

# BIBLE STUDY SERIES: SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

**Acts 17<sup>11</sup>** These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.

**When Paul and Silas came to Berea, the Bereans did not accept, “at face value”, the message proclaimed by the apostle Paul. The scripture declares as “noble” the fact that they readily received the word, and that they searched the scriptures to determine the accuracy of what they were being told.**

**The apostle Paul stated at 2 Corinthians 10<sup>4</sup>** (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)

<sup>5</sup> Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

**The word “imaginations”** in this passage is an English translation of the Greek word *logismos*, meaning “computation” i.e. (fig.) “reasoning...” (Strong’s Concordance) This scripture informs us that carnal (unenlightened) reasoning works against knowledge that is of God. However, *a mental consideration according to the ministry of the Holy Spirit is within the process of coming to knowledge of Him. The Spirit’s enlightenment through scripture must not only stimulate our thought, it must also govern and limit it.* When reasoning is employed to arrive at a conclusion that is contrary to what a scripture passage, in harmony with other scriptures, clearly states, the reader must choose between the rationalized conclusion and the testimony of scripture.

**Such rational activity is within the category of kindling one’s own fire.**

**We read at: Isaiah 50**

<sup>10</sup> Who is among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that

walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him **trust** in the name of the LORD, and **stay** upon his God.

<sup>11</sup> Behold, all **ye that kindle a fire**, that compass yourselves about with sparks: **walk in the light of your fire**, and in the sparks that **ye have kindled**. This shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow.

**There are conflicting theological systems of thought** within the Christian community, which, if closely observed, are at least in part, **the product of reasoning** to a conclusion that is not consistent with the scripture referenced for support of the conclusion. It is each person's responsibility to avoid such reasoning by oneself, and to not accept the reasoning of others. As the apostle John says, "But the **anointing which ye have received of him** abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as **the same anointing teacheth you of all things**, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as **it hath taught you**, ye shall **abide in him**. And now, little children, **abide in him; that**, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming."(1 John 2:27,28) Thus, we see that **God has granted** that His children might **discern between** the enlightenment of the Spirit and the darkness of man's reasoning.

**The intended purpose of the above comments is to encourage persons to notice, whether or not, interpretation of scripture, our own, and that of others is supported by the scriptures being referenced, and other relevant scriptures.**

**Bible Study Topics currently available:**

- **An Examination Of The "Dispensational" System Of Theological Thought** (169 pages)
- **A Consideration Of The Argumentation For And Against The Lordship and Non-Lordship Views Of Salvation** (57 pages)
- **What is the functional relationship between the law, grace, and love** (31 pages)
- **Considerations Related To Interpreting Scripture** (consists of 38 pages)
- **The Seed Of Abraham** (consists of 8 pages)
- **Why Did God Perform This Enormous Creative Act** (consists of 14 pages)
- **What Happened To Man In The Garden Of Eden** (consists of 8 pages)
- **What Is Faith** (consists of 13 pages)
- **What Is Grace** (consists of 6 pages)
- **What Is Salvation** (consists of 14 pages)
- **When We Come To Christ: Who Have We Come To** (consists of 11 pages)
- **When We Come To Christ: What Have We Come To** (consists of 27 pages)
- **Person And Work Of Christ: Applied To One's Relationship To God** (16 pages)
- **The Work Of The Holy Spirit** (consists of 21 pages)

- **Foreknowledge, Then Election And Predestination** (consists of 19 pages)
- **The Book Of Revelation** (consists of 74 pages)

**Excerpts from the Book Of Revelation paper that are available as separate topics:**

- **The Church—It's Foundation And It's Future** (consists of 10 pages)
- **Babylon—It's Origin, It's Nature, It's Fall** (consists of 8 pages)
- **The Coming Of The Lord—And Related Events** (consists of 14 pages)
- **Who Inherits In The Kingdom Of God And Of Christ** (consists of 8 pages)
- **Can God's Children Come Under Punitive Judgment For Sin** (consists of 10 pages)

**The following is a brief introduction to each of the above listed bible study topics, except for the excerpts from the Book Of Revelation paper.**

## **AN EXAMINATION OF THE “DISPENSATIONAL” SYSTEM OF THEOLOGICAL THOUGHT**

### **General Outline Of the Contents Of This Study Paper.**

1. Brief introduction—pages 1-3.
2. Divisions within the Divine program according to the Dispensational System of thought---bottom of page 3 through middle of page 6.
3. The Covenant with Abraham-Conditional vs. Unconditional---middle of page 6 through the middle of page 13.
4. Covenant with David, citing II Samuel 7:8-26, and comment---bottom of page 13 through top of page 15.
5. New Covenant-citing Jeremiah 31:33-34 and comment; Ezekiel 36:25-28 and comment; Joel 2:28-32 and comment---middle of page 15 to near bottom of page 16.
6. Who is the Seed of Abraham---bottom of page 16 to middle of page 18.
7. Are God's covenants of promise to Israel realized at the first advent of Christ or when Christ returns. If at the first advent, are the Gentiles included in such covenants of promise---middle of page 18 to top of page 73.
  - Kingdom-is it a physical, geo-political kingdom, or is it a spiritual kingdom---bottom of page 38 to near bottom of page 41.
  - Moses' house is a testimony of Christ's house---bottom page 41 past middle of page 43.
  - The earthly Jerusalem and the heavenly Jerusalem---near bottom of page 43 to bottom of page 44.
  - Changes accompanying transition from The Old Covenant to the New Covenant---bottom of page 44 to bottom of page 49.
  - Dispensational thought denies that the New Covenant with Israel is in effect in this age---bottom of page 49 to top of page 53.
  - Character of the New Covenant---middle of page 53 to middle of page 55.

- Time of fulfillment of the New Covenant, in which God provides a Savior to Israel, and also an explanation of Romans 11:26-27---middle of page 55 through middle of page 63.
  - Relationship, if any, of the Church to the New Covenant---middle of page 63 to middle of page 68.
  - That “they shall all know Me” is an element of the New Covenant prophesied at Jeremiah 31:34---middle of page 68 through top of page 73.
8. Description of the “millennial kingdom” according to Dispensational thought---top of page 73 through top of page 76.
  9. God’s children are, and can be, responsible for faithfulness to their relationship with God---top of page 77 to bottom of page 92:
    - 1 John 1:7-9---top of page 77 to bottom of page 78.
    - Colossians 1:21-23---bottom of page 78 to near bottom of page 79.
    - Hebrews 3:5-6; 6:4-15; 10:26-31---near bottom of page 78 to middle of page 88.
    - Some prominent scriptures on which the unconditional (an act of faith) security concept of dispensational thought seeks support, and comment---middle of page 88 to near bottom of page 92.
  10. The ceremonies, rituals, and feasts prescribed by God under the Old Covenant were to be performed in the land, the place of Israel’s inheritance and rest, and are fulfilled in the Person and work of the Lord Jesus, and the coming of the Holy Spirit pursuant to the New Covenant---bottom of page 92 to middle of page 103.
  11. What is the time relationship of the coming of the Lord to: the Day of the Lord; the Day of Wrath; and the Day of God---middle of page 103 through the middle of page 121.
  12. Abraham and the other Old Testament saints who “died in faith” were not anticipating a future inheritance on the present earth---middle of page 121 through top of page 125.
  13. The full inheritance is explained in the book of Revelation---near top of page 125 to near top of 131.
  14. Are all of God’s children “overcomers”, or are “overcomers” those who are faithful to do His commandments unto the end---near top of page 131 to near top of page 138.
  15. God has made adequate provision for the overcoming of sin and the world to be the present experience of every child of God---near top of page 138 to near top of page 151.
  16. The apostle Paul explains the complete agreement between Romans 2:13, and Romans 3:20---near top of page 151 to top of page 162.
  17. The time when the Lord will, without partiality, judge every person according to his or her works is related to His coming---top of page 162 to near top of 165.
  18. Those persons who are in the first resurrection reign with Christ for 1000 years and are not hurt by the second death. Who lives not again until the 1000 years are finished---near top of page 165 through page 167.

