

Using Correct Terminology

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"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God..." (1Pe 4:11).

I. The importance of using correct terminology

1. In order to understand the scriptures, we must understand the sense of the words of scripture (**Neh 8:8**).
 - A. Sense *n.* – III. Meaning, signification. 19. a. The meaning or signification of a word or phrase; also, any one of the different meanings of a word, or that which it bears in a particular collocation or context.
 - B. We must therefore understand what the words of the Bible mean and use them correctly.
2. If we use words incorrectly and mean something different than the words mean, we will create confusion (**1Co 14:7-8**).
 - A. The words we speak must be easily understood by others; else communication will not take place (**1Co 14:9, 19**).
 - i. If we don't use words in their proper Biblical meaning, we will be as a barbarian unto those who hear us (**1Co 14:11**).
 - ii. Barbarian *n.* - 1. *etymologically*, A foreigner, one whose language and customs differ from the speaker's.
 - B. When words are used in secondary meanings, confusion can result (**Joh 11:11-12**).
 - C. If we are to use secondary meanings, it's important to make clear what we mean by explaining what we mean using words in their primary meanings (**Joh 11:14**).
 - D. Even when we are using words in their primary meanings, it is important to remember to define our terms when we are speaking with people unfamiliar with them.
3. We should endeavor to speak as clearly and understandably as possible.
 - A. The apostles spoke with great plainness of speech (**2Co 3:12**), and so should we.
 - i. Plainness *n.* - The quality or condition of being plain, in various senses of the *adj.* 1. Flatness, smoothness, evenness, levelness. 2. Openness, honesty, or straightforwardness of conduct; frankness or directness of language. 3. Clearness to the perception or comprehension; lucidity of exposition, meaning, or expression.
 - ii. Plain *adj.* - 6. a. Of which the meaning is evident; simple, intelligible, readily understood.
 - B. When we speak plainly and don't use parabolic or cryptic language, we will be understood (**Joh 16:29-30**).
 - C. Plainly *adv.* - 1. In a clear or distinct manner; so as to be clearly seen, heard, perceived, or understood.
4. Other religions use Bible words to mean something different than what the Bible means when it uses them.
 - A. They do this on purpose to deceive people and make them think their religion is in accord with the Bible when in actuality it is not.
 - B. For just one example, the Mormons claim to believe in the "Heavenly Father", "Jesus Christ", and "the Holy Ghost."

- i. But by those Biblical names they mean three different gods of their false religion.
 - ii. "Latter-day Saints believe that this supreme being will always be their Father and their God and will always look to Him as such. His importance to them can never dim. They believe that He is the head of two other gods—Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost—over whom He will always have preeminence, as He will always have preeminence over mankind, even when they achieve godhood." (*The Plurality of Gods*, https://www.mormonwiki.com/The_Plurality_of_Gods)
 - iii. "The Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man's." (*Heavenly Father*, https://www.mormonwiki.com/Heavenly_Father)
 - iv. "Latter-day Saints believe that God the Eternal Father is just that—he will always be their father. They believe He once was a human man who lived on an earth but, through following the principles of righteousness, has reached an exalted, perfected, glorified state. Through His own personal resurrection, He attained his own tangible, immortal, and incorruptible body of flesh and bones, so He can be both seen and touched, though people still on earth rarely have the opportunity to know this for themselves." (*The Plurality of Gods*, https://www.mormonwiki.com/The_Plurality_of_Gods)
- C. "Corruption in doctrine works best when it is unfettered by any explicit statement of that doctrine. Error loves ambiguities. It does not desire to state its position clearly, either because it has no distinct position to state, or if stated, it would stand convicted of iniquities in the eyes of all honest and God fearing men." (Martin L. Wagner, *Free Masonry, An Interpretation*, p.539)
- D. "When words lose their meaning, people lose their freedom." (Confucius)
5. Christians often use incorrect terminology to describe their beliefs.
- A. The newer in the faith a Christian is, the more often this happens.
 - B. This is in large part due to the influence of errant Christianity which misuses Bible words.
 - C. This can create confusion for both them and others because they are using words to mean something different than what the Bible means by them.
 - D. The purpose of this study is to give the correct meaning of commonly misused words so that we can be accurate in our speech concerning our faith.

II. Commonly misused or misunderstood words or phrases

1. Christian

- A. Christian *n.* - 1. a. One who believes or professes the religion of Christ; an adherent of Christianity.
- B. The word "Christian" is only used three times in the entire Bible, and is therefore easy to define Biblically.
 - i. A *Christian* is a *baptized disciple* (**Joh 4:1**) who assembles himself with the local church for the purpose of learning about Christ from its ministers (**Act 11:26 c/w Act 2:41-42**).
 - ii. A *Christian* is more than just a man who *believes* the word of God concerning Jesus Christ, but rather is a man who has publicly confessed faith

in Christ and has been baptized and added to a church with which he identifies and assembles.

- a. King Agrippa believed the gospel of Christ which Paul preached (**Act 26:22-23 c/w Act 26:27**).
 - b. But King Agrippa was not ready to become a Christian because of what it would cost him (**Act 26:28**).
 - iii. A *Christian* is a man who *suffers* for his faith because he has publicly confessed Christ and was made a companion of the other members of the church who are likewise despised by this world (**1Pe 4:16 c/w Heb 10:32-33**).
- C. A Christian is not *merely* one of the elect, or a regenerate man, or a child of God, or a believer, or a member of a false church.
- i. A man can be elect, regenerate, and believing, and yet not be a Christian in the Biblical sense of the word.
 - ii. A Christian is an elect, regenerate, believing child of God who has *also* been baptized into a true church and assembles with it to learn of Christ through its minister.
 - iii. A man cannot know with certainty the exact day he was born again (**Joh 3:8**), but he can know with certainty the exact day he became a Christian because it was the day of his baptism.
 - iv. Every Biblically defined Christian is a child of God, but not every child of God is a Biblically defined Christian.
- D. Most people use the word "Christian" to refer to a child of God.
- i. When such a man says "So-and-so is a Christian," he means that he thinks that so-and-so is an eternally saved child of God.
 - ii. When a man says, "I became a Christian when I was 10 years old," he means he first believed in Jesus when he was 10.
 - iii. When a man says of someone who just died, "I think he was a Christian," he means that he hopes the person was a child of God.
 - iv. Using the word "Christian" in this way is unbiblical and creates confusion.
- E. Sometimes people use the term "Christian" to refer to a sincere believer.
- i. When such a man says, "I think he is a Christian," he means that he thinks the man is a sincere believer in Jesus Christ.
 - ii. If we are using the word as the Bible does, we should never say "I *think* so-and-so is a Christian."
 - a. Whether someone is a Christian *as the Bible defines it* is not a matter of speculation.
 - b. You don't have to wonder if (or even *think* that) someone is a Christian — all you have to do is ask the following question: is he a baptized member of a true church?
 - (i) If the man is a baptized member of a true church, he is a Christian.
 - (ii) If he is not, then he isn't a Biblically defined Christian.
 - c. If you don't know if he was truly baptized and is a member of a true church, then you need to find out if he was baptized by a validly ordained minister in a biblical manner and if the church he is a

- member of is a true church with a lineage to the church Christ founded.
- d. If he was baptized by a validly ordained minister into a true church, then he is a Christian; if not, he isn't one.
- F. Church members should learn to use the word "Christian" in the way that the Bible does.
- G. We should not refer to people who are not validly baptized members of true churches as "Christians."
- i. We should rather refer to them as "professing Christians", meaning that they profess to be Christians.
 - ii. They can also be termed "so-called Christians."
- H. The word "Christian" is never used as an adjective in the Bible, so be cautious about using it that way.
- i. Organizations, institutions, or forms of entertainment are never referred to as "Christian" in the Bible.
 - ii. For instance, there are no *Christian* colleges, *Christian* universities, *Christian* schools, *Christian* music, *Christian* movies, *Christian* companies, *Christian* dating sites, etc.
 - iii. These organizations or things might be owned, operated, or performed by Christians (although not usually), but they are not *Christian* things.
- I. In summary:
- i. A *Christian* is an *elect*, *regenerated*, *born again*, *quicken*ed child of God who has been *converted*, having become a disciple of Jesus Christ by believing the gospel, repenting of his sins, being baptized, and being added to the membership of a true local church.
 - ii. A *Christian* is not *merely* one of the *elect*.
 - iii. A *Christian* is not *merely* a child of God.
 - iv. A *Christian* is not *merely* someone who has *eternal life* and *eternal salvation*.
 - v. A *Christian* is not *merely* someone who has believed the gospel.
 - vi. A *Christian* is a person who is all of the above *and* who has also obeyed the gospel, been baptized, added to a true local church, and continues to worship Jesus Christ in His church and obey Him all the days of his life.

2. Church

- A. Church *n.* - III. 10. A congregation of Christians locally organized into a society for religious worship and spiritual purposes, under the direction of one set of spiritual office-bearers.
- B. A church is a congregation of people (**Heb 2:12 c/w Psalms 22:22; Acts 7:38 c/w Exodus 16:2**).
- C. As the previous verses showed, the nation of Israel was God's church under the Old Testament.
- i. The church was reformed by Christ at His first coming (**Heb 9:10**).
 - ii. This was the true Reformation.
 - iii. The Protestant reformers reformed the Roman Catholic Church, not God's church.

