



# 4 DOCTRINES

*“I Just Can’t Live Without”*

PASTOR DENNIS BALDWIN

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# HEARING COMES BY THE WORD OF GOD

Apologist: Dennis J Baldwin

Apologist: a person who writes or speaks in in defense or justification of a doctrine, faith, action, etc.

Doctrine: in its simplest form, teachings, something taught:

- **Doctor**: it seems evident to me, given the close correlation between *doctrine* and *doctor*; that a person with a “*doctorate*” might be more qualified to present a paper on “*doctrine*”

Since I do not possess a “*doctorate*”; for me to teach such a class in the complete sense will include, though perhaps not be limited to, the following three principles:

- **Dogma**: I will attempt in this class to present what has been *handed down* through the authority and teaching of “*the doctrine of God*”<sup>1</sup>. In that sense it could be termed *dogma* though not strictly so.

Not pilfering (*to steal things of small value*), but showing all good faith that they may adorn the *doctrine of God* our Savior in every respect. Titus 2:10 (NASB77)

- **Tenet**: it will also be my intent to emphasize my defense of certain doctrines that are of paramount importance to me because as I see it, they are important to God and to His Son.<sup>2</sup>
- Jesus answered them and said, "My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me. <sup>17</sup> If anyone wants to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or *whether* I speak on My own *authority*. John 7:16-17 (NKJV)
- **Precept**: In addition to the above; the doctrines which I deem so important as to be “*fundamental*” (*to serve as an essential component*)<sup>3</sup> to me, are intended to be my rule of conduct rather than a simple teaching to be laid on the shelf for reference.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See Also in 1Tim. 6:1, note that the NKJV translates “*His doctrine*” while the NASB translates *our doctrine*. *Dogma*, in my usage, refers to a doctrine or belief that is *handed down* by authority as true and indisputable.

<sup>2</sup> An understanding of *good doctrine* requires a commitment to doing the Father’s will. A *tenet* might emphasize the defense rather than the teaching of a principle.

<sup>3</sup> See Titus 2:10 (NASB) It is clear from this reference that the “*doctrine of God* is something to be adorned-in every respect”. In my usage, a *precept* is a doctrine (dogma) intended as a rule of action or conduct.

I particularly appreciate the way the *doctrine of God* is referred to in Paul's words, handed down as sound words which Timothy had heard from Paul.

- Retain the standard of *sound words* which you have heard from me. 2 Timothy 1:13 (NASB)

### **WATCH WHERE YOU STEP**

While my presentation intends to dwell more on the positive, I would note that not everything in the writings of the apostles regarding doctrine was positive. Some was expressed in the negative. Various references give warning about teachings which must be analyzed for their true value.<sup>5</sup> While often the specifics of the doctrines are not addressed, the principal of ***watch where you step*** is laid down.<sup>6</sup>

- Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son. 2 John 1:9 (NASB)

**Jesus warned last day believers of false prophets:**

- And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you. <sup>5</sup> For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many. Matthew 24:3-5 (NKJV)

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<sup>4</sup> Yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. The *doctrine of God*, which has been *handed down* to us under God's authority is intended to be obeyed from the heart. Romans 6:17 (NKJV)

<sup>5</sup> Whether it be me or someone else, if one goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, he is *anathema (accursed)*. Seems very harsh by our current standards. This path takes one away from God and His Son. Paul was very bold when he wrote to the Galatians in 1:8. He even emphasized the point by repeating it in the very next verse: Galatians 1:8-9 (NASB) But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed! <sup>9</sup> As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed!

<sup>6</sup> And their message will spread like cancer. Hymenaeus and Philetus are of this sort, <sup>18</sup> who have strayed concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection is already past; and they overthrow the faith of some. It seems evident that Hymenaeus and Philetus *went too far*. Notice the warning regarding the teaching of *the resurrection*. This must be talking about the coming resurrection of the dead. Perhaps they were teaching that the resurrection of the dead simply referred to the resurrection of Christ. I recall hearing as a young man from some of my Advent Christian friends that the "first resurrection" in Revelation was the resurrection of Jesus. 2 Timothy 2:17-18 (NKJV)

#### Paul put Timothy on guard:

- For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but *wanting* to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires,<sup>4</sup> and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths. 2 Timothy 4:3-4 (NASB)

#### Borrowing from history Peter put his readers on guard:

- But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves.<sup>2</sup> Many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of the truth will be maligned;<sup>3</sup> and in *their* greed they will exploit you with false words; their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep. 2 Peter 2:1-3 (NASB)

#### John cautioned:

- I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it, and because no lie is of the truth.<sup>22</sup> Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son.<sup>23</sup> Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also.<sup>24</sup> As for you, let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father. 1 John 2:21-24 (NASB)

#### Jude gave notice:

- Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints.<sup>4</sup> For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ. Jude 1:3-4 (NASB)

## **THE DELIGHT AND JOY OF MY HEART**

As a young man I was introduced to the Word of God in a very wonderful way. My Pastor, ZB Duncan, actually the only one I have ever had, had the God given ability to present the Word of God in a way that caught my attention. He hardly ever made a joke from the pulpit but was able to grab your attention and encourage you to hang on every word. What I was able to glean from that was a desire to want more, to understand more and better the wonderful faith and promises presented in the Bible. The word actually became to be "A lamp to my feet and a light to my path." Psalm 119:105. Actually another way I might explain it is:

- Your words were found and I ate them, And Your words became for me a joy and the delight of my heart; For I have been called by Your name, O LORD God of hosts.  
Jeremiah 15:16 (NASB)

I became infatuated as a young man with God's Word. Ezekiel the prophet seemed to have a similar experience:

- Then He said to me, "Son of man, eat what you find; eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel." <sup>2</sup> So I opened my mouth, and He fed me this scroll. <sup>3</sup> He said to me, "Son of man, feed your stomach and fill your body with this scroll which I am giving you." Then I ate it, and it was sweet as honey in my mouth. Ezekiel 3:1-3 (NASB)

I knew early on that I wanted to be a "preacher, minister, pastor". I decided that the things I wanted to "preach, promote, and teach" would need to be not simply what I heard others speak, but what it said in the book; what Jesus, the prophets, Paul, Peter, John and all the others taught. What I later learned was I wanted to be like Jesus:

- "My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me. <sup>17</sup> If anyone wants to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or *whether* I speak on My own *authority*. John 7:16-17 (NKJV)

What I was later to learn was what led up to Ezekiel's introduction into his "ministry".