# **A CONSIDERATION OF THE ARGUMENTATION FOR AND AGAINST THE LORDSHIP AND NON-LORDSHIP VIEWS OF SALVATION**

## **General Outline Of The Contents Of This Study Paper.**

- A. The argumentation by formidable advocates of, both, the “Lordship” and the “Non- Lordship” views of salvation. (Page 1 through the middle of page 17 of this paper)
- B. Comments of a twentieth century evangelist who rejects the “once saved-always saved” or “unconditional security” position held by both the “Lordship” and the “Non-Lordship” advocates. (Bottom of page 17 through the middle of page 23 of this paper)
- C. My comments on the omission by all four commentators of a passage of scripture in the Epistle to the Hebrews, chapter 10, verses 26 through 31, which is relevant to their discussion on eternal security. (Bottom of page 23 through top of page 25 of this paper)
- D. A summary of the preceding consideration. (Top of page 25 through the middle of page 31 of this paper)
- E. A concluding consideration of the underlying cause for the different interpretations of the Holy Scriptures by persons who hold these Scriptures to be the “inspired” and “inerrant” Word of God. (Bottom of page 31 through page 57 of this paper)

## **The Functional Relationship Between The Law, Grace, and Love**

**As a person reads theological commentary, and observes religious practice, that there exists within “Christianity” widely divergent perspectives of what God is doing with His people and how He is doing it, becomes most evident. Much of this diversity focuses on what affect the death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ has upon the application of God’s law to His people.**

**Our approach to this consideration** will begin by examining Old Testament scriptures that testify to the law as given by God through Moses (Exodus 20:1-17), and then enquiring to determine the laws application, if any, to God’s children under the New Covenant.

**In the New Testament** we are told that the “works of the flesh” include **adultery, idolatry, and murder**-Gal. 5:19-21. And, that they that practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Also, we are told to **put away lying** and to **speak truth** to our neighbor-Eph. 4:25, **not to steal**-v28, and that no **covetous** man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of God and

of Christ-Eph.5:5. Children are told to **obey their parents** and to “**Honor thy father and mother**”; which is the first commandment with promise; That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth”-Eph. 6:1-3. We are told that we are to **cease from our own works** as God did from His-Heb. 4:3-11. These scriptures provide clear and unequivocal testimony that the law given through Moses has application in the lives of God’s children under the new covenant administration. *How it applies is the more pertinent question and will be considered in the discussion that follows.*

**The sum of the legal requirements** (Exodus 23:4-12) *is to be just and equitable to everyone and to worship and serve God without defilement. Surely, this is what Jesus had in view when He told His disciples at:*

**Matthew 6**

<sup>9</sup> After this manner therefore pray ye: **Our Father** which art in heaven, **Hallowed** be thy name.

<sup>10</sup> Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

**Christ gave Himself for us that He might have as His own, a people whose hearts have been made clean from all defilement**-Titus 2:14. Such cleansing is a process of growing up “into him in all things”-Ephesians 4:15. We must attend to this important matter and leave for the Lord the avenging of the injustices imposed on us by others. **For this is His way, as expressed at:**

**Romans 12**

<sup>17</sup> Recompense to **no man** evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

<sup>18</sup> If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

<sup>19</sup> Dearly beloved, **avenge not yourselves**, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, **Vengeance is mine; I will repay**, saith the Lord.

**The law of God as revealed to and through Moses is verbal expression of the virtues that will constitute the Divine character of the people in His kingdom.**

**It is an expression with words of the very image of God in His people. This character and image is declared to be holiness.**

**The apostle Paul, in distinguishing the new covenant from the old covenant** is explaining to the brethren at Corinth (2 Corinth. 3:2-6,17,18) that while the law under old covenant administration was written on tablets of stone, **God administers the new covenant by writing His laws in their hearts by the Spirit**. The just demands of the law (letter) make us aware of sin, but provide no power to deliver us from sin-Romans 8:3. The resulting experience is death-2 Corinth. 3:6; Romans 7:10. However, under new covenant administration *the Spirit not only gives us understanding and wisdom to live in accordance with the just and equitable demands of the law, the Spirit also frees us from the degrading demands of sin, so that we can live in accordance with those just and equitable demands*-2 Corinth. 3:17; Romans 8:2,4.

**A summary** of the scriptures referencing God’s laws on pages one through four (of the study paper) shows that the legal requirements are that the Lord’s people be

**just and equitable to others**, including those who hate us, and to worship and serve God **without defilement**. When the veil (the flesh-Hebrews 10:19,20) that obscures the goodness of the Lord is removed **by the Spirits enlightenment through the scriptures**, and **the Spirits delivering us from sin in the flesh**, God's children, **actually seeing the glory (justice and equity) of the Lord** are transformed into His image-2 Corinth. 3: 18; Romans 8:28,29: 12:1,2. The statement "from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" is referring to such change ***being a process of growing through the ministry of the Spirit***. This is not standing helplessly condemned before a list of legal demands that are either, **against** our internal defilement, or **for** endless ceremonial and ritualistic practices, but rather, it is **Christ being formed (fashioned) in us**-(Galatians 4:19; see also verses 4-10) as we **purify** our souls by **obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love** of the brethren.

(When considering the law we must not refer to it in a manner that conveys a negative and demeaning impression to the minds of others. The scripture testifies that "...the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good". "Was then that **which is good** made death unto me? God forbid. **But sin**, that it might appear sin, working death in me **by that which is good**; that **sin by the commandment** might become **exceeding sinful**. For we know that **the law is spiritual**: but **I am carnal**, sold under sin"-Ro. 7:12,13.)

