

[Begin Part 1]

1.1 ARE YOU REGENERATE?

Jesus replied, “Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are **born again.**” John 3:3

You should not be surprised at my saying, ‘You must be **born again.**’ John 3:7

For you have been **born again**, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. 1 Peter 1:23

1.2 GET UNDERSTANDING

Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all your getting get understanding. Proverbs 4:7

Through your precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way. Psalm 119:104

He that refuses instruction despises his own soul: but he that hears reproof gets understanding. Proverbs 15:32

I will instruct you and teach you in the way which thou shall go: I will guide you with my eye. Psalm 32:8

1.3 CAN ANYTHING STAND UP TO THIS?

2 Peter 1:4 KJV

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.

2 Peter 1:4 Amplified Bible (AMP)

4 For by these He has bestowed on us His precious and magnificent promises [of inexpressible value], so that by them you may escape from the immoral freedom that is in the world because of disreputable desire, and become **sharers of the divine nature**.

2 Peter 1:4 Mounce Reverse-Interlinear New Testament (MOUNCE)

4 by means dia of which hos he has freely given dōreomai to us hēmeis his ho precious timios and kai splendid promises epangelma, so that hina through dia them houtos you may ginomai escape apopheugō the ho corruption phthora that is in en the ho world kosmos caused by en sinful desire epithumia and become ginomai **partakers koinōnos** of the ios the **divine theios nature physis**.

Hebrews 6: 4 For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,
5 And have tasted the good word of God, and **the powers of the world to come**,

6 If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.
KJV

Gal 4 9 But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the **weak and beggarly elements**, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? KJV

9 But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how is it that you turn back again to the **weak and worthless elemental things**, to which you desire to be enslaved all over again? NASB

1.4 WHAT DOES ONLY BEGOTTEN MEAN?

He who has the Son has THE Life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have THE Life.

When Adam and Eve fell does anyone suppose that God Almighty was caught off guard and without a plan? Only a fool would believe such a thing. God had the plan, “the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began.” Romans 16:25

Furthermore, how many people believe that this great plan and secret of God was to merely put His children back on a pre-fall basis? Indeed, many well intentioned people believe just that.

Why are we told that God “is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us.” Ephesians 3:20 Because that is exactly what He intends to do, and no area more important than His eternal plan for the salvation and elevation of His children. This is what it is all about.

First some elementary background.

God gave Adam and Eve and all of their descendants the power of free choice. They chose to sin. He has chosen to redeem us with the life and works of Jesus Christ. God has not done this to merely put us back on the status quo with Adam before the fall. He is fulfilling his original plan in spite of human choice. He has included man’s worst choice in his plan for overcoming all obstacles. God’s children can now trade in mere created human life for the only begotten life of the Son within them.

We know that to lose we would have to reject God’s offer. To go back to the pre fall-state of Adam would be a draw. We are supposed to win and we do. What is only begotten life like? Look at Jesus on the cross. His body was long past supporting human life before he released his spirit back to the Father. Only Begotten life cannot be killed. It is the life of God Himself.

“For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself.” John 5:26

This means that Jesus is the life source. This is theological proof of His divinity.

Now He shares it with us.

“And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.

12 He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.

13 These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.” 1 John 5:11-13 NASB

The Greek as reflected in the NASB contains the definite article THE life. That is because it is that particular form of life which God possesses. All living beings draw their natural life from God. Christians have the Only Begotten life inside them because Jesus is inside.

Research – description of only-begotten, a single word in the Greek:
Strong's Concordance 3439 monogenēs (from 3411 /mīsthotós, "one-and-only" and 1085 /génos, "offspring, stock") – properly, one-and-only; "one of a kind" – literally, "one (monos) of a class
monogenēs: only begotten.

Original Word: μονογενῆς, Part of Speech: Adjective Transliteration: monogenēs Phonetic Spelling: (mon-og-en-ace') Short Definition: only, only-begotten, unique Definition: only, only-begotten; unique.

Scriptures from John's Gospel NASB

And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the ONLY BEGOTTEN from the Father, full of grace and truth.

15 John testified about Him and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me [m]has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.'"