- "Open your mouth and eat what I am giving you." <sup>9</sup> Then I looked, and behold, a hand was extended to me; and lo, a scroll *was* in it. <sup>10</sup> When He spread it out before me, it was written on the front and back, and written on it were lamentations, mourning and woe. Ezekiel 2:8-10 (NASB)

The sweetness of the word sometimes gave way to bitterness as it must have to Ezekiel as he dealt with the "*lamentations, mourning and woe.*" Much like the bitterness in Revelation 10:9.

The communion service is a very good example of the idea. Jesus asks us to partake of the words we read and hear about his death and the shedding of his blood; to ingest them internally. *“Don’t forget those words about me”*. It is easy to look into the *“perfect law of liberty”*<sup>7</sup> and forget who and what we are if we forget who Jesus is and what he did.

I hope through this introduction you can get an idea of who I am and to some extent where I am coming from. Some of you have known me for at least part of my ministry in the Church of God during the past 43 years. You know that my teaching (*doctrine*) is, to some of you, perhaps *ultra* conservative. I will admit to, without apologizing for, having *ultra* conservative roots. I have not nor will I ever seek to do away with my heritage. Having perhaps begun my presentation in a very unorthodox manner let me say this:

I believe that God has certain expectations which are delineated in the Bible. These expectancies which Jesus referred to as, *“His Father’s doctrine, which he also owned”*, are comprehensible to the person who in humility will ask God in faith<sup>8</sup>. God, who, from the beginning has been at work in His creation, has now committed that work to His Son. Because of who we are, He has committed the same to us as we can see through the example of Philip and the eunuch.<sup>9</sup>

God is not willing that any should perish. (2Peter 3:9) He said to Ezekiel *“I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth.”* (Ezek. 18:32) He is after all our creator and can save whoever He so chooses. It is not up to me or you to say that this or that person will not be saved if they don’t adhere to a set of teachings. God can do that and does in the Bible but having said and realized that I know that in the end it is up to Him who he saves and who he does not. I will therefor present my lessons on that premise. God has given His word. I understand what He has said at least part of the time and truly believe those issues to be of utmost importance; but the gift of His salvation is up to Him. (See Matt. 20:1-16)

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<sup>7</sup> James 1:23-25 (NASB77) <sup>23</sup> For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; <sup>24</sup> for *once* he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. <sup>25</sup> But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the *law* of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man shall be blessed in what he does.

<sup>8</sup> James 1:5 (NASB77) <sup>5</sup> But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all men generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. The KJV uses the phrase *“upbraideth not”*. To me it is simply, *“God will hold us to account for not knowing it seems”*, else why is there any urgency in presenting the gospel to those who do not know it? However He is very merciful to those who will ask Him for His revelation to them of what they need to know. Do you remember Jesus’ words to Peter? *“Flesh and blood has not revealed it to you but my Father which is in heaven.”* Matt. 16:17.

<sup>9</sup> See: Acts 8:26-40 Philip endeavored to pass along (*even as Jesus passed along what he received from the Father*) what he had received from the Lord to the Eunuch because of the leading of the Lord through the spirit.

## GOD AS THE HIGHEST

Most of us have read or heard the work of Dr. Harold J. Sala. Here is a part of his a work that appeared in Guidelines. He here deals with a principle with which I concur. He wrote:

[Does it really make any difference what you believe, just so that you believe it with all your heart? Many millions of men and women would answer in the negative. They would respond that it does not make much difference what you believe as long as you believe it with all your might. Some would perhaps add that all religions lead to the same place if you do your best and follow the teaching.

A number of prominent medical authorities recognize the therapeutic power of belief as opposed to the debilitating and unhealthy effects of doubt and skepticism. Dr. Carl Jung was among those who recognized strong belief in about anything as a good thing. Jung took the position that religion meets one of man's basic needs and that lack of faith is the root cause of neurosis, which he often found in his patients. In fact, Jung would go so far as to say that lack of faith was the root cause of neurosis in every one of his patients. But Dr. Jung was not concerned with the truth or falsity of a person's beliefs, he simply felt that a person who believed in something--whether it be a lump of silly putty or a totem pole that had passed from generation to generation--was better off than one who had no convictions.....

.....The difference between faith in belief and faith in God. There is a big difference. Let's suppose that you are crossing a turbulent river, and spanning the gorge is a bridge. But what you do not know is that the planks are rotten, and, although it has been satisfactory for many years, it is likely to let you plunge through the rotten timbers to your death below. Your faith in the weak planks may be strong, but weak faith in a strong plank is better. The validity of Christianity is not the strength of your belief, but rather its strength is in the empty tomb and God's power that brought Jesus forth from the grave.

It is not great faith that really counts--it is faith in a great God. The Bible makes little allowance for the power of faith in faith, but without faith in the sovereign God of the Bible there is little hope of pleasing Him who calls us. What really counts is not the strength of your belief, but rather the strength of Him in whom you believe.]

- "...Because you have so little faith. I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you." (Matthew 17:20).

Faith is the vehicle in which we must ride today. It was the medium of all the saints of old: "The just shall live by faith".<sup>10</sup> It is the avenue traveled by those "who obtained a good report".<sup>11</sup> Even though that faith, Jesus said, needs be ever so small; it must be, not in a "higher power"

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<sup>10</sup> See Romans 1:17, Galatians 3:11, and Hebrews 10:38

<sup>11</sup> See Hebrews 11:39

but in the “highest power”.<sup>12</sup> If we are to have faith in the “highest GOD”, the God “YHWH” of the Bible, much effort should be exercised to find out as much as we can about Him and “get to know Him”.

So essential is faith that the writer of Hebrews emphasized how it is impossible to *please God* without it. The writer makes this point after explaining that it was by faith that Enoch *pleased* God. Believing that “*God is*” certainly carries with it the indication that he exists with the added impression that “he *singularly* exists”.<sup>13</sup> *Coming to God* conveys the notion of approaching or coming near to God.<sup>14</sup>

- And without faith it is impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and *that* He is a rewarder of those who seek Him. Heb 11:6 (NASB)

### **THEY KNOW NOT ME**<sup>15</sup>

Failing to “know” this YHWH God,<sup>16</sup> that we pray “hallowed be Thy Name” to, brought *breakdown* to God’s people in the past. Following the death of Joshua we are told:

- All that generation also were gathered to their fathers; and there arose another generation after them who did not know the LORD, nor yet the work which He had done for Israel. Judges 2:10 (NASB)

It seems that they followed a natural progression. As a result of not knowing God we are told:

- And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim: **12** And they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that *were* round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the LORD to anger. Judges 2:11-12 (KJV)

A sad thing it is, not to know YHWH God. It was bad enough for the Israelites to be without the leaders who had guided them for so long and for so far. What they had forgotten was that it was YHWH God who had been leading them all along, through Moses as well as Joshua. At that

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<sup>12</sup> See Luke 1:32 The angel Gabriel told Mary that her child would “be called the Son of the **Highest**”

<sup>13</sup> If in fact the singular verb “is” gives that indication.