- iv. Protestant "churches" are therefore reformed Catholic "churches."
- D. The word "church" is used in scripture to describe three different things:
 - i. The universal body of the elect for whom Christ died (**Eph 5:25-27; Heb 12:22-23 c/w Eph 3:15**).
 - a. This church does not and cannot assemble on earth now.
 - b. But it does and will assemble in heaven.
 - ii. The institution of the local church which is God's kingdom on this earth (**Mat 16:18-19; Eph 3:21**).
 - a. Individual churches come in and out of existence over time.
 - b. But the institution of the local church has not and never will cease.
 - iii. Local congregations of baptized disciples who regularly assemble to worship God (**Act 8:1; Act 11:26; Act 14:23; 1Co 1:2; 1Th 1:1**).
 - a. This is by far the most common usage of the word "church" in the Bible, and it accounts for nearly every instance of the word.
 - b. Each local church is "the whole church" not part of it (**1Co 14:23**).
 - c. When more than one local church is under consideration, they are called "churches", not "the church" (**Act 9:31; Act 15:41**).
 - d. Churches in a particular country or region are called "the churches" of that region, not "the church" of that region. For example:
 - (i) The Bible says, "the churches of Galatia", not "the Galatian church" or "the church in Galatia" (**1Co 16:1; Gal 1:2**).
 - (ii) The Bible says, "the churches of Asia", not "the Asian church" or "the church in Asia" (**1Co 16:19**).
 - (iii) The Bible says, "the churches of Macedonia", not "the Macedonian church" or "the church in Macedonia" (**2Co 8:1**).
 - (iv) The Bible says, "the churches of Judea", not "the Judean church" or "the church in Judea" (**Gal 1:22**).
 - e. Therefore, we should not refer to churches (even true churches) in America as "the American church" or "the church in America," because to do so is an unbiblical usage of the word "church."
 - f. Nor should we refer to churches (even true churches) in China, Asia, Africa, Europe, or any other country, continent, or region as "the Asian church", etc., or "the church in Asia", etc.
- E. When we say, "the church" we should only ever be referring to one of three things:
 - i. The universal family of God's elect in heaven and earth. For example: "Christ died for the church."
 - ii. The institution of Christ's church. For example: "Satan has never been able to destroy the church for the last 2000 years."
 - iii. Local congregations of baptized believers which have a lineage going back to Christ and the apostles. For example: "He joined the church today", or "The church excluded a brother today", or "The church is the most important thing in my life."
- F. When we refer to churches in a certain area, state, country, or continent, we should call them "churches", not "the church."

- G. We absolutely should not call protestant, charismatic, Pentecostal, mega-churches, etc. "the church" because those organizations are not even true churches, and even if they were, they should not collectively be called "the church."
 - i. For example, we should not say things like:
 - a. "The church has been paganized."
 - b. "The church has gone into apostasy."
 - c. "The church is backslidden."
 - d. "The church is corrupt."
 - e. "The church needs to repent."
 - ii. If you ever hear me utter words like these, you better be very afraid because I will be talking about the Excelsior Springs Church or another true local church.
 - iii. If we want to talk about such organizations which claim to be churches, we should be careful to say things like:
 - a. "These so-called 'churches' have been paganized."
 - b. "Charismatic so-called 'churches' are possessed with a Satanic spirit."
 - c. "These religious entertainment facilities are devoid of truth."
 - d. "The religious organization I grew up in used to sing hymns."
 - iv. The Bible does in one place refer to pagan houses of worship as "churches" (**Act 19:37**).
 - v. If you do so, make sure you make yourself clear to those who hear you as to what you are referring.
- H. A church is NOT:
 - i. A physical building (**Rom 16:5 & Col 4:15 c/w 1Pe 2:5**).
 - a. The building a church meets in should be called a "church building", not a "church."
 - b. Buildings are never called churches in the Bible.
 - ii. A hierarchical organization.
 - iii. A denomination.
 - iv. A congregation whose history traces back to the Catholic "church" (the Protestant "churches").
- I. The church is a holy, glorious institution, organization, and body, so let's not degrade it by calling buildings or counterfeit organizations by its blessed name.
 - i. "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God..." (**1Pe 4:11**).
 - ii. Let's be careful to use correct Biblical terminology when we speak.

3. Sovereign grace

- A. The term *sovereign grace* is not found in the Bible, but it describes the Biblical doctrine of salvation by grace.
- B. *Sovereign grace* is the act of God in saving His *elect* by His grace alone apart from their will or works (**2Ti 1:9; Tit 3:5-7; Rom 9:16**).
- C. We use the term "*sovereign grace*" because God is a sovereign king (**Dan 4:35; 1Ti 6:15**) who chooses to whom He will extend mercy and grace (**Rom 9:15**).
 - i. Sovereign *adj.* – 1. Of persons: Standing out above others or excelling in some respect. 2. Of things, qualities, etc.: Supreme, paramount; principal, greatest, or most notable.

- ii. Sovereign *n.* – 1. One who has supremacy or rank above, or authority over, others; a superior; a ruler, governor, lord, or master (of persons, etc.). Freq. applied to the Deity in relation to created things.
- D. *Grace* is unmerited favor and is not in anyway dependent on human faith or other works (**Rom 11:5-6 c/w Joh 6:28-29**).
 - i. Grace *n.* - II. Favour. 6. a. Favour, favourable or benignant regard or its manifestation (now only on the part of a superior); favour or goodwill, in contradistinction to right or obligation, as the ground of a concession.
 - ii. The word "grace" by itself conveys the idea that God alone decides whom He bestows favor towards.
 - iii. Since most people think grace is an *offer* of salvation which is contingent on faith (which it is NOT), we use the term *sovereign grace* to describe our belief concerning eternal salvation to clear up any confusion.

4. Election, elect

- A. Election *n.* - 1. a. The formal choosing of a person for an office, dignity, or position of any kind; usually by the votes of a constituent body. 2. a. The exercise of deliberate choice or preference; choice between alternatives, *esp.* in matters of conduct. 3. *Theol.* a. The exercise of God's sovereign will in choosing some of His creatures in preference to others for blessings temporal or spiritual, *esp.* for eternal salvation. *doctrine of election*: the doctrine that God actually exercises this prerogative with regard to mankind; in popular language often identified with the (Calvinistic) doctrine of 'unconditional election', i.e. election not conditioned by the conduct or disposition of the individual.
- B. *Election* is God's choosing of men to *eternal salvation* (**Eph 1:4; Rom 11:5; 1Pe 1:2**).
- C. *Election* is not man's choosing of God for *eternal salvation* (**Rom 9:11, 16**).
- D. The *elect* are those whom God has chosen (**Mar 13:20**) to *eternal life*.

5. Predestination, predestinate

- A. Predestinate - *v.* 1. *Theol.* Of God: To foreordain by a divine decree or purpose: a. to salvation or eternal life; to elect.
- B. *Predestination* is God choosing the eternal destination of heaven for His *elect* before the foundation of the world (**Eph 1:11; Rom 8:29-30**).
- C. *Predestination* is God choosing to make one a *child of God* by adoption through Jesus Christ before the world began (**Eph 1:5**).

6. Reprobation, reprobate

- A. Reprobation *n.* - 3. *Theol.* Rejection by God; the state of being so rejected or cast off, and thus ordained to eternal misery. (Opposed to *election* in the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination: cf. reprobate *adj.* 4 and *v.* 2.)
 - i. Reprobate *adj.* - 1. Rejected or condemned as worthless, inferior or impure. 2. Depraved, degraded, morally corrupt. 3. Rejected by God; lost or hardened in sin. 4. *absol.* Those who are rejected by God, and thus excluded from participation in eternal life with Him. (Opposed to *the elect*.)
 - ii. The Bible defines *reprobate* as "rejected by God" (**Jer 6:30**).

- B. Reprobate v. 1. *trans.* To disapprove of, censure, condemn. 2. Of God: To reject or cast off (a person or persons) from Himself; to exclude from participation in future bliss. (Cf. reprobation 3.)
- C. *Reprobation* is the action of God choosing before the foundation of the world to reject the people whom He did not choose to save, *viewing them as fallen sinners*.
- D. The *reprobate* are those sinners, whom God rejected, who are not in Christ and He is not in them (**2Co 13:5**).
- E. Reprobates are identified by their reprobate (depraved and morally corrupt) thoughts and behavior (**Rom 1:28; 2Ti 3:8; Tit 1:16**).

7. Child of God

- A. A *child of God* is an *elect, born again* person who has *eternal life* (**Luk 20:36; Joh 11:51-52; Rom 8:14-16; Eph 1:5; Gal 4:4-6; 1Jo 3:1-2**).
- B. A *child of God* is a spiritual child by the new birth, not a natural child by natural birth (**Rom 9:8**).
- C. A *child of God* is one of the *elect* who is *born again, quickened, regenerated*, and in possession of *eternal salvation*, but not necessarily *converted* or a *Christian*.

8. Born again

- A. Born-again - a. Of, pertaining to, or characterized by (an experience of) new birth in Christ or spiritual renewal; of a Christian: placing special emphasis on this experience as a basis for all one's actions, evangelical. b. *fig.* Regenerate, revitalized; characterized by the extreme enthusiasm of the newly converted or re-converted.
- B. The dictionary definition of "born again" is only partly accurate.
- C. Being *born again* is the state of a person whom God has *regenerated (quickened)*, giving him a new spirit and *eternal life*, making him a *child of God* (**Joh 3:3-8 c/w Tit 3:5; 1Pe 1:23 c/w Joh 5:25**).
- D. Being *born again* is a synonym of being a *child of God*, being *quickened*, and being *regenerated*.
- E. Being *born again* is not synonymous with *conversion* or with being a *Christian*, but rather happens prior to *conversion* (**Joh 5:24; 1Jo 5:1**) and becoming a *Christian*.

9. Quicken

- A. Quicken v. - 1. a. To give or restore life to; to make alive; to vivify or revive; to animate (as the soul the body).
- B. To *quicken* is to make alive and resurrect spiritually (**Joh 5:21 c/w Joh 5:25; Eph 2:1, 5; 1Pe 1:3**).
- C. Quickening happens after a person has been legally justified by Christ's death on the cross (**Col 2:13**).
- D. Being *quickened* is a synonym of *regeneration*, being *born again*, and being a *child of God*.
- E. *Quickening* is not a synonym of *conversion*, but rather happens prior to *conversion*.

