loss of membership. Young people express dissatisfaction with the church, seeking to create their own fellowships. Such views aren't new. According to Paul in I Corinthians 11:22, there were some in that first century congregation who despised the church. The writer to Hebrews was also concerned for those who weren't attending services (10:25). One speaker's evaluation summarized it by observing, "Most churches are in a struggle to keep themselves going, barely able to meet expenses."

In spite of such attitudes and concerns, I believe in the Church of Jesus Christ. This includes both visible and invisible. First of all I believe in the church because of what the Bible says about it. We know that Christ founded it (Matt. 16:18). "I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The second person of the Trinity, God incarnate in human flesh, never made and never will make a mistake. We see the Son of God as "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and forever" (Heb. 13:8). This faultless, unchangeable Saviour founded the church.

We note that Christ believed in the future of the church as He declared, "I will build my church." What He began is still in the building process. He still has faith in its continuing development. He felt a personal relationship to His church by placing His stamp of approval and attachment to it in the words, "My church." Paul declared that its foundation is sure and secure (Eph. 2:19,20).

Second, I believe in the Church of Jesus Christ because it is His body. As Paul states, "Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh, for his body's sake, which is the church"

(Col. 1:24). We know that Christ is the head of the body, the church (Col. 1:18). In the physical realm, the body is always under the control of the head. When you make something, you do so not because your hand wants to, or is capable of doing it, but rather because your head wants to. So it is in the spiritual realm. The true Church is under the control of its head, Jesus Christ. The head gives proper direction and the true body responds in accordance with the wishes of its head, Jesus Christ. Our faith is in a Person, not an institution.

Third, I believe in the Church of Jesus Christ because the Holy Spirit mentions it so many times in the New Testament. A biblical statement doesn't become more true because it is affirmed many times. If God states a thing to be true, it is true whether He states it 100 times or just once. It is obvious, however, that several references to something in the Bible indicates the stress God places upon it. In the New Testament, the word "church", whether singular or plural, is used 114 times in 112 verses. In the New Testament, there are 7,959 verses, which means that one out of every 71 mentions the church. If we were to delete the verse that have the word "church" in them, we would drop out a verse every three pages. We would lose such truths as the following: that Christ is the foundation of the church; that Christ is the head of the church; that Christ has a great love for His church; and that the church has a future of great glory. What an emaciated Bible we would have if such were done. If you don't believe in the church or don't esteem its worth by attending it, you might as well take a pair of scissors and cut those verses right out of your New Testament. That is what you are doing when you ignore the church.

Fourth, I believe in the church of Jesus Christ because the Saviour has promised its permanence (Matt. 16:18). He never starts anything which He can't finish. He certainly has ample power to keep His church. A further statement of His plentitude of power is in Matthew 28:18, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." If the church were going to fall, it would have done so long ago. The church has been attacked by some of the most brilliant minds in history, but none has torn down its standing in the sight of God. That such attacks have occurred shouldn't be surprising because Paul warned the Ephesian elders about them (Acts 20:29,30).

The church has been attacked by some of the most powerful governments in history, beginning with the Roman and continuing to his very day. A Protestant minister several centuries ago bravely replied to a king who was seeking to destroy the church, "Sir, it assuredly behooves the church of God, in whose name I speak, to endure blows and not to strike them. But may it please you also to remember that it is an anvil that has worn out many hammers." This permanence is assured because the church is founded upon the Rock, Christ Jesus. It stands assured that it hasn't completed the task the Saviour gave it. In Matthew 28:19 Jesus commanded, "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations." After almost two thousand years, we are still at the task, and we haven't reached them all yet. My friend, are you anxious for Christ's return? If you are, what are you doing? If you want Him to come, do something about it.

Fifth, I believe in the church of Jesus Christ because God believes in it. This is stated by His desire for His people to be a part of it (Heb. 10:25). The Lord does not create anything uselessly. He created the church for a purpose. "The church is an implement of God, not a monument to Him. It is the will of Christ, not the scheme of man. It is the living witness to Christ, not a museum of antiquity. It is a route through the world, not a detour around it."