<sup>14</sup> Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith. Heb 10:22

<sup>15</sup> See Jeremiah 9:3

<sup>16</sup> And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I *am* the LORD: **3** And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by *the name of* God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH (YHWH) was I not known to them. Ex 6:2-3 (KJV)

point in their journey of faith they were left with the guiding hand of YHWH God. That lack of security lead them to seek the gods of their neighbors, which God had strictly forbidden.<sup>17</sup>

- " Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!  
<sup>5</sup>"And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.  
<sup>6</sup>"And these words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart;  
<sup>7</sup>and you shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.  
<sup>8</sup>" And you shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead.  
<sup>9</sup>" And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.  
<sup>10</sup>"Then it shall come about when the LORD your God brings you into the land which He swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to give you, great and splendid cities which you did not build,  
<sup>11</sup>and houses full of all good things which you did not fill, and hewn cisterns which you did not dig, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant, and you shall eat and be satisfied,  
<sup>12</sup>then watch yourself, lest you forget the LORD who brought you from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.  
<sup>13</sup>" You shall fear *only* the LORD your God; and you shall worship Him, and swear by His name.  
<sup>14</sup>" You shall not follow other gods, any of the gods of the peoples who surround you,  
<sup>15</sup>for the LORD your God in the midst of you is a jealous God; otherwise the anger of the LORD your God will be kindled against you, and He will wipe you off the face of the earth. Deuteronomy 6:4-15 (NASB77)

#### A careful analysis of Moses' words (YHWH's WORDS):

- a. YHWH is our God and He is One. If a person has a God, that God should be the highest one. John the Baptist recognized that Jesus was greater than himself and Jesus recognized that his Father was his God and that he was the highest, the greatest.<sup>18</sup>
- b. Can you say, "I love God with all my heart"? Had the Israelites who settled into the land of promise learned to love God with all their hearts? Doesn't seem so, does it?
- c. What didn't happen in their lives was:
  - 1.The Words of YHWH did not make it into their hearts, or if it did it did not stay.
  - 2.Their parents did not instill YHWH's WORDS in their hearts
  - 3.They either had *never* known YHWH or only learned "about" Him

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<sup>17</sup> Exodus 20:3 and Deut. 5:7

<sup>18</sup> See John 14:28, Luke 3:16, John 20:17

Without this foundation in their lives they were able to stumble along under the proper leadership of Moses and Joshua. However, when the time came for their personal stand in faith they failed and turned to their neighbors' gods. They left the "one YHWH God" and accepted other gods. Moses' words came true:

- <sup>10</sup> "Then it shall come about when the LORD your God brings you into the land which He swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to give you, great and splendid cities which you did not build,  
<sup>11</sup> and houses full of all good things which you did not fill, and hewn cisterns which you did not dig, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant, and you shall eat and be satisfied,  
<sup>12</sup> then watch yourself, lest you forget the LORD who brought you from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.  
<sup>13</sup> " You shall fear *only* the LORD your God; and you shall worship Him, and swear by His name.

Was what happened to the Israelites peculiar to them or does it also have any application to our day and time? What can I take away from this *history*?

- For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. <sup>5</sup> Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus; <sup>6</sup> that with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Romans 15:4-6 (NASB77)

God wanted the nation of Israel to, *in one accord*, glorify the one LORD. He also wants us with one accord to glorify the God and Father (*who is the one LORD YHWH*) of our Lord Jesus Christ. See? Here is the problem:

In a Psalm where David commissioned Asaph and his relatives to give thanks to this one LORD, YHWH, he reminded the people<sup>19</sup> of how their one God had delivered them as they had traveled through the nations in a wonderful way. One point David wanted the people to be sure to remember in their praise from their heart was:

- For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; He also is to be feared above all gods. <sup>26</sup> For all the gods of the peoples are idols, But the LORD made the heavens. 1 Chronicles 16:25-26 (NASB77)

Any god that is not the "highest" is only an idol which was strictly forbidden and not to be tolerated according to the words of Moses:

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<sup>19</sup> See 1 Chronicles 16:7-36

- "You shall not follow other gods, any of the gods of the peoples who surround you,<sup>15</sup> for the LORD your God in the midst of you is a jealous God; otherwise the anger of the LORD your God will be kindled against you, and He will wipe you off the face of the earth. Deuteronomy 6:14-15 (NASB77)

The idea behind "talking about them (these commands, words, testimonies) wherever you are, sitting at home or walking in the street; talk about them from the time you get up in the morning to when you fall into bed at night, tying them on your hands and foreheads as a reminder; inscribing them on the doorposts of your homes and on your city gates. The idea was to get these words inside of you and inside of your children."<sup>20</sup>

- "When your son asks you in time to come, saying, 'What *do* the testimonies and the statutes and the judgments *mean* which the LORD our God commanded you?' Deuteronomy 6:20 (NASB77)

Get your kids to begin asking what the things they hear you talk about mean. Let the life you live and the things you say cause someone else to be inquisitive about your God, your YHWH. Make sure they understand that your YHWH is one, He is the greatest, He is the highest, He is the creator and Him alone.

### **THE SHEMA IN THE NEW TESTAMENT**

What is the first commandment? The entire story behind the question and the answer begs our attention. Here we can get inside the driving force of our Lord and Master.