16 For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace.

17 For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth[p]were realized through Jesus Christ.

18 No one has seen God at any time; the ONLY BEGOTTEN God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him. John 1:14 -18

For God so loved the world, that He gave His ONLY BEGOTTEN Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

17 For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.

18 He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the ONLY BEGOTTEN Son of God. John 3:16 - 18

1.5 THIS IS THE WAY

And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left. Is 30:21 (KJV)

If you wander from the right path, either to the right or to the left, you will hear a voice behind you saying, "You should go this way. Here is the right way." (Easy To Read Version)

1.6 HEARING GOD

Scriptures:

1. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. Romans 8:9b
2. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. Romans 8:14
3. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you are called in one body; and be thankful. Colossians 3:15
4. Also put the Urim and the Thummim in the breastpiece, so they may be over Aaron's heart whenever he enters the presence of the LORD. Thus Aaron will always bear the means of making decisions for the Israelites over his heart before the LORD. Exodus 28:30 NIV
5. The terms "Urim" and "Thummim" have traditionally been understood as "light(s)" and "perfection(s)" The Urim and Thummim were a means of revelation entrusted to the high priest. No description of them is given. This oracular means apparently consisted of a material object or objects since it was physically stored in the breastpiece of the high priest. (Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology)
6. Then spoke Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. John 8:12
7. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on you: because he trusts in you. Isaiah 26:3
8. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you. 2 Corinthians 13:11

9. And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Revelation 1:6

10. And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. Revelation 5:10

Action Points

1. The “charismatic” gifts of prophecy or word of knowledge **is not given to all** believers.
2. The light and the peace **is given to all** believers since New Testament believers are all priests.
3. Pray earnestly and ask God questions that can be answered by a Yes or a No.
4. This is not because God has a problem communicating, but because Christian believers find it difficult to hear God.
5. Then speak a simple statement such as, “God wants me to
6. Then speak the opposite.
7. The statement with the light and/or the peace on it is the answer.
8. Repeat these questions in hourly intervals after sincere prayer until you are sure.
9. Do not back down on your conviction.
10. When time and results prove that you did indeed hear from God tell someone about it.
11. Do Not let pentecostals or charismatics bully you in this matter.

1.7 HOW TO BELIEVE A LIE

10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should **believe a lie**:

12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. 2 Thess. 2:10-12 (KJV)

It is actually quite simple, all a person has to do to set themselves up to believe a lie is to refuse the love of the truth. Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. John 14:6

Jesus calls the source of all lies the Father of Lies.

A lie or lies can be spoken out loud and heard with the ears for the mind and spirit to process it, or it can happen silently, in the human mind itself.

A lie does not have the “ring of truth.” It is like a broken bell, a bell with a crack in it, which only sounds a dull “thunk” and not the clear ring of truth.

A person who has refused the love of the truth takes the “thunk” for the sound of a true bell.

They are then deceived and can not ‘hear’ the truth.

Those who spread lies often think they are spreading the truth.

Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, **he speaks of his own**: for he is a liar, and the father of it. John 8:44

There is much more to this teaching that can be shared.

[End Part 1]

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- A vertical collage of five images. From top to bottom: 1. A sunset or sunrise over a body of water, with the sun low on the horizon and clouds in the sky. 2. A hand reaching through an open window frame, looking out onto a bright, possibly beach-like scene. 3. Two hands, one from each side of a light-colored wall, reaching towards each other as if to shake. 4. A close-up of two hands shaking firmly. 5. A white orchid branch with several flowers and buds, set against a dark background.

[Begin Part 2]

2.1 DEPENDENCE ON GOD

Today in Western culture we are taught that independence and self-reliance are the most important virtues that we can possess. Regarding our relationships in the world around us, this is usually true. In religious circles we are taught that we are dependent on God for our salvation because we are sinners and in need of the help that only He can provide. However, in the teaching of this we are so often left with the impression deep down in our beings that the dependence is because of our sin. This is not true.

Humans were originally designed to be dependent on God. Adam was given great power to be in charge of the entire natural world. But he had this power in dependence on God. He lost this power when he took his life into his own hands. Jesus said that he did not do anything that he did not see the Father doing. Jesus walked in total dependence on God the Father.

Dependence on God is good. We were never supposed to be free from God. He wants us to draw from him continually. He delights in meeting our every need. The life of faith is an adventure with God meeting every need, even anticipating our needs and arranging the supply before we ask. This is healthy.