**The end result of this purification process through which the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in a child of God-Romans 8:4, and the means of accomplishment are concisely expressed at:**

#### **1 Peter 1**

<sup>22</sup> Seeing ye have **purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love** of the brethren, see that ye **love** one another with a **pure heart** fervently:

**This passage** is a further declaration by scripture that ones inward cleansing is accomplished in **obeying the truth**, obedience being possible through enabling by the Spirit of grace. But of great significance ***is the inward realization of love that can only reside in a pure heart. A pure heart is one that has been cleansed of self-serving defilement that it can, without internal resistance, have high regard for others. The "just and good" law (Romans 7:12) through the enlightening and the saving (or delivering) ministry of the Spirit of grace has achieved its intended function.***

**The law functions in at least two ways related to love. First**, as previously mentioned, **the law** in providing us **with knowledge of sin is an instrument** used by **the Spirit** to purify our hearts **unto unfeigned love**. **Second**, **the law gives definition to love** so that love is not a vague and abstract concept shaped by the feelings and imaginations of people. ***Love is not an alternative to walking in the truth, but rather, love is the motivation for so walking.*** Love does not define the law, but rather, the law **defines love**, which in turn **fulfills the law**. **Thus, the law**

*is the vehicle employed by the Spirit to reveal how we are and how God wants us to be. Grace is the ministry of the Spirit, which ministry rests on the Person and work of the Lord Jesus, through which we are transformed into the image of God's Son. The end of this process of transformation is a pure heart, cleansed of the works of the flesh, and filled with love for God and for one's neighbor. This is the functional relationship between the law, grace, and love.*

**Hebrews 13**

<sup>20</sup> Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great **Shepherd** of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,<sup>21</sup> make you complete in every **good** work to do His will, working **in you**<sup>[1]</sup> what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom **be glory** forever and ever. Amen.

## Considerations Related To Interpreting Scripture

**This consideration will rest on a threefold premise:**

**That** the New Testament scriptures explain the ultimate meaning and fulfillment of the law and the prophecy contained in the Old Testament scriptures;

**That** the New Testament scriptures support another foundational proposition—the long range focus of Old Testament prophecies is on *the new covenant* which is inclusive of God's administration in the present age, the millennium, and thereafter;

**That** those men who wrote the New Testament scriptures are God's original and sole beneficiaries of His revelation that explains “what, or what manner of time” was spoken by the Old Testament prophets.

**The** New Testament scriptures determine the soundness of these premises, and whether or not, they conflict with the historical, and the physical-temporal aspects of Old Testament prophecy.

**While** it seems necessary to mention the debate about literal and non-literal interpretation, this consideration **is not an effort to engage that debate** as it relates to Israel and the Church, the “land”, etc., but rather, **to see what the New Testament scripture says about the Old Testament scriptures.**

**To** determine the soundness of the premise that the *New Testament scriptures explain the Old Testament law and prophecies*, we must examine the scriptures themselves. **1 Peter 1**

<sup>9</sup> Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.<sup>10</sup> Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, **who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you**:<sup>11</sup> Searching what, or what manner **of time** the Spirit of Christ which was in them **did signify**, when it testified **beforehand** the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.

<sup>12</sup> Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister



the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.

**Relevant** to our subject, it should be noted that: **1.** The **salvation** that the prophets by the Spirit testified of beforehand concerned both the sufferings of Christ and the glory that would follow Christ's sufferings. While many expositors would agree that the prophecies of Christ's suffering are explained by the New Testament writers, fewer would acknowledge the extent to which they explain the glory that proceeds from that suffering, as it relates to the nation of Israel.

**2.** The prophets saw that the things that they ministered were not to themselves, but to **"us"**. **3.** It is noteworthy that these things spoken by the prophets are the subject matter of the gospel.

## The Seed Of Abraham

### Genesis 13

<sup>14</sup> And the LORD said unto Abram, ...<sup>15</sup> For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, **and to thy seed** for ever.<sup>16</sup> And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered.

**This** summary of Israel's history (not included in this introduction) gives us a very brief survey of God's **temporal** and **physical** implementation of His promise to Abraham of **a seed** and of **a land**.

**The** apostle Paul, in explaining to the churches of Galatia the change from the **old covenant administration** to that of the **new covenant**, wrote to them concerning the promises to Abraham: **Galatians 3**<sup>16</sup> Now to Abraham and **his seed** were the promises made. He saith **not**, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to **thy seed**, which is **Christ**.

<sup>19</sup> Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.

<sup>29</sup> And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

**This** is clear testimony that God's promise was to Abraham and to Christ, Abraham's **seed**. **"And to thy seed"**, in verse 16 above, refers to, **"and to thy seed"** at Genesis 13:15 cited above. (See also, Genesis 17:7 where the promise is expressed **"and to thy seed"**). *Thus, the **spiritual** and **eternal** implementation of God's promise to Abraham did not inure to any people on the basis of natural posterity.* But rather, the beneficial effects of the promise rests solely with individuals who, **by faith**, are **Christ's**, who is Abraham's **seed** to whom the promise was made, and who is the "firstborn among many brethren" as stated at: **Romans**

8<sup>29</sup> For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that **he** might be the firstborn among many brethren.

## Why Did God Perform This Enormous Creative Act

Let us note several significant observations in concluding this consideration of the question: Why did God perform this enormous creative act?

**First, God's original intent** that man would subdue the earth and have dominion over all other living things is ultimately realized in His kingdom. This eternal reign by man is as servants of their Creator.

**Second, God's pursuit of a personal relationship with man** is the dominant theme of scripture from the beginnings in Genesis through the ending in Revelation. Accordingly, Adam was engaged by God **in a relationship** in the Garden of Eden. Then with Enos, men began to call on the name of the Lord. At Genesis 5:22, we are told that **Enoch walked with God**. So, also did **Noah who served God** in the catastrophic event of "the flood".

**Then**, we learn of God's instruction to Abraham that, through Isaac and Jacob, resulted in the **nation of Israel**. Throughout the Old Testament, the **nation of Israel** is the focus of God's effort to have a people **with whom He could dwell**, and **through whom** "all the people of the earth may know that the Lord is God, and that there is none else." (1 Kings 8:60)

God raised up Moses, who led the children of Israel out of Egypt. Through Moses, God gave the old covenant instructions to the children of Israel. At this time **the tabernacle** was built.

**Later**, from among the children of Israel, **God anointed David** to be king over the nation. It was to David that God promised, that of his seed a house would be built, wherein God would dwell. Pursuant to this promise, Solomon, David's son, built **the temple** that was the place where **God dwelled** with his people Israel.

*It is significant, however, to note that the promise to David of a seed and a house would be realized ultimately, not in Solomon and the temple that he built, but rather, in Christ and a spiritual house, built of living stones.*

**Concerning this house, Paul writes at: Ephesians 2**

<sup>19</sup> Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;<sup>20</sup> And are built upon **the foundation** of the **apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;**<sup>21</sup> In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord;<sup>22</sup> In whom ye also **are builded together** for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

**Third,** We see that God's promise to David **ultimately** referred to a **future** development of divine administration of his purpose with man, called the **“new covenant”**. This new covenant was instituted by **the death of Christ** and was realized in man by **the coming of the Holy Spirit**. We are told in Ephesians chapter 1, verses 13 and 14, that those who believe are “sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession...”. The **new covenant is an eternal covenant** with its blessing being realized **in measure** until the **resurrection** of the body at the return of Christ, **at which time** the inheritance will be realized in **its fullness**.