- And one of the scribes came and heard them arguing, and recognizing that He had answered them well, asked Him, "What commandment is the foremost of all?"<sup>29</sup> Jesus answered, "The foremost is, ' HEAR, O ISRAEL! THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE LORD;<sup>30</sup> AND YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH.'<sup>31</sup> "The second is this, ' YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' There is no other commandment greater than these."<sup>32</sup> And the scribe said to Him, "Right, Teacher, You have truly stated that HE IS ONE; AND THERE IS NO ONE ELSE BESIDES HIM;<sup>33</sup> AND TO LOVE HIM WITH ALL THE HEART AND WITH ALL THE UNDERSTANDING AND WITH ALL THE STRENGTH, AND TO LOVE ONE'S NEIGHBOR AS HIMSELF, is much more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices."<sup>34</sup> And when Jesus saw that he had answered intelligently, He said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." And after that, no one would venture to ask Him any more questions. Mark 12:28-34 (NASB77)

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<sup>20</sup> Deuteronomy 6:7-9

It will help us to get inside the thinking Jesus presented to the Scribe and as well as the thinking the Scribe gained from Jesus' teaching. If God is "one" He deserves to be #1, the greatest, the highest. Isaiah called Him "the high and lofty one that inhabits eternity, whose Name is holy".<sup>21</sup> The Scribe picked up on that thought right away. "Right, Teacher, You have truly stated that HE IS ONE; AND THERE IS NO ONE ELSE BESIDES HIM; AND TO LOVE HIM WITH ALL THE HEART AND WITH ALL THE UNDERSTANDING AND WITH ALL THE STRENGTH." If we, like the scribe, want to get close to the Kingdom of God; this needs to be a part of our understanding. John saw this correlation between our love for God and our love for our neighbor and wrote:

- We love, because He first loved us.<sup>20</sup> If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen. 1 John 4:19-20 (NASB77)

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<sup>21</sup> Isaiah 57:15

## GOD'S ONLY BEGOTTEN SON

Paul's initial ministry to the people of Corinth placed enormous emphasis on Jesus Christ and on his cruel crucifixion and death. He sought at the outset to give particular prominence to what so many of the people had only heard about but wanted more information than the snippets that had been exposed to. In beginning of Paul's ministry in Corinth, he expressed to be at a loss for those *persuasive words* that flowed so freely in his former ministries in Philippi, Thessalonica and Berea where he had left several small groups of converts.<sup>22</sup> There was, however, a demonstration of the Spirit and of power among them which assured him and the people of Corinth of the working of God's power in their midst. His expression "fear and trembling" offers a glimpse into the personal side of this man of faith.

- **1 Corinthians 2:2-5 (NASB77)** <sup>2</sup> For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. <sup>3</sup> And I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling.  
<sup>4</sup> And my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power,  
<sup>5</sup> that your faith should not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God.

Considering the initial response to the Corinthians mentioned here it seems helpful to forward over to the 15<sup>th</sup> chapter where we would get an even more complete picture of the beginnings at Corinth. Given the fact that Paul had seen the resurrected Christ; he was uniquely qualified to bring to the Corinthians the "gospel", embodied in the person of the risen Savior who he had seen: who was crucified for the sins of humanity, raised from death to life, and seen by the apostles, of which Paul himself felt only as the least.

- **1 Corinthians 15:1-8 (NASB)** <sup>1</sup> Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, <sup>2</sup> by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. <sup>3</sup> For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, <sup>4</sup> and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, <sup>5</sup> and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. <sup>6</sup> After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep; <sup>7</sup> then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles; <sup>8</sup> and last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared to me also.

Jesus in a sense was the embodiment of the gospel. See "good tidings" (Luke 1:19, 2:10, 3:18, 4:18) as well as many other reference where Jesus spoke on his favorite subject, "*The gospel*

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<sup>22</sup> "Polite amusements greeted his witness in Corinth and was perhaps more difficult to take than violence: violence at least showed that some impact, was being made." FF Bruce in PAUL Apostle of the Heart Set Free. (page 248)

(*glad tidings*) of the kingdom". Pilate commissioned a placard of some sort to be put on the cross where Jesus was crucified, written in Latin, Hebrew and Greek which said, "JESUS OF NAZERETH THE KING OF THE JEWS". The chief priests wanted it only to say, "HE SAID I AM KING OF THE JEWS", John 19:19-22, but Pilate ordered it to left as he had said. Little did Pilate (the one who asked Jesus "What is truth"?) know the truth of what he said at the time. Even though the Chief Priests said, "We have no King but Caesar". (Ver. 15) This is what Jesus in a parable said they would say; "We do not want this man to reign over us" (Lk. 19:14) it was still ordained and revealed before his conception that he would "reign over the house of Jacob forever and of his kingdom there would be no end". Lk. 1:33 This Jesus that Paul included as a primary part of the gospel of the kingdom was the very one who should announce the good news, "*The Kingdom of heaven is at hand.*"

Even though some of us might be eager to testify that we "have allowed this man to reign over them", we must not be like the Jews who crucified Jesus, thinking they were allowing YHWH God to reign over them, without allowing Jesus to be *their* Lord and Master. In Jesus' ministry he often chided those who spent time in the temple, made long public prayers, paid tithes down to leaves of mint, and made wide phylacteries<sup>23</sup>, thinking themselves to be better than the tax collector, "who went down to his house justified"<sup>24</sup> after the two of them worshipped in the temple. Jesus warned that our righteousness must "*surpass*" theirs<sup>25</sup> if we expect to enter the kingdom.

- **Luke 6:46-49 (NASB)**<sup>46</sup> "Why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?<sup>47</sup> "Everyone who comes to Me and hears My words and acts on them, I will show you whom he is like:<sup>48</sup> he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid a foundation on the rock; and when a flood occurred, the torrent burst against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built.<sup>49</sup> "But the one who has heard and has not acted *accordingly*, is like a man who built a house on the ground without any foundation; and the torrent burst against it and immediately it collapsed, and the ruin of that house was great."

### **ANOTHER JESUS?**<sup>26</sup>

Jesus beckons to those who are burdened and are heavy laden to "*come to Him*"<sup>27</sup> and He will give rest. How often I have recognized that need and availed myself of the opportunity. Hearing His words and needing to act in a positive manner to their implications has at times provided me no small amount of difficulty.

- **Matthew 7:15-23 (NASB)**<sup>15</sup> "Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves."<sup>16</sup> "You will know them by their fruits."

<sup>23</sup> See Exodus 13:16 and Mat. 23:5

<sup>24</sup> See Luke 18:9-14

<sup>25</sup> See Mat. 5:20

<sup>26</sup> See 2Corin. 11:2-4 also comments later.