Many earthly dependencies have unwanted side effects. Dependence on God has no unwanted side effects. The unwanted side effects of drugs, for example, are that they can in themselves be damaging to a person. Also, they will lead to a dependency which will take a person away from the good things in life. And, last but not least, the supply of the drug may be interrupted or stopped and painful withdrawal will result. A dependency on God will not lead to any of these consequences.

God is not damaging to the person. The ungodly are dangerous to themselves and others. God's goal is to free the person and help that person to realize all of his or her potential. A dependency on God will not take us away from the good things in life. Rather, it will bring us into a complete fulfillment of the good things in life like health and love and relationships and joy.

Finally, the prospect of not being able to receive the blessings of God at any time is not possible, at least not from God's side of the relationship. God is always available to us and always will be in this life and in eternity. This dependency does certainly imply relationship. We are to live in a relationship with a living God

2.2 SIT - WALK - STAND

SIT, WALK, STAND IN EPHESIANS:

1. OUR POSITION IN CHRIST: "SIT" (verse 2:6)

4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,
5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ,
(by grace ye are saved;)

6 And hath raised us up together, and made us SIT together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:

7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

2. OUR LIFE IN THE WORLD: “WALK” (verse 4:1)

1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye WALK worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,

2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;

3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

4 There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;

5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism,

6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

7 But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

3. OUR ATTITUDE TO THE ENEMY: “STAND” (verse 6:11)

10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to STAND against the wiles of the devil.

12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to STAND.

14 STAND therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

2.3 URIM AND THUMMIM

Exodus 28:30 And thou shalt put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim; and they shall be upon Aaron's heart, when he goeth in before the LORD: and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the LORD continually.

Deuteronomy 33:8 And of Levi he said, Let thy Thummim and thy Urim be with thy holy one, whom thou didst prove at Massah, and with whom thou didst strive at the waters of Meribah;

1 Samuel 28:6 And when Saul enquired of the LORD, the LORD answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets.

Ezra 2:63 And the Tirshatha said unto them, that they should not eat of the most holy things, till there stood up a priest with Urim and with Thummim.

Nehemiah 7:65 And the Tirshatha said unto them, that they should not eat of the most holy things, till there stood up a priest with Urim and Thummim.

John 8:12 Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. Matthew 5:14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

Urim and Thummim For Priests Not Prophets.

Hebrew OT 224. Urim Strong's Concordance Urim: part of the high priest's breastplate עִירִם :Word Original Part of Speech: Noun Masculine

Transliteration: Urim Phonetic Spelling: (oo-reem') Short Definition: Urim - Lights Strong's Exhaustive Concordance Urim Plur of 'uwr; lights; Urim, the oracular brilliancy of the figures in the high-priest's breastplate -- Urim. see HEBREW 'uwr

Hebrew OT 8537. tom Strong's Concordance tom: completeness, integrity, also part of the high priest's breastplate תּוֹמֵם :Word Original Part of Speech: Noun Masculine Transliteration: tom Phonetic Spelling: (tome) Short Definition: integrity

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance full, integrity, perfection, simplicity, uprightly at a venture From tamam; completeness; figuratively, prosperity; usually (morally) innocence -- full, integrity, perfect(-ion), simplicity, upright(-ly, -

ness), at a venture. See Tummiym plural) see HEBREW tamam see HEBREW Tummiym

Greek N.T. εἰρήνη (eirēnē) Strong: G1515 GK: G1645

peace, Lk. 14:32; Acts 12:20; tranquillity, Lk. 11:21; Jn. 16:33; 1 Thess. 5:3; concord, unity, love of peace, Mt. 10:34; Lk. 12:51; meton. the author of peace, Eph. 2:14; from the Hebrew every kind of blessing and good, Lk. 1:79; 2:14, 29; meton. a salutation expressive of good wishes, a benediction, blessing, Mt. 10:13 Galatians 5: 22-23

Isaiah 26:2-4 Complete Jewish Bible (CJB)

2 Open the gates! Let the righteous nation enter, a nation that keeps faith! 3 “A person whose desire rests on you you preserve in perfect peace, because he trusts in you. 4 Trust in Adonai forever, because in Yah Adonai, is a Rock of Ages.”

2.4 THE BIG BREAKTHROUGH

Your Heavenly Trust Fund.