**The** scriptures that have been quoted and referred to in the book of Revelation show **God's full and complete** accomplishment of His original purpose to dwell with man, under the **new covenant**, in and through the Person and work of His Son, Jesus Christ.

## **What Happened To Man In The Garden Of Eden**

**This discussion presupposes** the existence of **divinely revealed truth** and an **attending reality**. However, this truth is **outside of the range** of man's **unaided** comprehension. This is not a consideration of physical truths perceived through the physical senses. Rather, scripture is explaining **a reality** governed by **divine principles** that requires a clarity within man's spirit, which **clarity** was lost through disobedience.

**This passage of scripture** (1 Corinth. 2:1-16) **provides a clear explanation of the two realities**. One reality is lived in by man according to the fallen state inherited from Adam, while the other reality is known through enlightenment by God's Spirit.

**These** scriptures (Eph. 2:2,3 plus others) show that man, **in his natural state**, lives according to the **affections** and **desires** of his own heart. The world and the things in the world **are the focus** of such affections and desires. There is wisdom and knowledge that is **the product of rationalizing** this existence of self-gratification. It is an earthly reality that conflicts with divine reality as explained by Paul at: **Galatians 5**<sup>16</sup> This I say then, Walk in **the Spirit**, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of **the flesh**.<sup>17</sup> For the flesh lusteth **against the Spirit**, and the Spirit **against the flesh**: and these are **contrary the one to the other**: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

**In conclusion**, we learn that while man was created in God's image and after His likeness, Adam's disobedience so contaminated man's perceptions that he could **no longer comprehend** God's purpose for his being. His **resulting inward state** was oriented, no longer toward God, but rather, toward the world. Such earthward direction of his desires **focuses his**

**attention** upon the world around him in contradiction to God's original, interim, and final purpose that man "attend upon the Lord without distraction". (1 Cor. 7:35)

**Man is constituted a sinner.** Sinful behavior is simply that behavior which is brought forth **by the desires** that are active in man's nature. Such behavior is referred to as "works of the flesh"-Galatians 5:19-21. Any desire of the flesh is an avenue through which Satan will make his appeal to us, which appeal, if not rejected will result in disobedience to God's will. **Thus, resistance to God's restorative efforts to draw men back to Himself is found in the very nature of man. God's efforts to restore man back to the fellowship that is in His Son are directed toward reconstituting man from his nature inherited from Adam, to partake of the divine nature provided in and through Christ. The apostle Peter addresses this matter of reconstitution at: 2 Peter 1**

<sup>2</sup> Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,

<sup>3</sup> According as **his divine power** hath given unto us all things **that pertain unto life and godliness**, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to **glory and virtue**:

<sup>4</sup> Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be **partakers of the divine nature**, having escaped the corruption that is in the world **through lust**.

## What Is Faith

**There are differing systems of theological thought and practice within Christianity. Generally, these different systems are the result of what people believe. However, this consideration will be an inquiry into the scriptures explanation of the words "faith" and "believe". As one reads the scripture these two words occur frequently and have obvious significance. What is their meaning?**

**1. Faith has an intellectual basis**-"...faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God". (Romans 10:17) **2. Faith has a volitional basis**-"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 them that **believe** on his name."

(John 1:11,12) **3. Faith is an internal matter**-"For with **the heart** man believeth unto righteousness..."

**The** apostle Peter explains the essential role of faith **for inheritance** when Christ returns: **1 Peter 1<sup>3</sup>** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath **begotten us again unto a lively** hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,<sup>4</sup> **To an inheritance** incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,<sup>5</sup> Who are **kept by the power of God through faith** unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last

time.<sup>6</sup> Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:<sup>7</sup> That the trial of **your faith**, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, **might be found** unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:<sup>8</sup> Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:<sup>9</sup> Receiving the end of **your faith**, even **the salvation** of your souls.

**Here** we learn that Gods plan for fulfilling His promises to man is realized, from the perspective of mans **responsibility**, on the ground of **faith**. Therefore, whatever faith is, it is the **divinely conceived** means through which God, exclusively by His wisdom and power, **will fulfill His desire for and His purpose with man**, the highest order of His physical creation. The beneficial purpose in understanding the meaning of the term faith is that we might know how to live **by faith**, and also, that we might know that we are, in fact, living **by faith**.

**Faith as an inward matter** is seen in the scripture account of the three Hebrew men by their **attitude of commitment and devotion to God**, being **expressed** in their observance of duty, and loyalty to, and dependence on God. ***This attitudinal posture is faith***. This **inward position is volitionally taken** based on a person's knowledge of **God's will**. Such **inward positioning** involves both, the Spirit's **enlightenment** through scripture, and the individuals **volitionally** embracing, as truth, what the Spirit ministers to him. ***Knowing God's will is not faith, but the inward commitment to God for its accomplishment, is. Obedience is the actual doing of it. Living by faith is simply continuing in this position. On this basis, God gives us grace according to His will.***

## What Is Grace

**The** word grace is the English translation of the Greek word "charis". Charis is defined in Strongs Concordance as "graciousness (as gratifying) of manner or act...". **In scripture there are several applications of the word "charis" having varied English translations. These applications and translations provide insight into the essential meaning of the word.**

**The word "charis" is translated *liberality* at: 1 Corinthians 16<sup>1</sup>** Now concerning **the collection for the saints**, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye.

<sup>2</sup> Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.<sup>3</sup> And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your **liberality** unto Jerusalem.

Here, grace is applied to the material collection given by the brethren at Corinth to those brethren in Jerusalem. *It is noteworthy that the giving from one person to another is grace.*

In its most elemental form, grace is the providing of a gratuity, real or perceived, from a person or persons to another person or persons. Further, the benefit may be tangible or intangible and provide for actual need or selfish desire.

Now we will move our discussion from grace in its most basic form, *which is a gratuity bestowed by a benefactor on a beneficiary*, to a discussion of grace wherein God is the source. While the basic form is the same, the content is according to divine prerogative. God Himself has determined the purposes for which grace will be granted, as seen in the following scriptures:

(Scripture is referenced in the bible study paper). These scriptures inform us that God is not pleased by behavior that is common to most men, but that He is pleased by behavior wherein the motive is **to do his will**. What we do **because of conscience toward God** is rewarded. This is a matter of **faith** and the attending **faithfulness**.

It should be noted that a widely used **definition of grace is “unmerited favor”**. I would suggest that while God’s favor (that which He does for us, in us and through us) is not because of merit, **this definition tends to blur the difference between “grace” and “mercy”**. *While grace is the bestowal of divine benefits, the fact that such favor is unmerited is a matter of divine mercy.*

**Strongs Concordance** defines “mercy” as compassion. Compassion involves feelings of sympathy, pity, or sorrow for someone due to their difficult or unfortunate circumstance. *Thus, mercy is an inward attitude of compassion, but grace is the act of bestowing benefits*.