<sup>27</sup> See Mat. 11:28

Grapes are not gathered from thorn *bushes* nor figs from thistles, are they? <sup>17</sup> "So every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. <sup>18</sup> "A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. <sup>19</sup> "Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. <sup>20</sup> "So then, you will know them by their fruits. <sup>21</sup> "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven *will enter*. <sup>22</sup> "Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' <sup>23</sup> "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS .'

There are things in this parable that trouble me. In the context of being on-guard against what Jesus called "false prophets", Jesus offers another warning. This warning involves something that will keep us from entering into the kingdom of God where Jesus will reign as king. The troubling part is that he warned us against those who seem to be fellow laborers. They know how to "call on the Lord"<sup>28</sup> just as I do. They can prophesy in Jesus' name and can even perform miracles it is claimed. This warning Jesus applied to the end-time signs as well,<sup>29</sup>

"Take heed that no one misleads **you**", which should give **us** pause to reflect on its meaning. Being Jesus' words<sup>30</sup> I must not dare push them aside. We can be misled by someone who knows the magic, "Lord, Lord" words: who knows how to come in Jesus name, how to prophesy in Jesus' name, and even how to perform apparent miracles. Somehow, according to Jesus, I am to be suspicious enough and ask enough questions to make some determinations as to the quality of the fruit they produce.

Would it be safe to conclude that someone who does not confess the very first commandment just could possibly be practicing some type of lawlessness<sup>31</sup> by not abiding by the very first command? While I can only leave up to God *their* salvation, I cannot leave to *chance* mine. If Jesus has given warning, it would seem very important for me to take that warning seriously.

### **DENYING THE FATHER AND THE SON**

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<sup>28</sup> See Romans 10:13 and Acts 2:21

<sup>29</sup> See Mat. 24:4-5

<sup>30</sup> See Luke 9:26 Care must be taken not to be ashamed to Jesus and his words. Do you remember Paul's message to the Thessalonians in 4:13-16, "But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. **For this we say to you by the word of the Lord**, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of *the* archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first." This is the word of the Lord. It is the hope of those who mourn the loss of their loved ones.

<sup>31</sup> See Deut. 6:4-5, Mark 12:29-30

It seems ironic to me that John the very one who said, "In the beginning was the word"<sup>32</sup>, said:

- **1 John 2:21-24 (NASB)**<sup>21</sup> I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it, and because no lie is of the truth.<sup>22</sup> Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son.<sup>23</sup> Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also.<sup>24</sup> As for you, let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father.

What I am trying to say is, "John, who supplied what is thought to be the primary tenant for the teaching of the doctrine of the pre-existence of Christ, gives these dire warnings regarding the presence of antichrist already appearing in his day." John appeared to take a very narrow view of "*knowing the truth*". It seems to be much narrower than what even most of us in the Church of God would allow. We would manage to give more space for "*interpretation of truth*" than did John. We pastors have "*agreed to disagree*" on that principle more than once. I can only represent my conservative view that there are "*essentials*" that need to be "*understood-and stood for*" which would necessarily take the form of the truth John speaks of so forcefully in verses 21-22. Paul appeared to join that same frame of reference.<sup>33</sup>

Back to John's reference to what he would later refer to as "that *spirit* of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world."<sup>34</sup> This, it seems to me, John linked to the "*denial of the Father and the Son*"<sup>35</sup>. Is that not what is done by asserting that Jesus is as old as his Father? Is that not denying God as Father of Jesus?<sup>36</sup> If Jesus is co-equal and co-eternal with his Father, how could he be "the Son of God"? If God the Father is as old as Jesus the Son, how could he be "the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ?" It does appear that John preferred not to be complicit to such gross misrepresentation of the "*truth*". This would, as he said in chapter 4, lead to the denial of the humanity of Jesus<sup>34</sup>.

- **2 Corinthians 11:1-4 (NASB)**<sup>2</sup> For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, so that to Christ I might present you *as* a pure virgin.<sup>3</sup> But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of *devotion* to Christ.<sup>4</sup> For if one comes and preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or you receive a different spirit

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<sup>32</sup> John 1:1

<sup>33</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:12 (KJV)**<sup>12</sup> That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

<sup>34</sup> 1John 4:3 Considering the prominence of a doctrine in Christianity which denies the *humanity* of Jesus, *that he is a real human being*, his Sonship, as well as the Fatherhood of God; it does not seem unreasonable for John to give such a warning. To overlook such counsel does not appear to be a prudent thing to do.

<sup>35</sup> 1John 2:22-24

<sup>36</sup> Rom. 15:6, 2 Corin. 1:3, Ephesians 1:3, Col. 1:3, 1Peter 1:3 Note also in all these references, God is *the God of Jesus Christ* as well as *his Father*.

which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted, you bear *this* beautifully.

Paul, in his first letter to the Corinthians, had warned the Corinthians of wandering away from the Shema, "Hear O Israel, the LORD our God, the LORD is one"<sup>37</sup> as he observed the many gods around them. "Yet for us there is but one God, the Father." Carefully note the point made; that the *one God is the Father. (Not the Son, but the Father)* The Corinthians needed reminding in the first letter that there is "*one God and one only*", even though there appeared to be "*many gods*" to their friends and neighbors. In his second letter they, the Corinthians, needed to be warned against tolerating what he termed "*another Jesus*". Paul was concerned that the "one husband" he had a part in betrothing the Corinthians to, was none other than the one who "died for our sins according to the scriptures; was buried and was raised on the third day according to the scriptures."<sup>38</sup> I get the notion from what Paul wrote here that he didn't appreciate the way the Corinthian people were "*tolerating*" these "*super-apostles*"<sup>39</sup> who had managed to craftily deceive, and in *serpent* fashion, present to them "another Jesus" which he had not presented to them. While it is not clear what the Jesus presented to the Corinthians by these super-apostles resembled; it is worthy to note that a Jesus who is God could not be killed,<sup>40</sup> buried, or resurrected, much less being so prophesied by the scriptures. Paul confessed that even though their oratory training seemed to outshine his own; his knowledge, no doubt of the scriptures, was superior.<sup>41</sup> He refused to *back off* or to *back up* even a step.<sup>42</sup>

- Ephesians 4:5-6 (NASB)<sup>5</sup> one Lord, one faith, one baptism,<sup>6</sup> one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.