10. Justification

- A. There are two senses in which a person can be justified before God: either by being made (caused to be) righteous by God (effectual justification), or by being accounted (considered) righteous by God (evidential justification).
- i. Justified *ppl.* - Made just or right; made or accounted righteous; warranted; supported by evidence
 - ii. Justification *n.* - 4. *Theol.* The action whereby man is justified, or freed from the penalty of sin, and accounted or made righteous by God; the fact or condition of being so justified.
 - iii. Justify *v.* - 4. To absolve, acquit, exculpate; *spec. in Theol.* to declare free from the penalty of sin on the ground of Christ's righteousness, or to make inherently righteous by the infusion of grace: see justification 4.
 - iv. Make *v.* - III. To cause to be or become (something specified). a. With adj. as compl.: To cause to be, render.
 - v. Accounted - Counted, reckoned, considered.
- B. Being made righteous by God (effectual justification)
- i. Jesus justified us in the sense of causing us to be righteous by His:
 - a. Blood (**Rom 5:8-10**).
 - b. Grace (**Tit 3:7; Rom 3:24**).
 - c. Faith (**Gal 2:16**).
 - d. Knowledge (**Isa 53:11**).
 - ii. Jesus *made* us righteous by His obedience alone (**Rom 5:19**).
 - iii. We were *made* the righteousness of God by Christ being made sin for us (**2Co 5:21**).
 - iv. We are passive recipients of this (effectual) justification by Christ.
- C. Being shown to be righteous by our faith (evidential justification)
- i. Abraham is the eminent example of being justified in the sense of being shown to be just.
 - a. Abraham was not justified by his works (in the sense of being made righteous - effectual justification) (**Rom 4:2**).
 - b. Abraham was justified (evidential justification) by his faith (**Rom 4:3; Gal 3:6**).
 - (i) His faith was *counted* unto him for righteousness.
 - (ii) Counted righteous = accounted righteous = justified (see definitions above)
 - (iii) Faith is a token which is the evidence of (counted for) righteousness, just as poker chips are tokens which are the evidence of (counted for) the possession of real wealth.
 - (iv) Just as the poker chips are not real wealth, nor do they cause real wealth, so faith is not itself righteousness, nor does it cause righteousness, but is rather the *evidence* of righteousness.
 - (v) Abraham's faith didn't *make* him righteous, it *showed him to be* righteous.
 1. Abraham's faith was said to be counted for righteousness in **Gen 15:6**.

2. This happened *after* he left Ur *by faith* (**Heb 11:8**) in **Gen 12:1-4**.
 3. Abraham was already righteous when his faith was *counted* unto him for righteousness in Genesis 15.
 4. Furthermore, if the phrase "counted for righteousness" means "made righteous" or "given eternal life", then there is another means by which a person can become righteous and get eternal life (**Num 25:7-8 c/w Psa 106:30-31**).
- c. We are *shown to be* righteous by our faith which is the *evidence* (**Heb 11:1**), not the cause of our righteousness (**Act 13:39**).
 - d. We are also *shown to be* righteous by our works (**Rom 2:13; Jam 2:21-25**), which prove our faith (**Jam 2:17-20**).

11. Eternal salvation

- A. Eternal *adj.* – 3. Infinite in future duration; that always will exist; everlasting, endless. The New Testament expressions eternal life, death, punishment, etc. are here referred to sense 3, this being the sense in which the *adj.* in such contexts is ordinarily taken.
- B. Salvation *n.* - The action of saving or delivering; the state or fact of being saved.
 1. The saving of the soul; the deliverance from sin and its consequences, and admission to eternal bliss, wrought for man by the atonement of Christ.
 2. *gen.* Preservation from destruction, ruin, loss, or calamity.
- C. Save - 1. *trans.* To deliver or rescue from peril or hurt; to make safe, put in safety. 2. *Theol.* To deliver (a person, the soul) from sin and its consequences; to admit to eternal bliss.
- D. *Eternal salvation* is when God saves one of the *elect* from his sins by Christ dying for his sins and gives him *eternal life* through *regeneration*.
- E. *Eternal salvation* is not dependent on anything that the elect do, including their faith or other works, but only on the *sovereign grace* of God.
 - i. Jesus fully and *eternally* saved us from our sins when He died for us on the cross (**Heb 9:12; Heb 9:15**).
 - ii. Eternal salvation is a completed fact and is not conditioned on anything we do (works) (**2Ti 1:9; Tit 3:5**).
- F. Jesus Christ is the author of eternal salvation (**Heb 5:9**) which means that He conceived and executed it for His elect.
- G. *Eternal salvation* is *eternal* by definition, which means that it lasts forever and cannot be lost (**Joh 10:28**).

12. Eternal life

- A. *Eternal life* is the state which the *elect* are in once they are *regenerated* (*quicken*ed, *born again*) when God put a new spirit within them which can never die (**Joh 11:26**) nor sin (**1Jo 3:9**).
- B. *Eternal life* is the result of *eternal salvation* (**Tit 3:7**).
- C. *Eternal life* is *eternal* by definition, which means that it lasts forever and cannot be lost (**Joh 10:28**).

- D. The elect were ordained to eternal life by God (**Act 13:48**).
- E. Faith is the evidence of eternal life (**1Jo 5:13**).

13. Regeneration, regenerate

- A. Regeneration - 1. a. The action of regenerating; the process or fact of being regenerated; re-creation, re-formation, etc. 2. a. In religious use: The process or fact of being born again in a spiritual sense; the state resulting from this.
- B. Regenerate v. - 1. a. *trans.* In religious use: To cause to be born again in a spiritual sense; to invest with a new and higher spiritual nature.
- C. *Regeneration* is the act of God whereby He creates a new spirit in one of the *elect*, giving him *eternal life* (**Tit 3:5**).
 - i. *Regeneration* is accomplished by the sovereign voice of Jesus Christ, calling a spiritually dead sinner to new spiritual life (**Joh 5:25**).
 - ii. The call of regeneration by the voice of Jesus Christ is the same means by which Jesus resurrected Lazarus when He called him out of the grave (**Joh 11:43-44 c/w Joh 12:17**).
- D. *Regeneration* is a synonym of *quicken* and being *born again*, and it is the means by which a man becomes a *child of God*.
- E. *Regeneration* is not a synonym of *conversion*, but rather happens prior to *conversion* (**Joh 5:24**).

14. Conversion

- A. Definitions
 - i. Conversion n. - I. Turning in position, direction, destination. 1. The action of turning round or revolving; revolution, rotation.
 - ii. Convert v. - I. To turn in position or direction. 1. a. *trans.* To turn (a thing or oneself) about, to give a different (or specific) direction to. *refl.* = To turn (*intr.*).
- B. *Conversion* is the *process* that a *child of God* goes through when he hears the gospel, repents of his sins, is baptized, and turns the direction of his life from living in sin to keeping God's commandments.
- C. *Conversion* can only happen *after* a person has been *born again* (*quicken*, *regenerated*).
- D. *Conversion* is not a synonym of being *born again*, or being *regenerated* or *quicken*.
- E. *Conversion* is an *ongoing process* in the life of a *child of God* (**Luk 22:32 c/w Mat 16:16-17; Jam 5:19-20**), whereas *regeneration* is the *instantaneous act* of God in giving a person *eternal life*.
- F. *Conversion* is dependent on the faith and works of a *child of God*, whereas *regeneration* is by the *sovereign grace* of God alone.
- G. How the Bible defines conversion.
 - i. The word "conversion" is actually only used once in the entire Bible in **Act 15:3**.
 - a. The conversion of the Gentiles spoken of in Acts 15:3 refers to the Gentiles who were converted by the apostles, Paul and Barnabas, in

- Acts 13 and 14 in Antioch in Pisidia (**Act 13:14**), in Iconium (**Act 14:1**), and in Lystra (**Act 14:6**).
- b. The conversion of the Gentiles also includes Cornelius and his family, who were the first Gentiles to be converted in Acts 10.
 - c. Since **Act 15:3** is the only place the word “conversion” is used in the Bible, we simply need to examine what the Bible says happened to those Gentiles, and we can see what conversion is according to the scripture.
- ii. Cornelius and his family
 - a. Cornelius was a Roman centurion (**Act 10:1**) and was the first Gentile to whom the gospel was taken.
 - b. He was already born again prior to hearing the gospel (**Act 10:2 c/w Rom 3:18; Act 10:2 c/w Act 10:4 c/w Joh 9:31 c/w Pro 15:29 c/w 1Pe 3:12**).
 - c. He had a vision where an angel told him to send for a man named Peter to tell him what he should do (**Act 10:3-6**).
 - d. Peter went to his house and preached the gospel to those who were present (**Act 10:34-43**), after which time they repented (**Act 11:18**) and were baptized (**Act 10:47-48**).
 - e. In order for one to be baptized, he must repent (**Act 2:38**) and believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God (**Act 8:36-38**).
 - f. Here are the elements of their conversion:
 - (i) They received the word of God (**Act 11:1**).
 - (ii) They repented (**Act 10:47-48 c/w Act 2:38; Act 11:18**).
 - (iii) They were baptized (**Act 10:47-48**).
 - g. From this we see that conversion includes hearing, believing, repenting, and being baptized.
 - iii. The conversion of the Gentiles by Paul and Barnabas in Acts 13
 - a. Paul and Barnabas went to Antioch in Pisidia and went into the synagogue and preached Jesus to the Jews (**Act 13:14-41**).
 - b. When the Jews left, the Gentiles wanted to hear more of the gospel on the next sabbath (**Act 13:42**).
 - c. On the next sabbath day, nearly the whole city showed up to hear the word of God, and when the Jews saw it, "they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming" (**Act 13:45**).
 - d. At that point Paul turned to the Gentiles (**Act 13:46**).
 - e. The Gentiles heard the word of God, and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed (**Act 13:48**).
 - f. Here are the elements of their conversion:
 - (i) They heard the word of God and were glad (**Act 13:48**).
 - (ii) They believed the gospel (**Act 13:48**).
 - (iii) They were baptized and added to a church, which will be proved next.
 - iv. The conversion of the Gentiles by Paul and Barnabas in Acts 14

- a. Next Paul and Barnabas went to Iconium and preached the gospel there, and some Gentiles believed (**Act 14:1**).
- b. After that they went and preached the gospel in Lystra (**Act 14:6**).
- c. After being stoned at Lystra they went to Derbe (**Act 14:19-20**).
- d. Next they went back through Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch (**Act 14:21**).
- e. Notice what they did when they went back to those cities.
 - (i) They confirmed the souls of the disciples (believers) to whom they had just previously preached (**Act 14:22**).
 - (ii) They exhorted them to continue in the faith (**Act 14:22**).
 - (iii) They told them they must though much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God (the church) (**Act 14:22**).
 - (iv) They ordained elders in the churches that they had formed in those cities (**Act 14:23**).
- f. The fact that churches were started in those cities is the proof that the Gentiles who believed in those cities repented, were baptized, and were added to the church according to the pattern set forth in (**Act 2:37-42, 47**).
- g. Therefore, the *conversion* of the Gentiles that Paul and Barnabas declared in **Act 15:3** consisted of Gentiles hearing the word of God, repenting, believing the gospel, being baptized, and being added to the churches that were formed in those cities.
- v. As was shown previously, *regeneration* is the one-time, instantaneous act of God causing a person to pass from spiritual death unto spiritual life, wherein the person is totally passive, his will or works playing no part in it.
- vi. Conversely, *conversion* is the process by which a person hears, believes, repents, is baptized, and is added to a church as we have seen from Acts 13-15.
- vii. In conversion, the person is very involved in the process, and his will, submission, and works all play a role.