Some are critical and point out, "I don't like the church because it's so organized

that nothing moves. It's too unfriendly; its pastors' sermons are a bore. Its teachers are unprepared and dull, and it always wants something from me." Remember friend, God doesn't ask what you think. He says, "Go," because He believes in it.

Sixth, I believe in the church of Jesus Christ because the Holy Spirit is in it. He came upon the disciples in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. Our Lord told the disciples to stay in Jerusalem. The book of Acts points out that they met together when the Spirit came upon them. Several times after that, according to the book of Acts, the Spirit filled them as they were gathered together. God the Holy Spirit, the third member of the Trinity, dwells within the church. He is the source of its power, the source of its holiness, and the cause of its influence.

Finally, I believe in the church of Jesus Christ because it is the vehicle through which people come to know the truth in Jesus Christ (Rom. 10:14,15). The church is the normal place where preaching occurs. If it doesn't take place there, it usually will happen under the church's auspices. As one has written, "The church is our birthplace. Through it we came to know Jesus Christ as Saviour." There are some who say, "I accept Christ wholly apart from the church." Did you? You may have been saved through the reading of the Word of God, or through hearing a testimony from a believer, but the Church figured in your conversion. Through it the Bible was transmitted from generation to generation until that day you believed and until this very hour.

It was through the faithful preaching of a godly pastor in a local church that I came to know Christ as personal Saviour. It was through the preaching and teaching of a faithful pastor in a local church that I came to know more about God's Word and His will for my life. It is in the church of Jesus Christ that I find fellowship with other believers, and with them I am enriched in spiritual things, even as Paul declared in Romans 1:12, "That I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me." I believe in the church of Jesus Christ which, in the words of Paul in I Timothy 3:15, is called "the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."

#### TRINITY

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One of the distinct doctrines true Christians believe is that of the Trinity. The mention of the word, however, will often arouse different attitudes from various people. The human mind finds it hard to understand, apart from faith, that one God exists in three distinct Persons. Numerous cults have sprung up espousing erroneous views concerning the Trinity. There are even those who foolishly ridicule the subject as unreasonable and illogical. Nonetheless, the Bible clearly teaches that there is one God who exists eternally as three distinct and co-equal Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Finite man simply can't completely understand all there is to know about an infinite God. Scripture reminds us, "His ways

past understanding." How could He be God if we could completely comprehend all there is to know about Him? We are given enough light intelligently to believe and boldly to declare the doctrine of the Trinity.

First, the Bible tells us that there is only one true God. Deuteronomy 6:4 states, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord." In the New Testament the unity of God is also repeated in I Timothy 2:5, "For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." The children of Israel were encouraged, "Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is no other" (Isa. 45:22).

Even in the Old Testament we have some definite hints toward the Trinity. The very first verse of the Bible explains, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Gen. 1:1). Here the plural form for God, Elohim, is used. This implies more than one Person within the Godhead. The verb used in this verse for "create" is singular. There is a marked contrast. In Genesis 1:26, the Lord affirms, "Let us make man in our own image." The "us" can't refer to angels because they don't create, nor are men made in the image of angels. The Old Testament also reveals, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee" (Ps. 2:7). This shows a definite relationship to our Saviour prophetically.

Probably the clearest Old Testament passage on the Trinity is Isaiah 48:16. Here the Lord is identifying with Christ. He speaks through the prophet and invites, "Come ye near me, hear ye this: I have not spoken in secret from the beginning, from the time that it was, there am I, and now the Lord God (referring to the Father) and His Spirit has sent me." Within this passage there is the Speaker, no doubt indicated as Christ, the Lord God to whom He speaks (the Father), and then of course, the Holy Spirit.