While there is one Lord, there is one LORD.<sup>43</sup> The Lord who was born in Bethlehem of Judaea is the one they slew and hanged on a tree.<sup>44</sup> This Christ the Lord is the same one that they took down from the cross and laid in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea.<sup>45</sup> This Jesus who was laid in the tomb was the one that died so he is the one that God, his Father, raised from the dead and set him at His own right hand.<sup>46</sup> The Jesus who is alive today is the one who was dead and was

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<sup>37</sup> See Deut. 6:4

<sup>38</sup> See 1Corin. 15:1-4

<sup>39</sup> See the MSG paraphrase/translation

<sup>40</sup> If God could have been killed then the "GOD IS DEAD" people are correct.

<sup>41</sup> See 2Corin. 11:5-6

<sup>42</sup> Please note how Paul faced those who he called "false brethren". **Galatians 2:5 (NASB)** But we did not yield in subjection to them for even an hour, so that the truth of the gospel would remain with you.

<sup>43</sup> Psalm 110:1 (NASB) The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at My right hand Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet."

<sup>44</sup> See Luke 2:11, Acts 5:30 and 10:39

<sup>45</sup> See Matthew 27:57-60

<sup>46</sup> See Luke 24:39, Ephesians 1:20

dead.<sup>47</sup> The Jesus who ascended into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God his Father is the very one who will come to earth in like manner as he went away.<sup>48</sup> The Jesus who was born of the virgin Mary is the same Jesus who will reign over the house of Jacob forever and the same Jesus whose kingdom will be without end.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> See Rev. 1:18

<sup>48</sup> See Acts 1:11

<sup>49</sup> See Luke 1:33

## GOD'S REWARDS

John 1:1-14 ABV “In the beginning there was God’s grand design, the declaration of His intention and Purpose, and that declaration was with God, related to Him as His project, and it was fully expressive of God Himself. This was with God in the beginning. Everything came into existence through it, and without it nothing of what came into being existed. In it there was life and that life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness and the darkness did not overwhelm it. There came on the scene of history a man sent from God. His name was John. This man came as a witness so that he might bear witness to the Light and that everyone might believe through him. He was not the Light himself, but he witnessed concerning the Light. This was the genuine Light which enlightens every man coming into the world. He was in the world and the world came into existence through him, and the world did not recognize him, the Light. He came to his own land and his own people did not accept him. As many, however, as did accept him, to these he gave the right to become children of God — namely the ones believing in his Gospel revelation. These were born not from blood, nor from the desire of the flesh nor from the desire of a male, but from God. And the word came into existence, a human being and tabernacled among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of a uniquely begotten Son from a Father, full of grace and truth.”

Omnipotence is difficult/impossible for us mere mortals to understand. As yet, as a species, we don’t seem to have the desire to accept the statement that “*it is he that hath made us and not we ourselves*”.<sup>50</sup> Science wants us to accept the premise that *we did it all* through the process of *evolution*. So even suggesting the idea that God is *all knowing* is unacceptable to so many in this day. However, that is just what the Bible teaches. It was He that made us.

- Acts 15:18 (KJV)<sup>18</sup> Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world. Christians will accept that God created Adam and Eve who later decided they knew more about things than He did, so they went against His instructions<sup>51</sup> and ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil<sup>52</sup>, which He had strictly forbidden.<sup>53</sup>

Many will further accept the notion that, following man’s “*sin*”, God scurried about to put together a package of remedy, which included sending one of the “*godhead*” to the earth to redeem *humanity lost*. As a part of that package, this part of the godhead, would be incarnated into the world and would die for humanity’s sins. I covered much of that false perception in a former paper at this Seminar,<sup>54</sup> and on my website “godhasaplan.net”.

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<sup>50</sup> Psalms 100:3

<sup>51</sup> Gen. 2:17

<sup>52</sup> Gen. 3:6-7

<sup>53</sup> Gen. 2:16-17

<sup>54</sup> Christian Workers Seminar 2014

Not only did God “*know*” from the beginning what would transpire in the forever future, He had a *plan* already in place. When the Bible refers to Jesus as “*the beginning of the creation of God*,”<sup>55</sup> I believe, that is to say that Jesus was the primary part of the plan to begin with. John the Baptist was aware of that truth when he said:

- John 1:29-30 (NKJV) <sup>29</sup>The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! <sup>30</sup>This is He of whom I said, 'After me comes a Man who is preferred before me, for *He was before me.*'

Jesus did not exist in person long before John any more than he existed long before Abraham<sup>56</sup> other than in the definitive purpose of God.<sup>57</sup> The deeper we get into God’s purpose the more we begin to understand why we are here as well as why Jesus is here. The more we learn to pray “*not my will but thine be done*”<sup>58</sup> is the more we align ourselves with God’s plan which He purposed in His Son, our Savior. It sometimes seems problematic for us to “*get on the same page*” with God. It’s as if we are at “*cross-purposes*” (an English term which I like). Surely, we should say, “If God is omnipotent and omnipresent, He should know what is *best* for us and what furthers His plan”. God’s plan gives “*long range planning*” an altogether more-powerful aura.

It is plain from the ABV at the beginning of this presentation that John and Peter were on the same page regarding God’s word (*logos*). They were both referencing “*God’s grand design*”. Peter helps us to take a look at this *logos*:

- For when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that by the word (*logos*) of God the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed out of water and by water, 6 through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water.7 But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. 2 Peter 3:5-7 (NASB)

This is important to this last lesson in this series because it brings to the front, the hope that I share with “*others of like precious faith*”<sup>59</sup> placing that hope squarely in the center of God’s plan from the beginning. Take away that hope and the whole of my expectation is shattered.

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<sup>55</sup> Revelation 3:14 Jesus was the beginning of the old creation and the new creation so far as God’s plan was concerned. Not that He created Him physically first but that He created Him in His plan first and foremost.

<sup>56</sup> John 8:58

<sup>57</sup> *And to bring to light what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God who created all things;10 so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places.11 This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord,* Ephesians 3:9-11 (NASB)

<sup>58</sup> Luke 22:42

<sup>59</sup> 2 Peter 1:1

Inasmuch as faith is involved in things not seen as yet but do exist in the plan of God for the future, it is no small wonder that the writer of Hebrews asserted that the one coming to God “*must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him*”.<sup>60</sup> Abraham was fully assured that “*what God had promised he was able also to perform.*”<sup>61</sup> It seems to me that the *degree* and the *substance* (if I might use the word substance in this instance) of our faith, regarding the *reward* God has promised is *weighty* with Him. God promised Abraham that he would give him certain land<sup>62</sup> (and I do not think He used that word land without due consideration of the other land promises in the Bible), in other words, God was referring to the same land, David referred to in Psalm:

- **Psalm 37:29 (NKJV)** <sup>29</sup> The righteous shall inherit the land, And dwell in it forever.