15. Temporal salvation

- A. The Bible makes a distinction between things that are temporal and things that are eternal (**2Co 4:18**).
 - i. Temporal *adj.* – 1. Lasting or existing only for a time; passing, temporary. Now rare or merged in 2. 2. Of or pertaining to time as the sphere of human life; terrestrial as opposed to heavenly; of man's present life as distinguished from a future existence; concerning or involving merely the material interests of this world; worldly, earthly. (Opp. to *eternal* or *spiritual*.)
 - ii. Eternal - 1. Infinite in past and future duration; without beginning or end; that always has existed and always will exist: esp. of the Divine Being. 3. Infinite in future duration; that always will exist; everlasting, endless. The New Testament expressions eternal life, death, punishment, etc. are here referred to sense 3, this being the sense in which the *adj.* in such contexts is ordinarily taken.

- B. "Salvation" doesn't necessarily always refer to being saved from hell and given eternal life. Consider the definitions of the words:
- i. Salvation - The action of saving or delivering; the state or fact of being saved. 1. a. The saving of the soul; the deliverance from sin and its consequences, and admission to eternal bliss, wrought for man by the atonement of Christ. 2. *gen.* Preservation from destruction, ruin, loss, or calamity.
 - ii. Save - 1. *trans.* To deliver or rescue from peril or hurt; to make safe, put in safety. 2. *Theol.* To deliver (a person, the soul) from sin and its consequences; to admit to eternal bliss.
 - iii. Deliver - 1. *trans.* To set free, liberate, release, rescue, save.
 - iv. "Salvation" or being "saved" can simply refer to being delivered from danger or hurt, or to being liberated or set free from something.
- C. The scripture teaches that there is an *eternal salvation* that is by grace alone and is not conditioned on anything a person does (see section on *Eternal Salvation* above).
- D. But does the Bible always refer to eternal salvation when it speaks about being saved?
- E. Consider what the following verses say one must *do* to be saved:
- i. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ (**Act 16:30-31**).
 - a. Believing on the Lord Jesus Christ is something a man *does* which these verses plainly state.
 - b. Believe - 1. To have confidence or faith in (a person), and consequently to rely upon, trust to.
 - c. Believing is *doing* something, which is *work* by definition (**Joh 6:28-29**).
 - d. Work - 1. Something that is or was done; what a person does or did; an act, deed, proceeding, business; in pl. actions, doings
 - ii. Get baptized (**Mar 16:16**).
 - a. Baptize - 1. *trans.* To immerse in water....
 - b. Getting baptized is doing something, which is *a work* by definition.
 - iii. Confess the Lord Jesus with your mouth AND believe that God raised Him from the dead (**Rom 10:9**).
 - a. Notice that there are TWO conditions given here that must be met to be saved: *confessing* and *believing*.
 - b. Confess - 1. *trans.* To declare or disclose (something which one has kept or allowed to remain secret as being prejudicial or inconvenient to oneself); to acknowledge, own, or admit.
 - c. Believe - 1. To have confidence or faith in (a person), and consequently to rely upon, trust to.
 - d. These are not the same thing (**Joh 12:42**).
 - e. Both confessing and believing is *doing* something, which is *work* by definition.
 - iv. Call upon the Lord (**Rom 10:13**).
 - a. Calling upon the Lord is not the same as believing (**Rom 10:14**).

- b. Call - 1. To utter one's voice loudly, forcibly, and distinctly, so as to be heard at a distance; to shout, cry: often emphasized by out, to cry out.
 - c. Calling upon the Lord is *doing* something, which is *work* by definition.
 - v. Repent with godly sorrow (**2Co 7:10**).
 - a. Repentance - 1. The act of repenting or the state of being penitent; sorrow, regret, or contrition for past action or conduct; an instance of this.
 - b. Repent - 1. *refl.* To affect (oneself) with contrition or regret for something done, etc. (cf. 3.) 3. *intr.* To feel contrition, compunction, sorrow or regret for something one has done or left undone; to change one's mind with regard to past action or conduct through dissatisfaction with it or its results.
 - c. Repenting is *doing* something, which is *work* by definition.
 - vi. Remember the gospel that was preached to you (**1Co 15:1-2**).
 - vii. Remembering is *work*.
 - viii. Continue in the doctrine (**1Ti 4:16**).
 - a. Continue - 1. To carry on, keep up, maintain, go on with, persist in (an action, usage, etc.).
 - b. Continuing in the doctrine is *doing* something, which is *work* by definition.
 - ix. Have other Christians pray for you (**Php 1:19**).
 - a. Prayer - 1. a. A solemn and humble request to God, or to an object of worship; a supplication, petition, or thanksgiving, usually expressed in words.
 - b. Praying is *doing* something, which is *work* by definition.
 - x. Enter in the door of the sheepfold (**Joh 10:9**).
 - xi. Endure to the end (**Mat 10:22**).
 - a. Endure - II. To last; to suffer continuously. 2. *intr.* To last, continue in existence.
 - b. Enduring is *doing* something, which is *work* by definition.
 - xii. Have children (**1Ti 2:15**).
 - xiii. Stay in a ship (**Act 27:31**).
 - xiv. As the Arminian soul-winner would tell us: there's nothing you can do to be saved, all you have to do is...repent, believe, confess, call on the name of the Lord, get baptized, enter into the sheepfold, remember the gospel, continue in the doctrine, have other Christians pray for you, endure to the end, have children, and stay in a ship.
- F. Are all the preceding verses referring to *eternal* salvation?
 - i. Obviously not. All these verses have one thing in common: the salvation being spoken of was conditioned on *works*.
 - ii. Eternal salvation is *not of works* (**Rom 9:11; 2Ti 1:9; Tit 3:5**).
 - iii. *Any verse that attaches a condition that a person must fulfill (works) to be saved is not referring to eternal salvation.*
- G. There is more than one type of salvation in the scriptures.

- i. To be saved is to be delivered (**Act 2:21 c/w Joe 2:32; Psa 107:6 c/w Psa 107:13**).
 - ii. There are salvations in scripture (**Psa 44:4**).
 - iii. David was saved from dying in battle (**Psa 55:18**).
 - iv. We can be saved from death, tears (sorrow), and falling (**Psa 116:4-8**).
 - v. Men were saved from being killed at sea when they called upon the name of the Lord (**Psa 107:23-30 c/w Psa 107:13 c/w Mat 8:25 c/w Mat 14:30**).
 - vi. Therefore all the preceding verses that speak of salvation or being saved are not referring to *eternal* salvation, but rather to a *temporal* salvation.
- H. What does temporal salvation by belief of the gospel save people from?
- i. Ignorance of God's righteousness (**Rom 10:1-3 c/w Rom 10:9**).
 - ii. Deception and bondage (**Eph 4:11-14; Joh 8:31-32**).
 - iii. The power of Satan and sin (**Act 26:18; 2Ti 2:25**).
 - iv. Going about to establish their own righteousness (**Rom 10:1-4 c/w Rom 10:9**).
 - v. Fear of death (**Heb 2:14-15; Act 16:27-31 c/w Act 12:19**).
 - vi. Chastisement from God for sin (**Pro 1:20-33**).
 - a. Knowing God's will and doing it saves one from beatings from God (**Luk 12:47-48**).
 - b. Believing and obeying the gospel will help us to be (not become) the sons of God *without rebuke* (**Phi 2:15; 2Co 6:14-18**).
 - vii. An untoward and wicked generation (**Act 2:37-40**).
- I. What does temporal salvation by belief of the gospel save people unto?
- i. Knowledge and assurance of eternal life (**1Jo 5:13**).
 - ii. Assurance of their election of God (**1Th 1:4-6**).
 - iii. Fellowship with God and with believers of like faith (**1Jo 1:1-3; Act 2:41-42, 46**).
 - iv. Fullness of joy (**1Jo 1:4**).
 - v. Rest (**Mat 11:28**).
 - vi. Victorious living (**1Jo 5:4-5**).
- J. Summary
- i. *Temporal salvation* is salvation that can be experienced by a *child of God* in time and in this life, as opposed to eternal salvation which lasts eternally and carries on into the next life.
 - ii. *Temporal salvation* is deliverance from things such as ignorance of the gospel, trying to save oneself eternally, fear of death, chastisement for sin in this life, deception and bondage, and an untoward and wicked generation.
 - iii. *Temporal salvation* is salvation to knowledge and assurance of eternal life, fellowship with God and believers of like-faith, joy, rest, and victorious living.
 - iv. *Temporal salvation* is dependent on the faith and works of a *child of God*, whereas *eternal salvation* is dependent on God's *sovereign grace* alone.
 - v. When using the words "salvation" or "saved" we should specify if we are referring to eternal or temporal salvation.

- a. Remember, most professing Christians think that "salvation" only refers to eternal salvation — that is, being delivered from eternal punishment in hell.
- b. When they ask you, "Are you saved?" or "When were you saved?", they are asking if or when you were saved eternally.
- c. In their mind, a man is saved eternally when he believes the gospel, so what they are really asking is when you first believed the gospel or "accepted Jesus."
- d. When such a person asks you when you were saved, you should ask him to specify what exactly he means.
 - (i) Is he referring to eternal salvation?
 - (ii) If so, is he referring to when you were elected, justified, regenerated, or converted?
 - (iii) He will probably not know what he is asking, and if so, you will have an opportunity to explain all these things to him.
 - (iv) The coming section on The Five Phases of Salvation will help you understand how the phases of salvation all fit together and in which order they happen.