Why don't I have what the Bible says I (can) have?

An heir so long as he is a child does not inherit.

Galatians 4:1-3 (KJV) 1 Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differs nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; 2 But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. 3 Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world:

[Video [HERE](#) and [HERE](#)]

The 2 escape clauses: Romans 7: 17, 20 | John 3: 20-21 [Video HERE]

When are you going to catch up with yourself?

THE KEY Apprehend(ed) = Grasp καταλαμβάνω (katalambanō) Strong: G2638 GK: G2898 to lay hold of, grasp; to obtain, attain, Rom. 9:30; 1 Cor. 9:24; Phil. 3:12, 13; to seize, to take possession of, Mk. 9:18; to come suddenly upon; overtake, surprise, Jn. 12:35; 1 Thess. 5:4; to detect in the

act, seize, Jn. 8:3, 4; met. to comprehend, apprehend, Jn. 1:5; mid. to understand, perceive, Acts 4:13; 10:34; 25:25; Eph. 3:18

3:12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also It am apprehended of Christ Jesus.

Philippians 3: 7 - 15

7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. 8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, 9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: 10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; 11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. 12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. 13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, 14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. 15 Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.

In New Testament:

Mark 9:18 And whenever it (katalabē | καταλάβῃ | aor act subj 3 sg) seizes (katalabē | καταλάβῃ | aor act subj 3 sg) him, it throws him down, and he foams at the mouth and grinds his teeth and becomes rigid. So I asked your disciples to cast it out, but they were not able.”

John 1:5 The light shines on in the darkness, and the darkness has (katalaben | κατέλαβεν | aor act ind 3 sg) not understood (katalaben | κατέλαβεν | aor act ind 3 sg) it.

John 8:3 The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who (kateilēmmenēn | κατειλημμένην | perf pass ptcp acc sg fem) had (kateilēmmenēn | κατειλημμένην | perf pass ptcp acc sg fem) been (kateilēmmenēn | κατειλημμένην | perf pass ptcp acc sg fem) caught

(kateilēmmenēn | κατειλημμένην | perf pass ptcp acc sg fem) in adultery, and making her stand before them,

John 8:4 they said to Jesus, “Teacher, this woman was caught (kateilēptai | κατείληπται | perf pass ind 3 sg) in the very act of committing adultery.

John 12:35 Then Jesus said to them, “The light will be with you for yet a little while. Keep walking while you have the light, so that the darkness will (katalabē | καταλάβῃ | aor act subj 3 sg) not overtake (katalabē | καταλάβῃ | aor act subj 3 sg) you. The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going.

Acts 4:13 Seeing the boldness of Peter and John, and coming (katalabomenoi | καταλαβόμενοι | aor mid ptcp nom pl masc) to find that they were uneducated and common men, they were astonished and recognized that as those who had been with Jesus.

Acts 10:34 So Peter opened his mouth and said: “Truly I understand (katalambanomai | καταλαμβάνομαι | pres mid ind 1 sg) that God is not one who shows partiality;

Acts 25:25 But I found (katalabomēn | κατελαβόμην | aor mid ind 1 sg) that he had done nothing worthy of death; and since he himself appealed to the emperor, I decided to send him.

Romans 9:30 What then shall we say? — that the Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have obtained (katalaben | κατέλαβεν | aor act ind 3 sg) it, the righteousness that is by faith;

1 Corinthians 9:24 Do you not know that all who run in the stadium compete but only one receives the prize? So run that you may win (katalabēte | καταλάβητε | aor act subj 2 pl).

Ephesians 3:18 in order that you may be empowered to grasp (katalabesthai | καταλαβέσθαι | aor mid inf) with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth,

Philippians 3:12 Not that I have already obtained all this or have already reached my goal, but I press on in order to make it my own (katalabō | καταλάβω | aor act subj 1 sg) because Christ Jesus has made me his own (katalēmphthēn | κατελήμφθην | aor pass ind 1 sg).