And the same earth Jesus reiterated in the beatitudes which David mentioned in verse eleven:<sup>63</sup>

- **Psalm 37:11 (KJV)** <sup>11</sup> But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

### **GOD KNEW-GOD PURPOSED-GOD ORDAINED**

When we bring up what God *knew, purposed and ordained* from the beginning, it is interesting to note the following:

- Hebrews 2:6-8 (NASB) <sup>6</sup> But one has testified somewhere, saying, "WHAT IS MAN, THAT YOU REMEMBER HIM? OR THE SON OF MAN, THAT YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT HIM? <sup>7</sup> "YOU HAVE MADE HIM FOR A LITTLE WHILE LOWER THAN THE ANGELS; YOU HAVE CROWNED HIM WITH GLORY AND HONOR, AND HAVE APPOINTED HIM OVER THE WORKS OF YOUR HANDS; <sup>8</sup> YOU HAVE PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET." For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing that is not subject to him. But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him.

Most of us only want to go back to Psalm chapter eight in our comprehension of this text in Hebrews (where the writer is drawing attention to the preeminence of Jesus over the angles in God's plan and purpose) but actually we would need to go back to the beginning, to appreciate the full value of what was said both in Psalm 8 as well as Hebrews 2.

- Genesis 1:28 (KJV) <sup>28</sup> And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and **have dominion** over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

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<sup>60</sup> Hebrews 11:6

<sup>61</sup> Romans 4:21

<sup>62</sup> Genesis 13:14-17

<sup>63</sup> Matt. 5:5

A careful analysis here will show that God intended in the beginning that *His Son*, (a human being), will someday have the *dominion* God has purposed. Look at this scripture from the Psalm:

- Psalm 72:7-8 (KJV) <sup>7</sup> In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. <sup>8</sup> He shall have **dominion** also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.

This Messianic prophecy is often overlooked in our search to understand the references in Genesis, Psalm and Hebrews. Zechariah chimes in:

- Zechariah 9:9-11 (NASB) <sup>9</sup> Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout *in triumph*, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, Humble, and mounted on a donkey, Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey. <sup>10</sup> I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim And the horse from Jerusalem; And the bow of war will be cut off. And He will speak peace to the nations; and **His dominion** will be from sea to sea, And from the River to the ends of the earth. <sup>11</sup> As for you also, because of the blood of *My* covenant with you, I have set your prisoners free from the waterless pit.

All this is given to us to help us better comprehend the fullness of what was meant in Acts chapter 3, where Peter spoke of the *times of restitution*. The restitution of the full dominion, purposed and planned for God's creation:

- Acts 3:21 (KJV) <sup>21</sup> Whom the heaven must receive until the *times of restitution of all things*, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.

[Our God was Adam's God. Our God was David's God. God gave birth to the earth. It all emerged from his mind through his word; *i.e.* "*and God said.*" Moses tried to put it in human terms. *From everlasting to everlasting God is God.*<sup>64</sup>

God said to Adam, "*Dust thou are and unto dust shalt thou return.*" Genesis 3:19. Our lives stretch only to include our generation, but God has been man's dwelling place in all generations. To help us understand it Moses said "*a thousand years in God's sight are like only yesterday when it passes by.*"<sup>65</sup> He CAN and he DOES have a plan.

God awakens our understanding through Isaiah the prophet. He can *declare the end from the beginning* because He thus so *ordains*. This includes the things he has determined and the

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<sup>64</sup> Psalm 90:1-2

<sup>65</sup> Psalm 90:4

things he just knows because, after all, He is God and He is omniscient.<sup>66</sup>

"Remember the former things long past, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me,<sup>10</sup> Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, 'My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure'." Isaiah 46:9-10 (NASB)]<sup>67</sup>

[God allows us to understand how he thinks through what he has revealed to us in the Bible. He wants us to know at least a small fragment of his design. The Bible gives us a glimpse of his sketches for the future.]<sup>66</sup>

### **MOSES THE PROPHET/DAVID THE PROPHET**

When we think of "the prophets of God" we often limit that company to the Major and Minor Prophets in the Old Testament and to perhaps John in revelation. We must not forget the prophecies of Paul, Peter, James and John. Especially note how John was settled as a prophet:

- Revelation 1:1-2 (NASB) <sup>1</sup>The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must soon take place; and He sent and communicated *it* by His angel to His bond-servant John, <sup>2</sup> who testified to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, *even* to all that he saw.

Remember where all prophecy begins. God gave the Revelation to Jesus, who gave the Disclosure to His angel, who then communicated the same to John to show to his bond-servants. Notice the verification of the same, given by Amos the prophet:

- Amos 3:7-8 (NASB) <sup>7</sup> Surely the Lord GOD does nothing Unless He reveals His secret counsel To His servants the prophets. <sup>8</sup> A lion has roared! Who will not fear? The Lord GOD has spoken! Who can but prophesy?

His secret counsel reveals to humanity:

1. The mystery of His will
2. His kind intention
3. His purpose
4. The counsel of His will
5. Through the message of truth, the gospel of our salvation.

- Ephesians 1:9-13 (NASB) <sup>9</sup> He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him <sup>10</sup> with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, *that is*, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the

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<sup>66</sup> Acts 2:23

<sup>67</sup> Godhasaplan.net...GOD'S PLAN...God Has A Plan

heavens and things on the earth. In Him <sup>11</sup> also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, <sup>12</sup> to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory. <sup>13</sup> In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise,

Peter made the unmistakable assertion that David was a prophet of God. It is very difficult to read Psalm and not come to that conclusion. <sup>68</sup> Not only was David *a man after God's own heart*<sup>69</sup> and *the sweet Psalmist of Israel*;<sup>70</sup> he was also *a prophet of God*. His many prophecies relating to the coming Messiah as well as the inheritance of the saints all are a constant reminder of how God wants to reveal the counsel of His will to His people.

Moses is often overlooked as being a prophet of God. Do you remember his own words?

- Deuteronomy 18:15-19 (NASB) <sup>15</sup> "The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen, you shall listen to him. <sup>16</sup> "This is according to all that you asked of the LORD your God in Horeb on the day of the assembly, saying, 'Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, let me not see this great fire anymore, or I will die.' <sup>17</sup> "The LORD said to me, 'They have spoken well. <sup>18</sup> 'I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. <sup>19</sup> 'It shall come about that whoever will not listen to My words which he shall speak in My name, I Myself will require *it* of him.