When we come to the New Testament the unity of God is still affirmed. Greater emphasis is placed on His existence in the form of three Persons. Each of these is indicated to be deity. Very few people, even among the most liberal of "Christian" writers, would deny the deity of God the Father. Unfortunately many have denied the deity of the Son. They do this against clear evidence that the Saviour is truly God. We read in John 1:1, "The Word was God." Christ avowed, "I and my Father are one." The Jews were ready to stone Him for this because they knew He was claiming to be deity. Christ is called our Great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ (Tit. 2:13). He is addressed as God (Heb. 1:8). The Scriptures affirm the deity of the Son as well as the deity of the Father.

We come to the Holy Spirit and gain a very clear reference in Acts 5:3-4. Annanias is accused of lying to the Holy Spirit as well as to God. Both are One. All three Persons in the New Testament are regarded as deity, bound together at Christ's baptism (Matt. 3:16,17). In the so-called great commission, our Lord urges the disciples to go forth, making disciples of all nations and baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Here the three Persons are side-by-side, yet one name, one God, existing in three Persons.

Many illustrations, none of which are absolutely perfect, have been suggested for the Trinity. We should be careful not to do harm to the truth by that which may not be completely understood. Consider the three forms of water: liquid, solid and gaseous or vapor. In the family we have a plurality of persons but one human family. So, in the Trinity there is the plurality or triunity of Persons existing as one God. It is a tremendous realization to understand that the believer is indwelt by each of the three Persons of the Trinity. The Father and Son come to abide with

the redeemed individual (Eph. 4:6). Christ is said to dwell in the believer (Col. 1:27). The Spirit of God is definitely with and in the believer, even as Christ had promised.

When we come to the work of the Trinity, we find this power at work in raising the Saviour from the dead (Acts 17:31). He, God, has appointed Him to be the Judge of the living and the dead. Again in Romans 8:11 we discover that the Spirit of God raised Christ bodily from the dead. Even so He will also raise each believer in a coming hour. Paul assures that this same power which raised Christ from the dead and set Him in the highest heavens is the power that works in every true born-again child of God. This is why the Apostle desired to know the power of the Saviour's resurrection. He could realize, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me." While it may take millions of pounds of power to put a man on the moon, think of the power it took to put Christ at the righthand of the Father. Remember, too, that same power is resident in your life if you have placed your personal faith and trust in Christ Jesus.

The Trinity was also involved in our salvation. The Father planned our redemption. He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world. The Son purchased our salvation through the shedding of His own blood (Eph. 1:7). The Spirit Himself becomes the pledge of our salvation. He is presented as the earnest of our inheritance having sealed us unto the day of redemption. Some consider the Epistle of Ephesians as Paul's trinitarian letter where he presents all three aspects of our salvation.

The Trinity is also widely involved in the Christian's prayer life. The general New Testament formula for intercession is praying unto the Father, through, or in the name of the Son, and then praying in the Spirit (Jude 20). The child of God has the Spirit within him as the Intercessor in his heart. Jesus Christ is our Intercessor in heaven. The Holy Spirit within directs us to pray in the will of God. The Son of God above us offers our prayers as our great High Priest to the Father. What a fantastic experience the believer has when he prays! This is real communication, made possible only by the Trinity.

Our response, of course, to the Trinity should be one of worship. "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and Him only shalt thou serve." Many hymns have been offered in this direction such as the familiar doxology,

*"Praise God from Whom all blessings flow,  
Praise Him all creatures here below;  
Praise Him above ye heavenly hosts;  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."*

When one really receives Christ as Saviour in the biblical sense, the doctrine of the Trinity is more than just an abstract theological concept. It becomes a great experience in our personal lives. It means that with Christ as Saviour, God the Father, and the Holy Spirit, you have Someone to really love and care for you. Truly we can say for the doctrine of the Trinity, "Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

#### DEITY OF CHRIST

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Ever since the beginning of the church there have been those who have questioned the deity of Christ, seeking to influence others with their erroneous views. There are even those who go door-to-door seeking to convince people that Jesus Christ in reality isn't God. They have distorted the verses from the first chapter of John. This is one of the most important passages presenting to us the reality of the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ. Listen to the assertion, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God." Jesus Christ is the pre-existent One. Verse three teaches us that everything was made by Him. Therefore, He was with God prior to the beginning of the world.