An example of the **lack of this distinction** between **grace** and **mercy** is observed in the writing of an expositor of scripture who writes: “The scriptural definition of grace will never be improved upon- ‘The kindness and love of God our Savior toward men...not by works of righteousness which we have done...(Titus 3:4,5).’ The writer cites the passage in Titus chapter three. However, verse five continues by stating: “but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost.”

This scripture is referring to more than **grace**, which is *the act of “regenerating and renewing by the Holy Ghost”*. The writer omits this portion of the passage in his definition. References in the passage to **“love”**, **“kindness”**, and **“mercy”** refer, *not to grace*, but rather, *to God’s attitude toward men which is His motivation for bestowing His saving grace*, which

is *regenerating and renewing*. However, God's attitude of love, kindness, and compassion toward man does not negate *faith* as a person's *only access* to his grace.

## What Is Salvation

**A central theme in scripture is salvation. *Salvation is the foundational benefit to man of God's provision in Christ.*** The meaning of the Greek words generally translated "save", "saved", and "salvation" is *to make safe, to deliver or protect*. The Greek word *sozo* is so translated in Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible. The words *soter*, *soteria*, and *soterion* derive from *sozo* and have as primary meanings *deliverer, rescue or safety, and defender* or by implication *defence*, respectively. While, in scripture, the primary focus of these English translations relates to the spiritual dimension of man, there are other contexts in which the word "save", "saved", and "salvation" are used. An example is: **Acts 27<sup>31</sup>** Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be **saved**.

**Thus**, we learn that these words, **standing alone**, have wide application. However, our consideration will relate to the scriptures spiritual application of these words. According to this application, the words "save", "saved", and "salvation" are in reference **to sin**.

**One** of the more common Greek words translated "sin", according to Strong's Concordance, means to *miss*. ***The simplicity of this word could obscure its profound meaning.*** Let us pursue what is intended by this meaning for the word "sin".

**This** consideration of sin, using the word *miss*, has its application with reference to **doing God's will**. Further, ***doing the will of God is the divinely established governing principle for living each day of our sojourn on this earth.*** **John 4<sup>34</sup>** Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to **do the will** of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

**Concerning God's children: Matthew 7<sup>21</sup>** Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that **doeth the will of my Father** which is in heaven. **Ephesians 5<sup>15</sup>** See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,

<sup>16</sup> Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

<sup>17</sup> Wherefore be ye not unwise, but **understanding what the will of the Lord is.**

**The clear testimony of scripture is that we can know and do God's will.**

**A common understanding** is that sin is the commission of certain forbidden behavior. For example: it is a sin to lie, steal, etc. However, **God's will touches us in a comprehensive way:** how one lives each day; where we go; what we do, say, and think; how we relate to others; and how

we relate, in general, to the affairs of this life. **The apostle Paul says at: Galatians 5**

<sup>16</sup> This I say then, **Walk in the Spirit**, and ye shall **not fulfil the lust of the flesh**.

<sup>17</sup> For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

**In** moving more particularly to salvation from the **penalty of sin**, **imputation is a central theme**. The familiar terms, *forgive* and *justify*, simply mean that God does not attribute sin to a person. While much can be said concerning forgiveness or justification, it comes down to the fact that God does not hold a person's sin against him, or that He declares that the person is right in His sight. To have such a **standing** before God involves a **great act of grace** by a **merciful God**. However, in light of all of this, *let us take special notice of what moves God to such mercy and grace*. Of Abraham it is said: "**his faith** is counted [imputed] to him for righteousness".

**Proverbs 5<sup>1</sup>** My son, attend unto **my wisdom**, and bow thine ear to **my understanding**:

<sup>2</sup> That thou mayest **regard discretion**, and that thy lips may **keep knowledge**.

## **When We Come To Christ: To Whom Have We Come**

**When** we come to Christ, whom specifically, have we come to? As Jesus ministered among the Jews, a frequent question arose concerning His identity. In chapter eight of John's gospel, as Jesus taught in the temple, He was asked, "**Who art thou?**" (v-25). As Jesus continued in dialogue with the Jews, they said to Him, "Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil? (v-48). And again, they asked, Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? And the prophets are dead: **whom makest thou thyself?**" (v-53).

**John**, in his gospel, informs us **at: John 1<sup>1</sup>** In the beginning was **the Word**, and **the Word** was with God, and **the Word** was God.<sup>2</sup> The same was in the beginning **with God**.

<sup>3</sup> All things were made **by him**; and without **him** was not any thing made that was made.

**In** the Old Testament, when God **saw the blood** of the **Passover lamb** applied to the lintel and the side post, **He saved** alive those who were **inside** the house. *This foreshadowed and had its ultimate meaning in the death of Jesus*. When the chief priests, and the elders, and the multitude called for His crucifixion, **they were calling for the death of the "Lamb of God"**. This is why the land was covered with darkness, the earth quaked, and the rocks divided. They had killed **the Son** of God. However, this was not the end of the matter. *The Christ that we come to in faith is not in the fashion of a man, nor is He dead*. His Father had before determined **that Jesus would reign in a spiritual kingdom** by means of **death** and **resurrection**.



**Then Jesus ascended** up into heaven and was glorified, *opening the way for the coming of the Holy Spirit to all who believe*. So, as Paul wrote to the Corinthians: **2 Corinthians 5**

<sup>16</sup> Wherefore **henceforth** know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we **have known** Christ after the flesh, yet now **henceforth** know we him no more.<sup>17</sup> Therefore if any man be **in Christ**, he is a **new creature**: old things are passed away; behold, all things are **become** new.

**In** the epistle to the Hebrews **we see Jesus** in His position before the Father, **exalted above the angels**, and while in the beginning **He laid the foundation of the earth and made the heavens**, there is a future time when **Jesus will fold them up as a vesture, and they will be changed**.

**God and His Son Jesus did not ask us to follow Him without Himself first walking where man walks**. Thus, *we gain further insight into the Divine character*. And, as a demonstration of divine mercy and love, of all that are willing to *identify with Jesus and the meaning of His suffering*, He is not ashamed to call them **His brethren**. And, **Jesus' ministry on behalf of His brethren did not end with His death**. Hebrews 2<sup>17</sup> Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make **reconciliation** for the sins of the people.<sup>18</sup> For in that **he himself** hath suffered being tempted, **he is able** to succour them that are tempted.

**This** is, at least, a partial answer to: **Who art thou? Whom makest thou thyself?**

## **When We Come To Christ: What Have We Come To?**

**The question, "What have we come to?"** is addressed by the apostle Paul at: **1 Corinthians 1**

<sup>3</sup> Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>9</sup> God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

**The** word "fellowship" is translated from the Greek word *koinonia* and means "partnership..." *Koinonia* derives from *koinonos*, and means "a sharer, i.e. associate". *Koinonos* is also translated "fellowship" and "partaker". Thus, we learn that "**fellowship**" as herein discussed, refers to **sharing in, or partaking of the things of Christ**. **This** is what we are **called to** when we come to Christ.