16. Calvinism

- A. We are not Calvinists.
- B. Calvinism *n.* – The doctrines of John *Calvin* the Protestant Reformer (1509-1564), particularly his theological doctrines on grace, in which Calvinism is opposed to ARMINIANISM.
- C. The theological system of Calvinism is summarized with the acronym TULIP.
 - i. TULIP stands for Total Depravity, Unconditional Election, Limited Atonement, Irresistible Grace, and Perseverance of the Saints.
 - ii. Many Calvinists also believe in Reprobation and Absolute Predestination.
 - iii. Calvinism is correct in some points of doctrine and wrong in others.
- D. Let's briefly look at each of these and see which ones are right and wrong.
- E. Total Depravity – RIGHT
 - i. The doctrine of Total Depravity teaches that all mankind are totally depraved, and in their natural state they cannot seek, understand, believe in, nor please God (**Rom 3:9-12; Rom 8:7-8**).
 - ii. On this point Calvinism is correct.
- F. Unconditional Election – RIGHT
 - i. The doctrine of Unconditional Election teaches that God chose to save a portion of mankind based on no condition they did, could, or would fulfill such as faith or other good works (**Rom 9:10-16; Eph 1:4-5**).
 - ii. On this point Calvinism is correct.
- G. Limited Atonement – RIGHT
 - i. The doctrine of Limited Atonement teaches that Jesus only died and made atonement for the elect (**Joh 10:15 c/w 26; Joh 17:2**).
 - ii. On this point Calvinism is correct.
- H. Irresistible Grace - WRONG (as Calvinism defines it)

- i. The doctrine of Irresistible Grace is the teaching that the grace of God, whereby He saves a sinner from his state of death in trespasses and sins and gives him eternal life, is irresistible by the sinner.
- ii. The sinner, being spiritually dead, cannot resist being spiritually resurrected (*quicken*ed, *regenerat*ed, *born-again*).
- iii. Calvinists should change the name to "Irresistible Gospel" because they believe that all of the elect will irresistibly believe the gospel.
 - a. God's elect can and do resist believing the gospel, and some are outright enemies of it (**Rom 11:27-29**).
 - b. It is God's GRACE, by which a spiritually dead sinner is regenerated and given eternal life, *not the gospel*, which is irresistible (**Joh 5:25; Eph 2:1**).
- iv. On this point Calvinism is wrong.
- I. Perseverance of the Saints – WRONG
 - i. Calvinism wrongly teaches that all of the elect will persevere in faith until death, and if a person doesn't, then that means he was never one of the elect.
 - ii. Not all of the elect persevere faithfully until the end of their lives.
 - iii. The following are examples of God's elect which didn't persevere faithfully until their deaths.
 - a. Solomon (**1Ch 28:6 c/w Neh 13:26 c/w 1Ki 11:4 c/w 1Ki 11:40**).
 - b. King Saul (**1Sa 10:9-11 c/w 1Sa 31:4**).
 - c. Israel in the wilderness (**1Co 10:1-11 c/w Heb 3:17 - 4:2**).
 - iv. The truth is that God PRESERVES His elect forever and none of them can lose their eternal life, no matter if they persevere faithful to the end or not (**Joh 10:27-29; Psa 37:28**).
 - v. The "P" in TULIP should represent PRESERVATION of the Saints.
 - vi. On this point Calvinism is wrong.
- J. Reprobation – WRONG
 - i. By "reprobation", some Calvinists mean that God chose to damn some men before the foundation of the world, VIEWING THEM AS UNFALLEN.
 - ii. This is patently false and would make God evil if He chose to damn men in a state in innocence.
 - iii. It was ADAM, *not God*, who fitted men to destruction (**Rom 9:22 c/w Rom 5:12**).
 - iv. God afore prepared the elect for glory (**Rom 9:23 c/w Rom 8:29-30**).
 - v. God elected His people to make them holy and without blame which means that He did so *viewing them in a state of sin* (**Eph 1:4**).
 - vi. The same is true of the reprobate when God rejected them: He did so *viewing them in a state of sin*.
 - vii. On this point Calvinism is wrong.
- K. Absolute Predestination (Determinism, Fatalism) – WRONG
 - i. Calvinists (at least some of them) believe that God has predestinated all things in men's lives, and that they have no free will.
 - ii. God only predestinates what the Bible says He predestinates: the eternal salvation of His elect.

- iii. The following are the only four verses where the word "predestinate" and its cognates appear in the Bible (**Eph 1:5; Eph 1:11; Rom 8:29-30**).
- iv. To say that God predestinates all things is to say that He predestinates men to sin.
 - a. A simple syllogism will prove this statement.
 - (i) Major premise: God predestinated all things.
 - (ii) Minor premise: Sin is a thing.
 - (iii) Conclusion: God predestinated sin.
 - b. This is patently false and would make God the author of sin.
 - c. The *idea* of making men sin never even came into God's heart or mind, let alone the act of actually causing men to sin (**Jer 7:31; Jer 32:35**).
 - d. God condemns those who claim that God ordained that they sin (**Jer 7:9-10**).
- v. On this point Calvinism is wrong.
- L. If we are to use proper terminology when we speak of our faith, we must not call ourselves Calvinists.

17. Five Phases of Salvation

- A. The means by which God saves men from their sins includes several phases beginning before the foundation of the world and ending at the end of time.
 - i. There are five distinct phases of God's plan of salvation, which are:
 - a. The Planning Phase - Salvation from the *Plan* of sin
 - b. The Legal Phase - Salvation from the *Penalty* of sin
 - c. The Vital Phase - Salvation from the *Power* of sin
 - d. The Practical Phase - Salvation from the *Practice* of sin
 - e. The Final Phase - Salvation from the *Presence* of sin
 - ii. Each of the five phases of salvation happen *in Christ*.
- B. The predicament of sin
 - i. When Adam sinned, as the federal head of the human race, he placed the entire human race in a state of sin and spiritual death (**Gen 2:17 c/w Gen 3:6 c/w Rom 5:12**).
 - ii. In that state of sin, men are not able to be subject to the law of God (**Rom 8:7**), to please God (**Rom 8:8**), to hear God's words (**Joh 8:43-47**), to understand the gospel (**1Co 1:18; 1Co 2:14**), or to believe in Christ (**Joh 10:26**).
 - iii. God looked down on all men (Jews and Gentiles) to see if there were any that would understand and seek Him and He found NOT ONE (**Psa 14:2-3 c/w Rom 3:9-12**).
 - iv. Therefore, if any were going to be saved from their sins, God would have to devise a plan whereby He would sovereignly save them.
- C. The Planning Phase - Salvation from the *Plan* of sin
 - i. The plan of salvation was conceived in the mind of God before the world was.
 - a. This phase took place before the world began.
 - b. This phase is a necessary prerequisite for all the subsequent phases.

- ii. Before the foundation of the world, knowing that Adam would fall and defile all of his posterity, and viewing all of mankind as a fallen lump (**Rom 9:21**), God decided that He would choose a portion of them (His elect) and give them to Jesus Christ (who would be born in time as the Word made flesh - **Joh 1:1, 14**) to bear their sins on the cross to make them holy (**Eph 1:4**).
- iii. The Father elected them to have their sins atoned for by the blood of Christ (**1Pe 1:2**).
- iv. God predestinated His elect to be His children by adoption through Jesus Christ (**Eph 1:5**) according to His *purpose* and His own will (**Eph 1:11**).
 - a. Purpose *n.* - 1. a. That which one sets before oneself as a thing to be done or attained; the object which one has in view.
 - b. God *purposed* to save His elect by His grace before the world began (**2Ti 1:9**).
 - c. God promised their eternal life before the world began (**Tit 1:2**).
- v. This phase happened *in Christ* in covenant (**Eph 1:4; 2Ti 1:9**).
- vi. The elect had nothing to do with the planning phase since it happened before they existed.

D. The Legal Phase - Salvation from the *Penalty* of sin

- i. The next phase of the plan of salvation would be for Jesus to bear the sins of His elect and make legal payment for them.
 - a. This phase took place in approximately 33AD when Jesus died on the cross.
 - b. This phase is dependent on the planning phase.
 - c. This phase is a necessary prerequisite for the next three phases.
- ii. The penalty for sin is death (**Rom 6:23**).
- iii. Jesus lived a sinless life and then died for the sins of His elect in their stead (**2Co 5:21; 1Pe 2:22, 24; Isa 53:5; Joh 10:15**).
 - a. God reconciled His elect to Himself by Christ's death on the cross (**2Co 5:19; Rom 5:10**).
 - b. God condemned sin in the flesh by sending His Son in the flesh (**Rom 8:3**).
 - c. Christ's death on the cross justified (*to declare free from the penalty of sin on the ground of Christ's righteousness*) all of the elect (**Rom 5:9**).
- iv. This phase happened *in Christ* (**2Co 5:19; Gal 2:20**).
- v. The legal phase is contingent on the planning phase (**1Pe 1:2; 1Pe 1:18-20**).
- vi. The elect had nothing to do with the legal phase since it happened before many of them existed and after many of them were dead.

E. The Vital Phase - Salvation from the *Power* of sin

- i. Once the elect (planning phase) have been made legally holy and justified (legal phase), being born spiritually dead, they need to be given new spiritual life.
 - a. This phase takes place at some point during the lives of each of the elect *before* they believe the gospel and become converted.
 - b. This phase is dependent on the first two phases.

- c. This phase is a necessary prerequisite for the next two phases.
 - ii. Once Christ died for the sins of His elect, they are legally holy before God; but they are still born into this world spiritually dead (**Eph 2:1**) with a sinful spiritual nature (**Eph 2:2-3**) which has power over them and which needs to be renewed.
 - iii. This phase of salvation requires the life-giving voice of the Son of God to call each of His elect from spiritual death unto spiritual life (**Joh 5:25**).
 - a. This is the point when the elect are given eternal life (**Joh 10:28**).
 - b. This is called being quickened (*to give or restore life to; to make alive*) (**Eph 2:1, 5**).
 - c. This is called being regenerated (**Tit 3:5**).
 - d. This is called being born again, in which act God is sovereign (**Joh 3:3, 5-8**).
 - e. This is when God puts a new heart and a new spirit within His elect (**Eze 11:19; Eze 36:26**).
 - iv. This phase happens *in Christ* (**2Co 5:17; Eph 2:10**).
 - v. The vital phase is contingent on the first two phases.
 - a. It is based on the legal phase, in which the elect's sins were forgiven (**Col 2:13**).
 - b. It is also based on the planning phase in which God chose the elect and gave them to Christ for Him to give them eternal life (**Joh 17:2-3**).
 - vi. The vital phase is executed by the power of God Himself.
 - vii. The elect have nothing to do with the vital phase since they are spiritually dead when it takes place.
- F. The Practical Phase - Salvation from the *Practice* of sin
- i. Once the elect (planning phase) have had their sins atoned for by Christ (legal phase) and have been given new spiritual life (vital phase), they then have the ability and responsibility to believe the gospel and repent of sin in order to be saved from the *practice* of sin.
 - a. This phase takes place in varying degrees during the lives of the elect after they have been regenerated by God.
 - b. This phase is dependent on the first three phases and cannot happen without them first happening.
 - c. Whether or not this phase happens, and the degree in which it happens, is dependent on the obedience of the elect.
 - d. This phase *is not* a prerequisite for the final phase nor for the first three phases.
 - ii. Once the elect are regenerated, the preached gospel can open their eyes and they can turn from the power of Satan to God and receive temporal forgiveness of sins which happens when they repent and are baptized (**Act 26:18 c/w Act 2:37-38 c/w 1Jo 1:9**).
 - a. By receiving instruction they can repent and recover themselves from the snare of the devil (**2Ti 2:25-26**).