When the Saviour prayed as recorded in John 17, Christ asked God to restore to Him the glory which He had before the foundation of the world. Christ's pre-existence affirms the fact that He is God. His power clearly indicates that. Our attention is drawn to the realization that the "Word was God." Those who deny the deity suggest that "the word was a God" might be a better translation of this passage. This isn't so at all. In the Greek grammar the reason there isn't an article before God is to indicate first of all that this is the predicate of the sentence, rather than the subject. The subject is "the Word", as it has been all the way through the verse. Also it indicates that John through the Holy Spirit isn't emphasizing the identity of the Word but rather His quality.

Everything we know of God, everything that makes up the fact that God is God, is also attributed to the Word, Jesus Christ. As God is holy, so also the Word is holy. As God is just, so also the Word is just. As God is pre-existent in the eternal One, so also the Word is the eternal One.

The thing that creates some trouble for those who are undiscerning is found in verse 14. This Word was made flesh. People who are looking at the humanity of Jesus Christ immediately have difficulty pulling together the humanity and the deity of the Saviour into one Person. There will always be errors when people try to explain one side or the other without putting the two together in one Person. The writers of Scripture had no problems with this.

In verse one we see that "He was God," and yet in verse 14 we note that "He became flesh." While he was always God, He wasn't always Man. He had to become flesh. In Paul's writing to the Romans he brings out the same things. Jesus Christ was made of the seed of David according to the flesh. He had to become a man. At the same time "He was declared to be the Son of God." He didn't have to become the Son of God because He was always that. By the resurrection He was declared to be this. In verse one of John one, we read that "He was with God." In verse 14 we discover that He came to be with man. He was in the beginning before all of creation, yet He who made and created all things came down to become a part of creation.

How can all of this have a direct relationship to our own lives personally? Jesus Christ came for the purpose that He might declare the Father. He came that we might be provided with the only possible way of salvation acceptable to God. "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not, but as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to those that believe on His name" (1:12).

While we can rightly emphasize the humanity of Jesus Christ, let us never forget that He is truly God. Philippians 2:6 clearly reveals that He didn't feel His equality with God was something to be grasped hold of, but rather He made Himself of no reputation, taking upon Himself the form of a servant, and being made in the likeness of men. He was even willing to die that substitutionary death on the cross. Because this One who is God became flesh (Phil. 2:9), He has now been highly exalted given a name which is above every name. This is why in a coming day every knee should bow to His matchless authority. The fact that Jesus Christ isn't only man but also truly God should cause us to bow our knees before Him, living in a sense of exaltation as well as obeisance before Him!

Also, in Philippians 2 we are exhorted, "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem other better than themselves." The New American Standard Bible translates the idea that each is supposed to look on the other as more important than himself. An excellent pattern is set for us whereby we can look at others because Jesus Christ, who was equal with God, became willing to come to this earth where He died on the cross for us. The Saviour considered us as being far more important than Himself, considering our needs as more important than His own. You can see this in His entire life. He had the glory with God before the foundation of the world; He was in the presence of the Godhead before the foundation of the world. Yet He became willing because our need was more important to Him than His own desire. So He came down, becoming Man to sacrifice Himself for us.

In His death on the cross, Christ's own words uttered at the very end of His life, still show that we were more important than His own needs. As He cried out on the cross, "Father, forgive them," His main concern was for those who were putting Him to death. The very next consideration He gave was to the man who was dying beside Him. The thief was being justly punished for his sins, whereas Jesus unjustly. Yet Christ was more concerned for his need than for His own. He looked down at His mother, and certainly her sorrow and agony weren't as great as His. Yet He was more concerned for her needs than for His own. He made special provision for someone to take care of her. He cried out in agony before God in behalf of our sins. Only after He had done all of this did He finally express the agony, "I thirst." It was then that He gave up the ghost and died.