**In concluding this consideration, there are some points to revisit. 1 John 5**

<sup>20</sup> And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.

Even though God has given us an understanding, we must learn **the identity** of the Spirit's enlightenment. By contrast, *the influences from the carnal nature are often compelling, while the working of the Spirit is not forceful or coercive.* We read at: James 3<sup>13</sup> Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.<sup>14</sup> But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.<sup>15</sup> **This wisdom** descendeth not from above, but is **earthly, sensual, devilish.**

<sup>16</sup> For where envying and strife is, there is **confusion** and every **evil** work.

<sup>17</sup> But **the wisdom** that is from above is first **pure**, then **peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated**, full of **mercy** and good fruits, **without partiality**, and **without hypocrisy.**

**The Spirit's ministry** can be missed if we are not attentive to the Lord. The Lord appeals to persons who have **a willing heart.** Exodus 25<sup>1</sup> And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, <sup>2</sup> Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering: of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take my offering.

**We saw in the seventh chapter of Romans the experience of God's children who have not yet understood:** 1. The function of the law; 2. Their own inability to perform that which is right; 3. The role of the Spirit in bringing them to victory. *It is important to note that this is the inevitable experience of those who are young in Christ. However, if we are faithful to the Lord, He will bring us through this difficult period.*

**During this time we learn that:** 1. The law makes known what is sin; 2. In our flesh dwells no good thing; 3. Even though I delight in the law of God, I see that there is another law working in me that prevails. We must learn this before we will quit struggling, and look to the Father's power for deliverance. *Then we can learn the way of the Spirit, how to restrain our thoughts through obedience, and avoid the temptations of our desires that lead to sin.*

**Much** of this consideration has been focused on working out one's salvation as expressed at: **Philippians 2**<sup>12</sup> Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.<sup>13</sup> For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

## **The Person And Work Of Christ: Applied to One's Relationship With God**

**Man, in his inherently sinful condition,** cannot relate to God who is holy. However, **because God actually loves man,** the highest order of His creation, He provided **a means** through which we could properly relate to Him. **Apart from such provision,** man's judgment would involve unending

separation from God. It is evident that through Jesus death and his resurrection, God has provided for mans salvation from, both, sin's penalty and sin's power. And **in this provision**, God has integrated Jesus **death and His resurrection** to provide **a singular and complete** deliverance from sin.

**When** one comes to Christ **through faith** (an **inward posture** of commitment and devotion to God) God will not impute sin to him, but rather, **one's faith** is counted for righteousness. Even for a newborn babe in Christ, who is very much under the influence of the sin nature inherited from Adam, **his faith** is counted for righteousness. His children can stand before the Lord **only because they are inwardly devoted to Him.**

Also included in **the provision** in Christ is **sonship**, wherein we are given the indwelling of the Holy Spirit-Galatians 4:6. Here we learn that **we participate in Christ's death**, that is, in His death **the barrier of sin** that separates man from God **has been removed** so that man can, **by faith, access God's provision** for life and living in Christ. Thus, sin has been defeated, that we might be freed from sins power. And, the actual deliverance is **by the power of the Spirit** that dwells in us. Because the power of sin in us has been dealt with by Christ's death, we **can** walk in "newness of life" **by the same power** that raised Him from the dead-Romans 8:11,12.

**Salvation, which is the centerpiece of Gods provision for mankind, has as its purpose, to purify unto the Lord a people-Titus 2:11-14, through the process of cleansing from sin. The scripture does not present His divine provision as a menu from which to choose, but rather, it is a singular provision in Christ, explained as a unified body of truth, accessed solely by faith-Romans 5:1,2.** Therefore, we are exhorted to **"continue in the faith"**. (Colossians 1:23)

**The manner of living** for God's children should be, essentially, **knowing and doing his will.** Even though we begin in Christ with limited knowledge, we should be diligent in our pursuit of knowledge that is of God. This is a matter of faithfulness. We are told in the epistle to the Hebrews: "But **without faith it is impossible to please him**: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that **diligently seek him.**" (Hebrews 11:6) **As the Lord works in us, and as we work out our salvation** we will come to realize that we must "attend upon the Lord without distraction." (1 Corinthians 7:35) **While there are many solicitations for our attention and our time, the Spirit of grace will grant us wisdom and understanding that we might learn to engage mentally and physically in**

*only necessary things. This is process of growing in grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord.*

**To knowingly and willfully sin** is to ignore the truth, and is in God's view, **to treat with contempt the blood of his Son**. Such an attitude and conduct will not escape divine punishment. As we have read, "...The Lord will judge **his** people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." (Hebrews 10:30,31) However, there are bible expositors who allege that the hereinabove referenced passage in chapter ten of Hebrews does not apply to Christians, or that it is referring, not to punishment, but rather, to judgment within the kingdom. Answers to these two arguments are found within the text and its context. *Where reasoning is employed to arrive at a conclusion that is contrary to what a passage, in harmony with other scripture, clearly states, the reader must choose between the rationalized conclusion and the testimony of scripture.*

**By faith we come into and continue in the benefit of the blood of the Lord Jesus**. A present benefit is living in anticipation of an inheritance that is reserved in heaven for those "who are kept by the power of God through faith..." (1 Peter 1:5) *None of the promises of God negate faith, but rather, each promise is personally beneficial through faith and faithfulness.*

## **The Work Of The Holy Spirit**

**The Holy Spirit** is the One who **actively works to accomplish the will of God** with people. **The Holy Spirit exercises the wisdom and power of God** toward, and on behalf of His people for personal salvation, and for individual stewardship. **He is referred to as the Spirit:** of God, of Christ-Ro. 8:9; of **truth**-Jon. 14:17; of **life**-Ro. 8:2; of **adoption**-Ro. 8:15; of **promise**-Eph. 1:12; and of **grace**-Heb. 10:29.

**This consideration will focus on the work of the Holy Spirit in God's administration under the new covenant. However, it is important to recognize that the Holy Spirit performed a significant role in God's administration in the Old Testament.**

**In the above referenced scriptures** (referenced in the study paper), **we learn that, in the Old Testament, the Spirit of God:**

- Came upon the prophets that they might speak the Lord's words to His people.
- Filled particular individuals with wisdom and understanding that they might perform skilled work in the Lord's house.
- Came upon certain men that they might serve God as kings and judges over Israel.

- Endued with power as with Samson.
- Directed the prophecies of the Old Testament through holy men of God, so that such prophecies were from God, and not something formulated by men.