Moses's words in Genesis 1:26-28 can be seen through David in Psalm 8 and also by the writer to the Hebrews in chapter 2:6-10 to have Messianic ramifications. It is quite possible that Moses had an even deeper meaning that we had thought.

- **Genesis 1:26-28 (NASB)** <sup>26</sup> Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." <sup>27</sup> God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. <sup>28</sup> God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

Look a bit closer at the words in Hebrews 2 as they relate to Jesus. "We see not yet all things put under him (man). But we see Jesus made lower than the angels by the suffering of

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<sup>68</sup> Acts 2:30

<sup>69</sup> Acts 13:22

<sup>70</sup> 2 Samuel 23:1

death....that he should taste death for every man....the children (*you and I, his brothers*) being partakers of flesh and blood...he took part of the same that he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil...and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lives subject to bondage."<sup>71</sup> The writer takes us back to the beginning, asking us to take another look at the writings of Moses with *new eyes*. Because Eve was "*deceived by the serpent through his craftiness*"<sup>72</sup>, many were held hostage through fear of death, because "*in Adam all die*".<sup>73</sup> This would not allow the promised intention of God that man should have dominion over every living thing that moves on the earth. How many are those microscopic things that move on the earth that mankind does not "*now*" dominate? What we do have as *proof* that this dominion will occur is our Savior who tasted death for every man; having been made perfect through sufferings and will ultimately destroy him that had the power over death, the devil<sup>74</sup> and deliver those who live in fear of death.

Another of the things we might look at with new eyes is "Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness." I don't want you to misunderstand what I am saying, but I think he was talking to Jesus. Immediately I can see you shrink in your seats, not wanting to allow any knowledge of Dennis Baldwin. I believe that was said to Jesus in the same way as God said through David: "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee."<sup>75</sup> Just as God said through David, "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel".

Paul, in the synagogue on the sabbath day, in Antioch in Pisidia, preached to the men of Israel, reminding them of how this scripture referred to Christ:

- Acts 13:32-33 (NASB) <sup>32</sup> "And we preach to you the good news of the promise made to the fathers, <sup>33</sup> that God has fulfilled this *promise* to our children in that He raised up Jesus, as it is also written in the second Psalm, 'YOU ARE MY SON ; TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN YOU.'

God can speak of things yet to become in the present tense:

- (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, *even* God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were. Romans 4:17 (KJV)

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<sup>71</sup> Heb. 2:8-

<sup>72</sup> 2 Corin. 11:3

<sup>73</sup> 1 Corin 15:22

<sup>74</sup> See Genesis 3:1-15

<sup>75</sup> Psalm 2:7-9

I would suggest that God through the prophet Moses was promising to this Son<sup>76</sup>, “*the beginning of the creation of God*”<sup>77</sup> that He would bring “*many sons to glory*”<sup>78</sup> by delivering them from the power of death, giving them dominion over everything that creeps on the earth, and conforming them to the image and likeness<sup>79</sup> of both Himself and His Son<sup>80</sup> by changing them from mortality to immortality<sup>81</sup>. When Jesus appears, we shall be like him.<sup>82</sup> Then He shall change our vile body and make it like unto His glorious body.<sup>83</sup>

### **EVERLASTING LIFE FROM BEFORE THE BEGINNING**

We might credit Moses the Prophet with being the first prophet to bring to our attention to the concept of living forever. Pay special notice to the following:

- 2 Timothy 1:9-10 (NASB)<sup>9</sup> who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity,<sup>10</sup> but now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel,

The promise of *life and immortality* was brought to light through the *gospel* but the idea had its beginning in the plan and purpose of God earlier even than that. Actually the *gospel* was preached to Abraham before Jesus preached his first message on the gospel in Galilee.

- Galatians 3:8 (NASB)<sup>8</sup> The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, *saying*, "ALL THE NATIONS WILL BE BLESSED IN YOU."

God promised eternal life, the KJV says, “*before the world began*”<sup>31</sup>. Remember the *logos* that was in the beginning? *In it there was life and that life was the light of men.*<sup>84</sup> This required a declaration of God’s intention and purpose of eternal life.<sup>85</sup> Where does Moses the prophet fit in here? Genesis is credited to Moses. As we noticed Genesis 1:28. Psalm 8 and Hebrews 2:6-8

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<sup>76</sup> Psalm 2:7 God here says to His yet to be born Son, “Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten you” as if speaking directly to Him though he has not yet been born. See Romans 4:17.

<sup>77</sup> Rev. 3:14

<sup>78</sup> Heb. 2:10

<sup>79</sup> See Psalms 17:15

<sup>80</sup> Romans 8:29

<sup>81</sup> 1 Corin. 15:51-54

<sup>82</sup> 1 John 3:2, See the David’s Prophecy in Psalm 17:15

<sup>83</sup> Phil. 3:21

<sup>84</sup> John 1:4 ABV

<sup>85</sup> Titus 1:2(KJV) In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;

all showed their beginning in Genesis, even so the idea of living forever was first mentioned by Moses in Genesis. Adam and Eve were driven from the Garden and from the tree of life. Had they been allowed to eat of the tree of life at that point they could have lived forever, but were forbidden. Sinful man cannot live forever. Sin must be atoned which is what Jesus did.

- Genesis 3:22-23 (KJV) <sup>22</sup> And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever: <sup>23</sup> Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken.

God's hidden wisdom was predestined before the ages, Paul said.<sup>86</sup> Even His own purpose and grace was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity. It is amazing how God's plan and purpose: The gospel and the mystery of God: the promise of eternal life: all flow seamlessly throughout the age of mankind and before even that. In Jesus' own words we are reminded of the prophet Moses and the lifting of the serpent for the mortal lives of the Israelites. To fail to look upon the serpent was to perish. The lifting of Jesus on the cross for the forgiveness of sins, the eternal life of the believers, and deliverance from "*him that had the power of death, that old serpent the devil*".<sup>87</sup>

- **John 3:14-16 (NASB)** <sup>14</sup> "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; <sup>15</sup> so that whoever believes will in Him have eternal life. <sup>16</sup> "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.

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<sup>86</sup> 1 Corin. 2:7, 2 Tim. 1:9

<sup>87</sup> Heb. 3:14