So often as we look at the deity of Christ, we fail to measure the full value and importance of His sacrificial act. All that He did was so that we might have a proper relationship with Him. He has provided the perfect example whereby we might live with fellow believers in the Body of Jesus Christ, considering even as He did others' needs, problems, and sorrows more important than our own. Let us stand and be counted among those who truly exalt and rejoice in the fact of the deity of the Son of God who also is God. He is a Person of the Godhead, One of the Trinity. Yet in His love and humanity, Christ came to this earth that He might share with us these patterns whereby we can live victoriously day-by-day.

## RESURRECTION

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Throughout human history Satan has been the master deceiver. The Bible tells us that he was a liar from the beginning. Indeed he is the father of lies. He it was who declared to Eve, "Ye shall not surely die," but die she did. To the Christian of this era he has revised his strategy by promising, "Ye shall not surely live." The age-old question posed by Job presses upon the human heart, "If a man die, shall he live again?" Satan, the arch enemy of God as well as man has filled current philosophy with the hedonistic concept, "Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die." What a lie since the Scriptures clearly and strongly assert that man was created to live forever.

We were originally created to serve, fellowship with, and enjoy God forever. It was there in the idyllic circumstances of the Garden of Eden that man partook of the forbidden fruit, aligning himself in defiance to God in league with the great deceiver. At this point sin entered the human race and death began its tragic tyranny. Man's spiritual separation was of such a nature that it would have become eternal if something were not done. Through the perfect work of Jesus Christ on the cross, the penitent one can find complete forgiveness, as well as being restored to fellowship with God both now and for all eternity. The unbeliever is spiritually dead, separated from the life of God. His conviction becomes irreversible after death. It is only during this life that he may be saved. Now is the day to determine one's future destiny.

There are two stages of existence for both the believer and unbeliever after physical death. The first is the temporary period or intermediate step between death and resurrection. All who die enter into this transition. The story recounted by Christ of the rich man and Lazarus (Lk. 16:19-31) gives to the reader some information concerning this relationship. The believer is in a stage of conscious blessedness while the unbeliever is in conscious torment. Concerning the state of the Christian, Scripture speaks clearly. Paul explains, "For we know that if our earthly tent, which is our house, is torn down, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (II Cor. 5:1). Paul's testimony to the Philippians was that he had a desire to depart and be with Christ, for that would be much better (Phil. 1:21). The Apostle John in Revelation 14:13 writes, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on; yes, says the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors for their deeds follow with them."

In Revelation, the beheaded believers under the altar are represented as being fully conscious and calling upon God. Often in Scripture this condition is spoken of as sleep. Lazarus was said to be sleeping (Jn. 11:11). Those carnal believers who died because they had improperly observed the Lord's Supper were said to sleep (I Cor. 11:30). Never, however, does Scripture teach or imply that between death and resur-

rection the soul sleeps in the sense of losing consciousness. Scripture portrays the deceased person as retaining full consciousness.

Not as much is said about the present condition of the unbelieving dead. The rich man is portrayed as being in torment and conscious of the unsaved condition of his brothers (Lk. 16:24ff). The Bible declares in II Peter 2:9 that the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment. Thus, we believe that the Christians who are deceased are in the conscious blessedness in the presence of the Lord Jesus and the unbeliever is in a state of conscious torment, awaiting final sentence.

The second stage of existence after death is the resurrection. For those believers who are physically alive at the time of the resurrection, there will be an immediate transformation into the resurrected body. For the dead, there will be the resurrection. Daniel speaks of the resurrection of the just and unjust (Dan. 12:2). Jesus said, "Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming in which all who are in the tomb shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; those who did the good deeds, to a resurrection of life; those who committed the evil deeds, to a resurrection of judgment" (Jn. 5:28,29).