- b. The elect can *work out* this practical salvation in their lives because God has *worked in* them to will and to do of His good pleasure (**Php 2:12-13**).
 - c. God *hath reconciled* the elect to Himself *eternally* (**2Co 5:18**); the elect are then responsible to be reconciled to God *practically* (**2Co 5:20**).
 - iii. This phase happens *in Christ* (**2Ti 3:12; 1Pe 3:16**).
 - iv. The practical phase is contingent on the first three phases.
 - a. It is based on the vital phase (**Eze 11:19-20; Eze 36:26-27; Eph 2:10**).
 - b. It is based on the legal phase (**2Co 5:18-20; Tit 2:14**).
 - c. It is based on the planning phase (**2Ti 2:19**).
 - v. Participation in the practical phase is the *evidence* (not the *cause*) that a man has *already* experienced the first three phases and will experience the final phase (**Joh 5:24; 1Jo 5:1**).
 - vi. The elect are responsible for executing the practical phase.
- G. The Final Phase - Salvation from the *Presence* of sin
 - i. By this point the elect (planning phase) have been justified and made legally holy by God (legal phase) and have had their spirit renewed and made holy (vital phase), but their body still needs to be redeemed from corruption.
 - a. This phase takes place at the resurrection on the last day.
 - b. This phase is dependent on the first three phases, but not on the fourth phase (practical phase).
 - ii. Corrupt flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom God, but must first be changed and made incorruptible (**1Co 15:50-53; Rom 8:21-23**).
 - a. Jesus Christ will change our vile body to be made like His glorious body (**Php 3:21**).
 - b. This happens when Jesus Christ sovereignly calls His elect out of the graves and resurrects them on the last day of time (**Joh 5:28-29; Joh 11:24**).
 - iii. This phase takes place *in Christ* (**1Co 15:22; 1Th 4:16**).
 - iv. The final phase is contingent on the first three phases, but not on the fourth phase (practical phase).
 - a. It is based on the vital phase (**Rom 8:11**).
 - b. It is based on the legal phase (**1Co 6:14 c/w Rom 4:25**).
 - c. It is based on the planning phase (**Joh 6:39**).
 - v. All of the elect who were foreknown and predestinated (planning phase) shall be justified (legal phase), effectually called from death unto life (vital phase), and glorified (final phase) (**Rom 8:29-30**).
 - vi. The elect have nothing to do with the final phase since it will happen when most of them are physically dead and those that are alive and remain at that time will be changed by the power of God.

18. Confession / confess; Profession / profess

A. The false doctrine of Positive Confession.

- i. There is a false doctrine called "Positive Confession" which is taught in Charismatic so-called "churches" within the "Word of Faith Movement."
- ii. This doctrine teaches that people can have whatever they say if they say it in faith accompanied with positive thoughts.
- iii. This is NOT what the Bible when it uses the word "confession" (more on that later).
- iv. Definition
 - a. "Positive Confession: The Theology of the Spoken Word (Rhematology), or thought actualization, is commonly known as positive confession. It stresses the inherent power of words and thoughts. Each person predestines his own future by what he says verbally and by how well he uses spiritual laws. As such, it is as if we live in a mechanistic universe instead of a personal one (see, Kenneth Copeland, *Laws of Prosperity*, p. 15; Charles Capps, *The Tongue A Creative Force*, pp. 117-118; *Releasing the Ability of God*, pp. 98-99, 101-104)." (Clete Hux, [Word-Faith Movement Profile](#), 5-10-2022)
 - b. "In Word of Faith teaching, a central element of receiving from God is "confession", often called "positive confession" or "faith confession" by practitioners. Practitioners will claim and affirm they have healing, well being, prosperity, or other promises from God, before actually experiencing such results. They do so in demonstration of their faith, which they believe will ultimately result in the fulfillment of their words. While similar, it should not be confused with Norman Vincent Peale's positive thinking theology focusing on the individual, as evidenced by the motto, "Faith in God and believe in oneself". Noted Word of Faith teachers, such as Kenneth E. Hagin and Charles Capps, have argued that God created the universe by speaking it into existence (Genesis 1), and that God has endowed believers with this power. Thus, making a "positive confession" of God's promise and believing God's word stirs the power of resurrection which raised Christ from the dead (Ephesians 1:19-20; Ephesians 3:20), and brings that promise to fulfillment. This teaching is interpreted from Mark 11:22-23. A more recent variant of positive confession is "decree and declare". Word of Faith preachers have called faith a "force". Conversely, "negative confession" can harm, so believers should be conscious of their words." (Word of Faith, [Wikipedia](#), 7-13-2022)
- v. Quotes from Word of Faith teachers regarding Positive Confession
 - a. "In the moment you ask, and believe and know you already have it in the unseen, the entire Universe shifts to bring it into the seen. You must act, speak, and think, as though you are receiving it now." (Byrne, *The Secret*, p. 49.)

- b. "Faith is released with mouth. Even our salvation is based on the confession of our mouths that Jesus Christ is our Lord (see Romans 10:9-10). You can have what you say! In fact, what you are saying is exactly what you are getting now. If you are living in poverty and lack and want, change what you are saying. It will change what you have!" (Kenneth Copeland, *The Laws of Prosperity*, p. 88.)
- c. "So, every time we confess the Word of God from a heart that's confident God will do in our lives what He said—according to Jesus in Mark 11:24 — we shall have what we say." (Kenneth Copeland Ministries, [*The 7 Laws of Prosperity*](#), 5-2-2019)
- vi. Quotes from Charles Capps' book, *The Tongue – A Creative Force*.
 - a. "God's Word that is conceived in your heart, then formed by the tongue, and spoken out of your mouth, becomes a spiritual force releasing the ability of God within you." (emphasis in the original) (Charles Capps, *The Tongue - A Creative Force*, 1976, p. 1)
 - b. "You have prayed, "Lord, I've got this problem and it's getting worse."

"Now let's compare this prayer with the Word of God. First, you have prayed the problem and not the answer. The Word said pray the things you desire. You desire the answer. Second, you have released faith in the ability of the enemy. To make it worse, you established the words of the devil that prayer doesn't work and things are getting worse. You are *walking by sight* and not by *faith*. You have denied the Word of God. You have done it because of the lack of knowledge." (emphasis in the original) (Ibid, p. 4)

- c. "The Bible says, "**Let us hold fast to the profession (confession) of our faith...**" (Heb 10:23).

"It didn't say, "Hold fast to your prayer." When you hold fast to the prayer, you're holding fast to your problem, because most of the time you've prayed the problem.

"Turn loose of the problem and get hold of your confession. Quit praying the problem. And start saying the answer. "For verily I say unto you, whosoever shall say unto this mountain be thou removed...."

"When you prayed and said, "Lord, the mountain's getting bigger; it's not getting any better. I've prayed, and it's not working out," you were holding on to the problem. You haven't got to the answer. You're not there yet; you are still too involved with the problem.

"The answer is in the confession. The answer is in believing and confessing what the WORD SAYS. THE WORD SAYS THAT IT WILL BE REMOVED AND CAST INTO THE SEA.

"We should continually affirm and confess this: "I thank God, though it looks like the mountain's getting bigger, in THE NAME OF JESUS, I see it removed by the eye of faith. *BY THE EYE OF FAITH, I SEE IT REMOVED.*"

"There is creative power within you. Learn to use it wisely."
(emphasis in the original) (Ibid, pp. 23-24)

- d. "The *tongue* can destroy the very course of nature that causes you to be healthy.

"If you begin to say, "I believe I'm coming down with something," you probably will.

""I believe I am taking a cold."

"You'll get it!

"I've had people come in the prayer line and say, "I'm afraid I've got cancer. Well, I don't have any proof, but I just believe I've got it."

"It says the *tongue will set on fire the course of nature*. It will destroy the life-giving flow in you that God put in you to heal you and make you whole.

"Everyone has natural healing power within their body. If you cut your finger, you don't have to be concerned about it. It knows how to heal itself. *That healing power is in you.*

"If you go to talking *sickness and disease and defeat*, you have released words that will produce after their kind. You can stop the natural healing power that God put in you by the words of your mouth. Many have stopped divine healing the same way, by negative words." (emphasis in the original) (Ibid, pp. 40-41)

- e. "I have heard some folks say, "Pray for me, I'm taking the *flu*."

"They've got it *termed right*; they are *taking it*. Satan offered it to them. He said, "You've got a runny nose, and a neck ache; now let's see what you're going to say about it." Then most people will side with the devil and begin to say the very thing he said. "I am taking a cold."

"The WORD says, **"...In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established"** (2Co 13:1).

"You may have a runny nose. You may have aches all over. That is how you feel, but what are you going to *say* about it?"

"*God's Word is forever settled in heaven*; it is already established there. **"For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in *heaven*"** (Ps. 119:89).

"The first thing most people do is to go tell their wife or husband, "I believe I'm taking the flu." *You have released faith in sickness. You have established the words of the enemy. And Jesus said you can have what you say.* The WORD, in essence, said *the tongue will cause the healing power to stop.* It will set on fire the wheels of lineage, or that which you have inherited. What you have *inherited is natural healing power in your body.* Now don't misunderstand me. I am not talking about divine healing at this point, but the natural healing ability of the human body. Then all things being level, all things being right, and without Satan involved, any sickness that comes upon your body — your body will cast it off and heal itself.