Philippians 3:13 Brothers, I do not consider to (kateilēphenai | κατειληφέναι | perf act inf) have (kateilēphenai | κατειληφέναι | perf act inf) made (kateilēphenai | κατειληφέναι | perf act inf) it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching out to what lies ahead,

1 Thessalonians 5:4 But you, brothers, are not in darkness, for that day to (katalabē | καταλάβῃ | aor act subj 3 sg) take (katalabē | καταλάβῃ | aor act subj 3 sg) you by (katalabē | καταλάβῃ | aor act subj 3 sg) surprise (katalabē | καταλάβῃ | aor act subj 3 sg) like a thief

Perfect(ed) = mature

perfect, mature, finished

τέλειος (teleios)

Strong: G5046

brought to completion; fully accomplished, fully developed, Jas. 1:4a; fully realized, thorough, 1 Jn. 4:18; complete, entire, as opposed to what is partial and limited, 1 Cor. 13:10; full grown of ripe age, 1 Cor. 14:20; Eph. 4:13; Heb. 5:14; fully accomplished in Christian enlightenment, 1 Cor. 2:6; Phil. 3:15; Col. 1:28; perfect in some point of character, without shortcoming in respect of a certain standard, Mt. 5:48; 19:21; Col. 4:12; Jas. 1:4b; 3:2; perfect, consummate, Rom. 12:2; Jas. 1:17, 25; compar. of higher excellence and efficiency, Heb. 9:11

[End Part 2]

[Begin Part 3]

3.1 APPEARING

What Is An Appearing?

1. While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are NOT SEEN ARE ETERNAL. 2 Corinthians 4:18

2. By faith he (Moses) forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as SEEING HIM WHO IS INVISIBLE. Hebrews 11:27

3. When Christ, who is our life, shall APPEAR, then shall ye also APPEAR with him in glory. Colossians 3:4

4. 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. Hebrews 11:3

5. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet APPEAR what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall APPEAR, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. 1 John 3:2

Plus:

We having the same SPIRIT OF FAITH, according as it is written, I BELIEVED, and therefore have I SPOKEN; we also BELIEVE, and therefore SPEAK. 2 Corinthians 4:13

3.2 MYSTERIES

Mysteries (all N.T.)

Matthew 13:11 He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.

Luke 8:10 (parallel of Mathew) And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.

1 Corinthians 13:2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

μυστήριον (mystērion) G3466 a matter to the knowledge of which initiation is necessary;

a secret which would remain such but for revelation, Mt. 3:11; Rom. 11:25; Col. 1:26;

a concealed power or principle, 2 Thess. 2:7;

a hidden meaning of a symbol, Rev. 1:20; 17:7

3.3 THE OFFENSE OF THE INCARNATION

If we wish to avoid offense and still retain a belief in God, the easiest thing to do, and this is in fact what has been done widely in the church for centuries, is to affirm His divine nature loudly and forget his human nature. When we do this, however, the entire wonderful mystery of “the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us” (Jn. 1: 14) is forgotten.

Believers will easily accept His divinity and even fight vigorously to defend it. But if you try to “flesh out” a true understanding of Christ’s humanity, a humanity that was just like our own, the sparks begin to fly. This is because the humanity of Jesus offends people. And it offends precisely because of his divinity. The idea of a man who claims to be God is offensive. He is then no longer remote. He is no longer apart from us. He is no longer far away. He is not avoidable. This offended religious people in Jesus’ day. It still offends religious people. They cannot keep him at bay. It should not be offensive, however, to anyone who really wants to know Jesus and walk with him as a way of life. To that person his humanity is good news indeed.

It is good news because he has walked in our shoes. He has felt our limitations, lived with them, felt the helplessness, the helplessness that we feel when a beloved relative or friend dies, like Lazarus. If not for the shortest verse in the New Testament, we might be tempted to think that Jesus was clinically detached from Lazarus’ death because he intentionally let him die so that he could raise him back to mortal life. But, “Jesus wept.” (John 11:35) How many times have we been told that he was weeping because of the unbelief of Mary and Martha and the other Jews. Or that he was weeping because he knew that this miracle would target him for eventual crucifixion by the leaders of the Jews. But what is wrong with the most obvious meaning? Does God indeed give us the scriptures to confuse us? Or are they a revelation? Jesus wept because his good friend went through the pain and suffering of being sick and dying. And Jesus was helpless to stop it because the Holy Spirit hindered him from doing anything. Now, he would raise Lazarus but Lazarus would have to die yet again to wait the final resurrection into a glorious body.

Jesus identified with us so that we could identify with him. So that he could represent us before the Father as a faithful high priest. So that we could have what he has. The man Jesus is an eternal part of the life of Almighty God. And he is our big brother. We are related by blood, natural and redeeming blood.