As we move this discussion to the New Testament scriptures, **we will observe that the Holy Spirit provides the Lord's people with wisdom, understanding, and power that they might perform according to God's will, however, there is change in methodology under new covenant administration. The ministry of the Holy Spirit in this age is introduced in the promise that God made to Israel of a "new covenant" as recorded at: Jeremiah 31:31-34.**

- **Of particular note, under the new covenant, God's law is written in the hearts of His people. The new covenant, wherein the law is written in our hearts by the indwelling Spirit, was instituted by the death of the Lord Jesus. His **blood**, when rightly understood, frees our conscience **from the dead works** of the Old Testament to serve the "living God". He is **not worshipped** through **ceremony, ritual, and external formalities**. Now, they that worship God **worship Him "in spirit and in truth"**-John 4:23,24.**

A significant point in the above three scriptures that can be missed is that **much**, not all, of the Lord's work can be accomplished **in a manner that honors Him** only by His children who have grown to the point **that the Holy Spirit can determine things with them**, and thus, differentiate as to gifts. We cannot all minister any service. **When we are baptized by one Spirit into one body**, and have "been made to drink into one Spirit", **we have only "begun in the Spirit"**-Gal. 3:3. *Because **the Spirit governs everything of eternal value**, we must learn to walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit*-Ro.8:4.

**The foundational work of the Holy Spirit is to bring God's children out from under the servitude of sin.** This work of the Spirit begins with bringing us to the Lord Jesus. *When we come to Christ, after a period of time (it will vary with individuals), we will be confronted with our inability to perform in accordance with that which we understand to be the will of God.* We find that there is **something within** that prevails against that which we know we should or should not do. That "**something**" is **sin**, as Jesus forewarned those who **believed on Him**. However, He also told them that if they would **continue in His word**, they would know **the truth**, and that **the truth** would make them **free** from sin.

**This passage in chapter seven of Paul's epistle to the Romans describes the learning process and the experience that inevitably**

**engages the Lord's children soon after they come to the Lord Jesus.** As we work through this time, we discover that the knowledge that we receive through the law (the law makes sin known—v7) exposes “all manner of concupiscence”---v8. That is to say, that **as our knowledge, through the law, increases we recognize many desires and interests working in us that are contrary to the law.** “For without the law sin was dead”-v8, and “I was alive-v9. **Apart from what the law makes known, we are unaware of our sin and live comfortably with ourselves.** However, when God's children become knowledgeable of the laws testimony, they recognize the compelling demands of sin within, and because of a sensitive conscience they experience death (condemnation)-v9. **Prior to our trying, we expect that if we know what God requires, we will do it-v10.**

**It is important to recognize, both, the difference and the functional relationship between “liberty” and “obedience”.** The essence of “liberty” is freedom, while the essence of “obedience” is compliance. **Liberty is freedom, to not pursue the interests and desires of the flesh-Gal. 5:13, but by the enlightenment and empowerment of the Holy Spirit, to do the will of God---Colossians 1:9,10. Obedience is walking in compliance with the light that the Holy Spirit grants us concerning the Lord's will.**

**The goal of the Holy Spirit's ministry is expressed at: 2 Corinthians 3**<sup>17</sup>**Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.**<sup>18</sup>**But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.**

**This transforming work of the Holy Spirit should be the objective of each person who ministers in the name of Christ. Edifying ministry serves to the end of reconstituting the Lord's people in accordance with divine principles, which is Christ being formed in them---Gal. 4:19, on the basis of inner spiritual life. This work of the Holy Spirit is grace and is wrought in the child of God through his or her inward attitude of unwavering devotion and commitment to Him-Jam 1:5-8. This inward posture toward God is faith, which is our access to grace-Ro. 5:1,2.**

### **Foreknowledge, Then Election And Predestination**

—Does election or predestination shield God's children from punishment for sin?

**In this consideration, we will inquire into what scripture reveals concerning foreknowledge, election, and predestination. While this will not be an exhaustive study, it is intended to provide a scripturally accurate**

perspective of the subject. **We will commence by considering definitions of the words that are the subject matter of this study.**

**Foreknowledge**-is the English translation of the Greek word “prognosis” which means *forethought*. “Prognosis” is from the Greek word “proginosko” meaning, *to know beforehand*. The prefix “pro” means *fore*, i.e. *in front of, prior...to*. The Greek word “gnosis” means *knowing* (the act), i.e. (by impl.) *knowledge*.

**Elect**-is the English translation of the Greek word “eklektos” meaning “*select;...*” Eklektos is also translated *chosen* in some scriptures. The Greek word “eklegomai”, from which “eklektos” derives means *to select*, and is also translated *chosen* in some passages.

**Predestinate**-is an English translation of the Greek word “proorizo”, meaning *to limit in advance* i.e. (fig.) *predestinate*. “Proorizo” derives from “pro” and “horizo”. “Horizo” means *to mark out or bound* (horizon), i.e. (fig) *to appoint, decree, specify*. Other English translations of the Greek word “horizo” are: *declared, determine, limit, ordained, and determinate*. These definitions are taken from Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible.

**The apostle Peter has given us an introduction to our consideration at: 1 Peter 1**

<sup>2</sup> Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, **through sanctification** of the Spirit, **unto obedience** and **sprinkling of the blood** of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

**This scripture informs us that God selected or chose persons according to knowledge that He possessed before or prior to choosing them.** To understand this topic, it is important to notice that **foreknowledge precedes election**. Another significant point to be noted in the, above, definition of foreknowledge is that **foreknowledge means, simply and plainly, to know prior to some event**, the event in the referenced scripture being **God’s choosing persons** to “sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ”. **What God knows is merely passive, while that which God determines is active volition. Also, electing or choosing is an act of the will.** There are numerous books written on this subject. I would suggest that, while reading this consideration, or any of the available books on this or any other theological subject, that the reader notice, whether or not, comments and conclusions are supported by the referenced scriptures, or are they the product of reasoning.

**The question that remains to be answered is what it was that God knew that moved Him to elect or choose persons** to “sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ”. The apostle Paul addresses the matter of election at: 2

## Thessalonians 2

<sup>13</sup> But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:

<sup>14</sup> Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Here** we learn that, what persons are chosen to is **salvation**. This is equivalent to **“sprinkling of the blood”** in the passage in the epistle by Peter. In both scriptures, this result is accomplished through **the sanctifying work** of the Spirit. In Peter’s epistle, we learn that **this work of the Spirit brings a person to obedience**. The word “obedience” in this passage is translated from the Greek word “hupakoe” meaning *attentive hearkening*, i.e. (by impl.) *compliance* or *submission*. (Strong’s Concordance) In the Thessalonians passage, we read that in addition to the sanctifying work of the Spirit, this salvation is accomplished through “belief of the truth”. The word “belief” is translated from the Greek word “pistis” which is, with very few exceptions, translated *faith* throughout the New Testament. We are also informed in the Thessalonians passage that **we are called to salvation by the gospel** that the apostle Paul preached. It should be noted that, **choosing** is through **“faith”**, rather than, **“faith”** being through **choosing**. And, we will read in another scripture that **“faith comes by hearing the word of God”**. So, *through the Spirits sanctifying ministry in the word, one comes to an understanding of the truth, and to faith*. Thus, *one is chosen on the basis of faith*.