"That healing ability is in your body. But Satan has come on the scene, and he distorts these things, and *he has found out that his ability is limited to what he can get you to say.*

"Jesus said you can have what you say. Not many Christians know that, but Satan knows that, and he believes it.

"Just think back to the last time you had a cold or were sick. What was the first thing you wanted to do after you noticed the symptoms?"

"You wanted to go tell somebody, "I'm sick." And you probably did. Then you began to get worse immediately if not sooner. Being unaware, you activated a spiritual law that gave the authority you had to dominate your physical body over to the enemy. *You established the words of the enemy instead of God's Word. You have openly proclaimed, I AM SICK.*

"I beg your pardon, **THE WORD SAYS YOU'RE HEALED.** **"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed"** (1 Peter 2:24). *Not going to be — WERE HEALED —* Jesus already did it two thousand years ago. He's not going to do any more to heal you.

"You lay hold on what He said and deny that sickness has the right to exist in your body. Lay hold upon it by faith, confess the WORD OF GOD over it, and say. "I may hurt, but in the NAME OF JESUS I AM HEALED."

"Somebody said, "That sounds like a *nut!*"

"Well, it may, but I'd rather be a *well nut* than a *sick one!* It works. It works because God said it would. God tells you in His Word YOU CAN HAVE WHAT YOU SAY.

"Most people are having what they say, but they say the wrong things. Now, a lady stood up in the church and said, "*Pray for me, I'm taking the flu.*" Your praying wouldn't do her any good. *You're wasting your time praying for her. She believes the wrong thing. By the words of her mouth she has released faith in the ability of the enemy to make her sick. She has no Scripture basis for that belief. She has been motivated by her physical feelings.*" (emphasis in the original) (Ibid, pp. 47-50)

- f. "Don't get up and testify to the whole church, I'm taking the flu."

"One night, I heard a lady announce it to the whole church, "*I'm taking the flu,*" and most of the people in the congregation said, "You know, she does look bad. You know, I did notice her eyes watering. *Yeah, she's taking the flu. That's what it is.*"

"Now she has a hundred people agreeing she has the flu.

"And Jesus said, "**If two of you shall agree on earth...** (Mat 18:19).

"Wouldn't it be much simpler to stand up and say, "Well, the enemy's been trying to put the symptoms of the *flu* on me and cause me to *believe* in it. But I stand before you tonight, and you are my witnesses before the angels and before God and before heaven *that I AM not sick. I'll not have the flu — by the stripes of Jesus, I'm healed.* That settles it, thank you. *The Word says I'm healed. That's good enough for me.*" (emphasis in the original) (Ibid, pp. 57-58)

- g. "Jesus said your faith would speak to the object (sycamine tree), and it should obey you.

"Now, let's bring this into focus. *IT* (poverty) should obey you. You said, "*We don't ever have enough money. We will never be able to meet the payments*"; and *IT* (poverty) followed you home. You

sneezed and said, "I am taking a cold." AND IT (the cold) was obedient to your words and the virus fastened itself to your body. You said, "I just can't remember anything any more." IT (your memory) became obedient to your words. You said, "My nerves are on edge." IT (your nervous system) became obedient, because Jesus said, IT SHOULD OBEY YOU." (emphasis in the original) (Ibid, pp. 168-169)

B. Refutation of the "Positive Confession" false doctrine.

- i. The "Positive Confession" doctrine and the "Word of Faith" movement are founded upon a misunderstanding of a number of Bible verses such as the following.
 - a. **Mat 17:19-21** – "Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? ²⁰ And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. ²¹ Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting."
 - b. **Mat 21:21-22** – "Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done. ²² And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive."
 - c. **Mar 11:22-24** – "And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. ²³ For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. ²⁴ Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them."
 - d. **Luk 17:5-6** – "And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith. ⁶ And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you."
- ii. In all of the above verses Jesus was speaking to the apostles who had the apostolic gift of faith (**1Co 12:9; 1Co 13:2**).
 - a. This gift of faith is not the "common faith" which all Christians have (**Tit 1:4**).
 - b. It was one of the supernatural spiritual gifts which was given to the apostles and some Christians prior to 70AD.

- (i) This gift of apostolic faith was grouped with the other sign gifts such as the word of wisdom (**1Co 12:8**), the word of knowledge (**1Co 12:8**), the gifts of healing (**1Co 12:9**), the working of miracles (**1Co 12:10**), prophecy (**1Co 12:10; 1Co 13:2**), discerning of spirits (**1Co 12:10**), speaking in tongues (**1Co 12:10**), and interpreting tongues (**1Co 12:10**).
 - (ii) This type of faith was one of the "signs of an apostle" (**2Co 12:12**).
 - c. The gift of faith and healing was also given to the early churches (**Jam 5:14-15**).
 - (i) This was part of the apostolic gifts.
 - (ii) The only other place where anointing with oil for healing is spoken of in the New Testament is when Jesus gave that gift to the 12 apostles (**Mar 6:13**).
 - (iii) When this gift was exercised healing was guaranteed: "the prayer of faith *shall* save the sick, and the Lord *shall* raise him up" (**Jam 5:15**).
 - (iv) Churches do not have the gift of healing today.
- iii. The sign gifts were given to Jesus Christ, the apostles, and some Christians for a period of 40 years from the beginning of Jesus' earthly ministry until approximately 70AD.
 - a. This 40 year period of signs and wonders was prophesied in **Mic 7:15**.
 - (i) God would show the Messiah (*Him* – **Mic 7:15 c/w Mic 7:14, 18-19**) *marvelous things according to the days* that Israel came out of Egypt (**Mic 7:15**).
 1. According - *adv.* According to. a. In a manner agreeing with, consistent with, or answering to; agreeably to.
 2. Israel spent 40 years coming out of the land of Egypt (**Act 7:36; Act 13:17-19**), therefore these marvelous things would last 40 years as well.
 - (ii) The *marvelous things* were miracles (signs and wonders).
 1. Marvellous - *A. adj.* Such as to excite wonder or astonishment; wonderful, astonishing, surprising.
 2. Wonder - 1. A marvellous object; a marvel, prodigy
2. A deed performed or an event brought about by miraculous or supernatural power; a miracle (a reference to Moses and the apostles working wonders is cited for the secondary definition).
 3. *Marvellous things*, or *signs and wonders*, were done when Israel came out of Egypt (**Psa 78:12 c/w Psa 78:43**).
 - (iii) There was coming a day when the Messiah would be shown a 40 year period of miraculous signs and wonders.

1. The *beginning* of the 40 year period of signs and wonders (miracles) was when Jesus turned the water into wine at the marriage in Cana (**Joh 2:11; Act 2:22**).
 2. At the *beginning of miracles*, Jesus was about 30 years old (**Luk 3:23**) which was in approximately 26-30AD.
 3. The 40 year period of signs and wonders would therefore run until approximately 66-70AD.
- b. Sign gifts were given to the early NT church for two primary purposes:
- (i) To convince the Jews, who were accustomed to seeing a prophet proven by signs, that the Messiah had come (**1Co 1:22; Joh 4:48; Joh 6:14**).
 - (ii) To confirm the Word of God spoken by Jesus and the Apostles (**Mar 16:15-20; Heb 2:3-4; Act 14:1-3; Act 2:43; Act 5:12**).
- c. When the purposes for the sign gifts were no longer necessary, they ceased.
- (i) Once Jerusalem was destroyed in 70AD and all the Jews were either killed or carried away captive, there was no longer a reason for God to give signs and wonders to convince them.
 - (ii) Once the New Testament was complete (perfect) and confirmed, there was no longer a reason for the signs and wonders to continue, and the prophesied 40 year period ended and they ceased (**1Co 13:8-10**).
 - (iii) The signs and wonders were the signs of an apostle (**2Co 12:12**).
 1. The office of an apostle was a gift from God, just like the ability to perform signs was a gift (**1Co 12:28; Eph 4:8, 11**).
 2. Both gifts passed out of existence by the end of the first century.
- d. The apostolic gift of miraculous faith (**1Co 12:9 c/w Mar 11:23**) ceased at the same time the other miraculous sign gifts ceased.
- iv. The Positive Confession doctrine is unscriptural.
- a. It is based largely on the idea that Jesus took away all the sicknesses of His people when He died for their sins on the cross.
 - b. This is true in a sense and false in another sense.
 - c. It is true that all of our sicknesses and diseases will be healed when we our bodies are resurrected (**Rom 8:21-23**), but it is false that all diseases and sickness will be healed during our lives on earth.
 - (i) Disease and death is the result of sin (**Rom 5:12; Joh 5:14**).
 - (ii) When Christ died for our sins, He took away the ultimate cause of disease and death (**Psa 103:3**).

- (iii) However, physical disease and death will not be entirely eradicated until the redemption of our bodies at the resurrection (**Rom 8:21-23**).
 - (iv) Jesus destroyed death through His death (**2Ti 1:10; Heb 2:14**), but yet all of His children will physically die if they don't live until His second coming (**1Co 15:22; 1Th 4:16-17**).
 - (v) If Jesus' death for our sins didn't immediately heal our bodies from the death principle within them which causes them to die in this life (and it didn't), then it follows that neither did His death heal every ailment in our physical bodies in this life prior to them being resurrected.
- d. Isaiah prophesied that Jesus "hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows . . . and with his stripes we are healed" (**Isa 53:4-5**).
- (i) Matthew quoted Isaiah and rendered it, "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses" (**Mat 8:17**).
 1. Matthew said that Jesus *fulfilled* this verse when He "healed all that were sick" who came to Him during His earthly ministry (**Mat 8:16-17**).
 2. The Holy Spirit was not teaching that Isaiah's prophecy was proclaiming that all the sicknesses of all of Jesus' people would be healed during their lives.
 - (ii) Peter quoted Isaiah and rendered it, "Who his own self *bare our sins* in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: *by whose stripes ye were healed*" (**1Pe 2:24**).
 1. The Holy Spirit here shows us that Jesus bore our sins and healed us spiritually when He died for us on the cross.
 2. When Christ put away our sins we "were healed" of the *spiritual* sickness and death that sin caused in our souls and spirits (**Eph 2:1-5**).
 3. But we will *not* be healed of all *physical* sickness and death until our body is redeemed from corruption at the resurrection at the last day (**1Co 15:50-54**).
- v. The Positive Confession doctrine is nonsensical and contradictory.
- a. The "positive confession" teaching is contrary to the rules of basic grammar.
 - (i) For a person who is in fact currently sick to say, "I am well," or "I am healed" if he means, "I am going to be well," or "I am going to be healed," is an incorrect use of speech.
 - (ii) Most first graders understand this.
 - b. The "positive confession" teaching makes either a liar or a lunatic out of those who practice it.
 - (i) If a man who is actually physically ill says, "I am well," or "I am not sick," there are only two possibilities.