The one thing that is hardest to hold in our minds is the fact that Jesus was, always was, and is really God, and also that he became a man. He was no less God for becoming a man and he was no less or more of a man because he was God. When he was on earth for those 33 years, he was both the revelation of God and the concealment of God. He was the revelation of God because He still had the character of God. No one else had that. He was the concealment of God because he left his power behind voluntarily. Because he left his power behind, his glory was concealed. His glory could be seen in his character but not in his power. So his glory was at the same time both revealed and concealed. In other words, people of a childlike faith could see his glory in his character, in his love and understanding and lowliness; “Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart and you shall find rest unto your souls.” (Mt. 11:29) But no one could see his glory in his power because he left it in heaven.

Sure, he did miracles among them, or rather, God the Father did as Peter said, but these were done by the Holy Spirit which came upon him as a man at his baptism. We can do similar things by the power of the Holy Spirit just as he did. So you cannot say that Jesus was half God and half man because he was all God and all man; only he emptied himself of his power and the glory associated with his power before he came. Only once did the Father allow men to see a glimpse of this power and glory and that was when he was transfigured before Peter and James and John (Mt. 17:2). When he was restored to his glory after the ascension, he was restored to all that he had as God before he emptied himself, plus his manhood was also glorified as the “firstborn among many brethren” (Rom. 8:28). Now we can look forward to sharing this glory with him in the resurrection.

However, when it comes to the true humanity of Jesus, that is often another story. This is not well believed and it is to our detriment. If we do not see the true humanity of Jesus, we do not understand our relationship to Him. As a matter of fact, once we have accepted God as our heavenly Father, as Jesus teaches us to do in the gospels, we have more need of a human Jesus than a divine one. We have a loving Father who is God Almighty and not a man. We need a brother who is not only God but fully human. We can identify with a big

brother who knows what it is like to walk in our shoes. The only way to get into trouble here is to say that Jesus sinned because He did not. In every other way He was as human as we are. His mother Mary was no different than any other wholesome teen-age virgin. Jesus gets his humanity honestly from her.

It says in Philippians 2:7 NASB that Jesus “emptied himself” when he became a human being. He grew for nine months in Mary’s womb and was born into our world. An understanding of this “emptying” is the only sensible way to understand how Jesus was truly a man with the limitations of a man while He lived and ministered for over 33 years among us. Once we understand this, the actions of Jesus in the gospels will make sense to us more than they ever have before. We will then be able to see Him as a man of faith operating by the power of the Holy Spirit just as He expects us to do. We will no longer say when we sense that a certain thing is expected of us, “Well, that was Jesus!” But before launching into this you need to be ready to be stretched a little. You need to be willing to re-think some things that you may have always believed. It may seem threatening or even disrespectful at first until you begin to understand and “balance up” again.

In order to become one of us Jesus gave up three of the most important characteristics of God. I call these The Three Omnies; Omni-presence, Omni-potence, and Omni-science. When these words are divided in this way, it is easier to understand them. The prefix “Omni” simply means “All” or “Completely”. God is All-present, or everywhere at the same time. In order for Jesus to become one of us he had to give this up for 33 years to live in time and space with human beings. This is obvious because he took a localized body like every human being has. He could only be in the place where that body was located. He got this body from his mother Mary. It was a body like her body, a human body. When Jesus gave up one Omni, he also had to give up the other two. Omni-potence means to be all powerful. Jesus gave up his all powerful ability to become a man. His heavenly Father retained his power and the Holy Spirit kept his also, but Jesus gave his up for those 33 years. Omni-science means to know all things. Jesus also gave this up to become a man and the gospels are full of examples of things that he did not know. For instance, the time of his return (Matt. 24:36), who touched him when he was in the crowd (Luke 8:45), and the location of Lazarus’ body (John 11:34).