**The** testimony of these passages is in accord with the role of faith expressed throughout the New Testament. The clear and unequivocal testimony of scripture is **that man’s acceptance by God, in his relationship with the Father and the Son, rests on faith, as opposed to works**.

**Jesus** told the people that followed Him, **“No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.”** And then He said, **“But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him. And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.”**

**In the matter of election being according to foreknowledge**, it is significant that it was what Jesus knew from the beginning that determined who the Father would draw to Him, and what Jesus knew was, who they were that believed not. Also, at verse 40, we are told that it is the Fathers will that **everyone** who sees the Son and **believes** on Him shall have everlasting life. **The testimony of scripture** is quite clear that what God knew that determined His choice before the foundation of the world is the



*same as that which determines who He draws to His Son in time, which is, who believes and who does not believe.*

While **God is sovereign in power and authority**, and therefore moves according to His own will, and there are scriptures that often remind us of this fact, the Lord, **in His sovereign prerogative** has established and revealed principles **according to which His purpose shall be fulfilled** as it relates to man. Because God has granted to man certain prerogatives for the exercise of his own will, and because God relates to man according to certain considerations **such as faith, sin, repentance, etc.**, does not require that God has relinquished control, but that *He relates to man according to His predetermined, and sovereignly established principles.*

**The sum of this concluding point**, as clearly testified to by the referenced scriptures is that, **while God is sovereign**, His predestinating, and His choosing according to His foreknowledge **are alterable in accordance with principles that He, in His sovereignty, established to accomplish His eternal purpose with man.**

## **The Book Of Revelation**

**Outline for this study of the book of Revelation**-pages one, two, and top of page three.

**Chapter one provides an introduction to the book.**

**The revelation is given by God. V-1**

- To Jesus Christ. V-1
- To show to his servants who are in the 7 churches that are in Asia. VS.1, 4, 11
- Things present and future. Vs.1, 19
- Communicated by his angel. V.1
- To his servant John. V. 1
- John records this word from God and this testimony of the Lord Jesus and all things that he saw, and **sends it to the seven churches with are in Asia.** Vs. 2,4, 9,11

**John saw seven candlesticks, and in the midst of the candlesticks he saw the Son of man, who had seven stars in his right hand.**

- The seven candlesticks **are** the seven churches. V. 20
- The seven stars are the angles of the seven churches. V. 20
- The Son of man is “The first and last”; the one who lives, was dead, and lives forever. Vs. 17,18 (On pages 3 and 5 of this study.)

**Chapters two and three describe:**

- The **spiritual condition that prevails** in each of the seven churches of Asia. (Bottom of page 4 through top of page 10 this study.)
- **Who inherits in the kingdom of God and of Christ.** (Middle of page 17 through the middle of page 24 of this study.) (**An excerpted passage**)

*A brief consideration of the church, its foundation, and its future is inserted.* (Top of page 10 through the middle of page 17 of this study.) (An excerpted passage)

**Chapter four introduces “Things that must be hereafter.” V. 1**

- Chapter four presents **the twenty-four elders and the four beasts** around the throne in Heaven worshipping and praising God. Reference is made to them in subsequent chapters **as they serve God** in relation to scenes and events occurring **at the end of the present age.**
- **All scenes and events** in chapters four through twenty-two, except for those referenced in verses seven through ten of chapter twenty, **occur near the time of the Lord’s return.** (Middle of page 24 to top of page 25 of this study.)

**Chapter five introduces the book sealed with seven seals, which contains the judgments that will occur on earth during the time of the “great tribulation”, and the “day of the Lamb’s wrath.”** (Top of page 26 to bottom of page 26 of this study.)

**Chapter six describes the events and scenes when seals one through six are opened by the Lord Jesus, the Lamb who had been slain.**

- **Seals one through four** describe the **judgments that occur during the “great tribulation”.**
- The fifth seal identifies **those who are killed** during the “great tribulation” as being **those who are faithful** to keep the word of God. They enquire of the Lord **as to when** their blood will be avenged on **“them that dwell on the earth.”**
- When the **sixth seal is opened, the sun will become black, the moon will become as blood and the stars of Heaven will fall to the earth.** These celestial happenings **announce that the day of the Lamb’s wrath** has come-Rev. 6:12 through 17. Also, these celestial events **occur immediately after the tribulation** and they signify that the **coming of the Lord is near.** See Matt 24:29-31. (Bottom of page 28 through top of page 29 of this study.)

**Chapter eleven, verses 2 through 13, and chapters twelve and thirteen describe scenes and events immediately prior to, and during the “great tribulation”.** The things in **these three chapters correspond in time to the scenes and events of seals one through five in chapter six.** (Middle of page 29 to the middle of page 37 of this study.)

**Chapters seven and fourteen describe the interim between the “great tribulation” and the “Lamb’s wrath”.** (Middle of page 37 to top of page 41 of this study.)

**Chapters eight, nine, fifteen (Vs. 15 through 18.) and sixteen (Vs. 1 through 16.) describe the Lamb’s wrath being poured out upon the earth and its inhabitants.** (Top of page 41 to middle of page 45 of this study.)

**Chapter eleven (Vs. 15 through 18.) and chapter sixteen (V.17) announce the end of the Lamb’s wrath upon the earth, and also that the kingdoms of this world have become the Lord’s, who will reign forever. And, that the time has come for judgment of the dead and reward of the Lord’s servants, and the saints that fear His name.**

**Chapters sixteen (Vs.18 through 21.), seventeen, and eighteen describe *Babylon and announce and explain Babylon’s fall.*** (Middle of page 45 to bottom of page 53 of this study.) (An excerpted passage)

**Chapter nineteen (Vs. 1 through 6.) corresponds with chapter eleven (Vs.15 through 17.) and chapter fifteen (Vs. 2 through 4.) in that these three passages are**

**scenes in which the Lord's people are rejoicing and praising the Lord because he has destroyed all opposition, both His and theirs in the earth and has begun to reign.**

**Chapter nineteen (Vs. 7 through 21.), chapter twenty (Vs.1 through 5.), chapter eleven (V. 15.), and chapters 21 and 22 describe *the coming of the Lord, and events and circumstances related to it.*** (Page 53 to the bottom of page 61 of this study.) **(An excerpted passage)**

**Chapters 21 and 22 provide particular detail concerning the New Jerusalem.** (Page 72 through top of page 73 of this study.)

**A brief consideration of judgment and reward.** (Bottom of page 61 to bottom of page 65 of this study.)

***Can God's Children Be Punitively Judged For Sin.*** (Pages: 65 to 71) **(An excerpted passage)**

**Chapter 20 (Vs. 6 through 10) refers to reigning with Christ during the 1000 years, and the final judgment of Satan and of those who are deceived by him.**

**God's ultimate purpose with man is realized.** (Page 72 through page 73 of this study.)