We believe that there are several stages to the resurrection of the just. Paul taught that the resurrection would take place in different orders. He told the Corinthians in the well-known chapter on the resurrection, "Each will be raised in his own order; Christ, the firstfruits; after that, those who are Christ's at His coming" (I Cor. 15:23). The resurrection of the Church will take place when the Lord Jesus returns to claim His bride. The trump of God will sound. There will be the voice of the archangel. The dead in Christ will be raised and those who are alive will be changed and caught up to meet the Lord in the air and be with the Lord forever (I Thess. 4:15-17). The guarantee of the resurrection of these bodies is promised to every believer in Christ (I Cor. 15:51-53). The Saviour Himself assures, "In my father's house are many dwelling places. If it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there you may be also."

After the resurrection of the Church, we believe that God will again begin actively dealing with His ancient people Israel. During this time there will be several years of indescribable tribulation, known as "the time of Jacob's trouble." This is the 70th week of Daniel 9:27. There will be numerous martyrs for the sake of Christ during this period of time. Immediately afterward the Lord Himself shall come in power and great glory, defeating the hosts of antichrist in the great battle of Armageddon. Those saints who die during the Tribulation will be resurrected to reign with Christ in His great millennial kingdom. Old Testament saints will also be resurrected. They, together with the resurrected Church saints and the Tribulation saints, will live and reign with Christ. Scripture promises, "If we endure, we shall also reign with him" (I Tim. 2:12; Rev. 2:26,27). It is also even prophesied that the Christian will judge angels (I Cor. 6:3).

After this dispensation the believer moves into the great eternal ages with God. It is then that the Lord will dwell with His people. Forevermore there will be no tears, no sadness, but rather continual joy and blessedness as we serve, worship and praise the Lord Jesus throughout eternity.

The fate of the unbeliever is not something to anticipate. He will have no part in the resurrection of life. The angel from the Lord told Daniel, "Many of those who

sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt (Dan 12:2). Of the unbeliever, the Lord declares, "Then they shall go forth and look upon the corpses of the men who have transgressed against me, for their worm shall not die and their fire shall not be quenched, and they shall be an abhorrence to all mankind" (Isa. 66:24). This judgment is spoken of as eternal destruction and everlasting fire.

The book of the Revelation provides us with further insight into the fate of the unbeliever. After the close of the one thousand year reign of Christ the judgment seat of God will be established. The dead, great and small, will stand before the Lord. The graves and temporary abodes of the spirits of the dead will be emptied. The first test will be to determine if their names are written in the book of life. If the name is not there, judgment is assured. They are cast into the lake of fire for an eternity without God.

The second test concerns their deeds. The books will be opened and the deeds analyzed. The quality of suffering and torment will be determined by their works. The duration of existence after the resurrection of the just and the unjust is expressed as "forever and ever." Of the unbeliever, it is declared that he will be tormented in the lake of fire and brimstone "day and night forever and ever."

While the world's philosophy may be, "Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die," God reminds us that "This life is just a beginning." It is only now, in this age of grace that we have the opportunity to accept eternal life as promised by Christ. Jesus said, "God did not send His Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world should be saved through him. He who believes in Him is not judged; but he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (Jn. 3:17,18). "He who believes in the Son has eternal life, but he who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him" (Jn. 3:36).

We here at Talbot Theological Seminary and Biola College are committed to the belief in existence after physical death. To the believer, it is eternal life with the Lord. To the unbeliever, it is eternal death, separated from God. For both it is an endless existence. For the one it is in blessedness; for the other it is conscious torment. Now is the day to make your decision for God. Now is the day of salvation. Tomorrow may be too late. If you believe not, you are already under condemnation. If you by faith accept the forgiveness of your sins, offered by Christ, you will be saved and will have the joyous prospect of life with God throughout the ages to come. Don't let Satan continue to deceive you. Without Christ, you shall surely die. With Christ, you shall surely live!