Jesus left the three Omnies behind for 33 years. He had them again after his death on the cross and the resurrection. We will get to that also. Another important thing that Jesus left behind in order to become a man was his glory. One way we know this is because he talked to the Father about when he

would get his glory back (Jn.17:5). Another obvious way that we know he left his glory behind is in the gospel record. Jesus appeared very much like other men. When the soldiers went to arrest him, they waited for Judas to identify him (Mt.26:48). There was no halo around his head like we see in the old paintings. At the transfiguration (Mt. 17) his glory was seen by a special act of the Father and the Holy Spirit by the three: Peter, James and John. But this was a one time happening. Jesus left his glory behind to become a man. This, like the three Omnes, was not a hiding or a veiling but an actual leaving behind. Consider, if Jesus had not left his glory behind, it would not have been possible for people to even look at him for the brightness of his glory. All would have known immediately that he was God. Faith would not have been necessary. It would have been like the children of Israel in the wilderness when they asked not to be exposed to God but rather that Moses should speak to God for them (Heb.12:19-20). Jesus left his glory behind to become a man. But he got it back at his resurrection. And believers get everything back that Adam lost and much more. Eternal life on a new heaven and a new earth in a resurrected body that cannot die.

Some may ask, “How is this possible? What you are and what you have are yours, unless you become disabled in some way.” Jesus did not become disabled in the sense of getting sick or old or infirm. God the Son in agreement with the Father and the Holy Spirit has the ability to give up anything he wants by a simple act of his will. This is not a pretend giving up but a real parting with these abilities. Exactly because he is God, he can do things that we cannot do. Why did he do this? His reason for doing this, giving all this up for a time, is his great love for his people. It is not because he failed or became weak but because he loves us so much. “But,” someone might also ask, “what about the things Jesus did and knew that were supernatural? After all, he was able to do and to know things that must have needed the very powers that you are saying that he left behind in order to become a man.” Those things which Jesus did which were obviously supernatural, he did by the power of the Holy Spirit. These days we call such things the gifts and ministries of the Holy Spirit which are given to the body of Christ on earth, the believers. Jesus did these wonderful things as a man by the power of the Holy Spirit just as he expects us to do them today.

3.4 Faith to Hope to Love

But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love. 1 Corinthians 13:13 (NASB)

THE WORKING CHAIN - Faith to Hope

In a working chain one thing causes another. Paul is saying here in Romans 5 that Faith tends to lead to tribulations, and tribulations tend to lead to patience, etc...arriving at hope (expectation).

Biblical Hope is Expectation. Not the futile “I hope so” of the natural world. With Faith we believe that God can do something. With Hope we Expect it to happen.

Romans 5:1-4 King James Version (KJV)

1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;

4 And patience, experience; and experience, hope:

Romans 5:1-4 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

1 Therefore, having been justified by faith, [a]we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

2 through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and [b]we exult in hope of the glory of God.

3 And not only this, but [c]we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance;

4 and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope;

Romans 5:3-4 Mounce Reverse-Interlinear New Testament (OUNCE)

3 And de not ou only monon that, but alla we also kai rejoice kauchaomai in en our ho sufferings thlipsis, knowing oida that hoti ·ho suffering thlipsis produces kater gazomai endurance ehypomonē,

4 ·ho and de endurance hypomonē produces character dokimē, ·ho and de character rdokimē produces hope elpis,

THE ADD TO CHAIN - Faith to Agape Love

In an “add to” chain we must set our will to add the next thing. God will supply it, but we must also set our will on it. We must seek to add virtue to faith etc.to get to Agape Love.

Agape love is the kind of love that God has. It just keeps on giving. It is interesting to see that Brotherly Love must precede Agape love. So we cannot say, "I will love him, but I cannot like him."

2 Peter 1:5-7 (KJV)

5 And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;

6 And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness;

7 And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.

2 Peter 1:5-7 (NASB)

5 Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge,

6 and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness,

7 and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love.

2 Peter 1:5-7 (MOUNCE)

5 ·kai For this very autos reason houtos, ·de make pareispherō every pas effort spoudē by en ·ho your hymēis faith pistis to produce epichorēgeō ·ho virtue aretē, by en ·de ·ho virtue aretē ·ho knowledge gnōsis,

6 by en ·de ·ho knowledge gnōsis ·ho self-control enkratēia, by en ·de ·hoself-control enkratēia ·ho steadfastness hypomonē, by en ·de ·hosteadfastness hypomonē ·ho godliness eusebeia,

7 by en ·de ·ho godliness eusebeia ·ho brotherly philadelphia affection, and de by en ·ho brotherly affection philadelphia ·ho love agapē.

[End Part 3]