1. He knows that he is currently sick, and he is therefore lying.
 2. He doesn't know that he is sick when he demonstrably is, and therefore he is a lunatic.
 3. In either case, this doctrine turns people into double-minded fools.
- (ii) Imagine such a sick man goes to the doctor after being "well" (in his own words) for a three months.
1. The doctor asks, "What is ailing you?", to which he responds, "I am not sick. I am well."
 2. Confused, the doctor asks him why he is there, to which he responds that he is in need of healing.
 3. The doctor asks him what he needs healed of, to which he responds, "I am healed."
 4. The doctor refers him to a psychiatrist.
- (iii) Consider another example of how "positive confession," if applied consistently, would make a man a lunatic.
1. Imagine a man who desires to be married.
 2. Rather than asking God to give him a wife if it is His will, he rather takes Kenneth Copeland's advice and says, "I am not single. I am married."
 3. When he goes on a Christian dating website, he is unable to sign up because there is no option to select "married" for his status.
 4. When he goes on a first date with a woman he hopes to marry, and she asks him how long he has been single, he responds, "I am not single. I am married." — The date ends immediately.
 5. He goes to a therapist to get help because he is depressed due to not being able to find a wife.
 6. The therapist asks him how long he has been single, to which he replies, "I am not single; I am married."
 7. The therapist diagnoses him with schizophrenia and commits him to a mental institution.
- c. Christians are not God.
- (i) Because God is omniscient and omnipotent, and therefore knows the future and can sovereignly control it, He "callet those things which be not as though they were" (**Rom 4:17**).
 - (ii) But for us to do so is proud and presumptuous.
 - (iii) We know that ultimately in our new, resurrected bodies we will be healed of all our ailments (**Rev 21:4**).
 - (iv) But we do not know if or when we will be healed of our sicknesses in this life.
- vi. Jesus and the apostles did not teach or practice the "Positive Confession" doctrine.

- a. Jesus healed multitudes of people of blindness, deafness, dumbness, lameness, etc.
 - (i) He never once told any of them to declare, "I am not blind," or "I am not deaf," or "I am not dumb," or "I am not lame."
 - (ii) He rather asked them if they had faith that He was *able* to heal them (**Mat 9:28-30**).
- b. Paul told Timothy to drink wine to heal his stomach problems and his frequent sicknesses (**1Ti 5:23**).
 - (i) He didn't tell Timothy to proclaim, "I am not sick."
 - (ii) He didn't tell him to declare, "I have no stomach problems. I am healed in the name of Jesus."
- c. Paul had a thorn in the flesh which buffeted him (**2Co 12:7**).
 - (i) He *besought* the LORD three times to take it away (**2Co 12:8**).
 1. Besought – pa. t. and pple. of BESEECH.
 2. Beseech v. – 1. *trans.* To seek after, search for, try to get. *Obs.* (last usage in 1374). 2. To beg earnestly for, entreat (a thing). 3. To supplicate, entreat, implore (a person).
 - (ii) Poor old Paul was so ignorant that he thought that *asking* God to take away his sickness was the right thing to do.
 1. He didn't know enough to take the sage advice of Charles Capps and, "*Turn loose of the problem and get hold of your confession. Quit praying the problem. And start saying the answer.*"
 2. No wonder Paul wasn't healed of the thorn in the flesh!
 3. He forgot that he was supposed to say, "I have no thorn in the flesh. I am not sick. I am healed in the name of Jesus."
- d. Peter healed a lame man (**Act 3:2-8**).
 - (i) He did not tell him to say, "I am not lame."
 - (ii) He did not tell him to proclaim, "I am healed in the name of Jesus" in order to be healed.
- e. There are many more examples of the apostles healing people of sicknesses, and never once did they tell them to say, "I am not sick. I am healed in the name of Jesus."
- vii. It is not unscriptural to tell God about your sicknesses or problems and ask for healing.
 - a. "Word of Faith" false teachers like Charles Capps tell people that they should not be saying their problems, but saying the solution: "*Quit praying the problem. And start saying the answer*".
 - b. The saints in the Bible did not get the memo.
 - c. The Bible is full of instances of saints telling God their problems, such as the following:

- (i) Hannah: "I . . . have poured out my soul before the LORD. ¹⁶ Count not thine handmaid for a daughter of Belial: for out of the abundance of my complaint and grief have I spoken hitherto." **(1Sa 1:15-16)**
 - 1. Eli replied to her: "Go in peace: and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of him." **(1Sa 1:17)**
 - 2. Hannah did NOT say, "I am not barren. I am pregnant in the name of Jesus."
- (ii) David: "Have mercy upon me, O LORD; for I am weak: O LORD, heal me; for my bones are vexed." **(Psa 6:2)**
- (iii) David did not say, "I am not weak. I am strong."
- (iv) David: "Give ear to my prayer, O God; and hide not thyself from my supplication. ² Attend unto me, and hear me: I mourn in my complaint, and make a noise;" **(Psa 55:1-2)**
- (v) A Psalmist: **Psa 102:1-11**

C. What is "confession" in the Bible?

- i. The term "confession" is NOT used in the Bible as the Word of Faith movement uses it.
- ii. Confession and profession are synonyms and are used as such in the Bible.
 - a. Confession *n.* – I. The action of confessing. 1. a. The disclosing of something the knowledge of which by others is considered humiliating, or prejudicial to the person confessing; a making known or acknowledging of one's fault, wrong, crime, weakness, etc. 2. As a religious act: The acknowledgment of sin or sinfulness; esp. such acknowledgment made in set form in public worship. 3. Acknowledgment of a statement, claim, etc.; admission, concession. 4. The recognizing or acknowledging (of a person or thing) as having a certain character or certain claims; declaration of belief in or adhesion to; acknowledgment, profession, avowal when asked; *spec.* the testimony rendered by a Confessor (sense 2).
 - b. Confess *v.* – 1. *trans.* To declare or disclose (something which one has kept or allowed to remain secret as being prejudicial or inconvenient to oneself); to acknowledge, own, or admit (a crime, charge, fault, weakness, or the like). 2. To acknowledge, concede, grant, admit for oneself (an assertion or claim, that might be challenged). 3. To acknowledge one's belief *that*, to avow formally, esp. as an article of faith. Tyndale *John ix:22* That yf eny man dyd confesse that he was Christ, he shuld be excommunicat. 4. To acknowledge or formally recognize (a person or thing) as having a certain character or certain claims; to own, avow, declare belief in or adhesion to.
 - c. Profession *n.* – The action or fact of professing; that which is professed. I. 1. a. The declaration, promise, or vow made by one entering a religious order; hence, the action of entering such an order; the fact of being professed in a religious order. II. 4. a. The action of declaring, acknowledging, or avowing an opinion, belief, intention,

- practice, etc.; declaration, avowal. In latter use often with implied contrast to practice or fact: cf. PROFESS *v.* 3, PROFESSED 2. 5. *spec.* a. The profession of religion; the declaration of belief in and obedience to religion, or of acceptance of and conformity to the faith and principles of any religious community; hence, the faith or religion which one professes.
- d. Profess *v.* – I. 1. *trans.* a. Orig. in passive form, *to be professed* (cf. PROFESS *a.*, PROFESSED *ppl. a.*), to have made one's profession of religion; to make one's profession, to take the vows of some religious order, *esp.* to become a monk or nun. II. 2. *trans.* To declare openly, announce, affirm; to avow, acknowledge, confess. 4. *trans.* To affirm or declare one's faith in or allegiance to; to acknowledge or formally recognize as an object of faith or belief (a religion, principle, rule of action; God, Christ, a saint, etc.).
- iii. In the scriptures, to confess or profess pertains to the following things:
- a. To acknowledge, disclose, and admit one's sins (**Dan 9:20; Mat 3:6; Act 19:18-19; Rom 14:10-12; Jam 5:16; 1Jo 1:9**).
 - b. To declare one's allegiance to Christ or His gospel before men (**Mat 10:32-33; Rom 15:9; 2Co 9:13**).
 - c. To declare or disclose one's faith in Christ (**Joh 9:22; Joh 12:42; Rom 10:9-10; 1Ti 6:12; Heb 3:1; Heb 4:14; Heb 10:23; 1Jo 4:2-3; 1Jo 4:15; 2Jo 1:7**).
 - d. To declare one's belief in something (**Act 23:8; Act 24:14; 1Ti 2:10; 1Ti 6:21; Tit 1:16**).
 - e. To admit or declare the truth concerning something (**Joh 1:20; Php 2:11; 1Ti 6:13; Mat 7:23**).
 - f. To declare something about oneself (**Rom 1:22; Heb 11:13**).
 - g. To admit to knowing a person (**Rev 3:5**).
- iv. Every usage of the words *confess, confession, profess, profession* and all of their cognates in the entire New Testament are included in the verses above (parallel passages in the gospels were omitted).
- v. Not in one single place are any of those words used in the way that the Word of Faith movement uses them.

19. Led by the Spirit

- A. Charismatics, and too often other professing Christians, frequently say they are "led by the Spirit" to do various things.
 - i. It is scriptural for Christians to be "led by the Spirit of God" (**Rom 8:14**), or to be "led of the Spirit" (**Gal 5:18**).
 - ii. But the following questions need to be asked and answered.
 - a. What does it mean to be led by the Spirit?
 - b. How does the Spirit lead us?
 - c. How do we know when the Spirit is leading us?
- B. What most people mean when they say they were led by the Spirit to do something is that they had a strong *feeling* that they should do it.

- i. They will say things like "I *feel* the Spirit leading me", or "I *feel* like the Spirit is telling me to do thus and so."
 - a. They are equating the Holy Spirit with an *emotion*.
 - b. Emotion *n.* – 4. a. *fig.* – Any agitation or disturbance of mind, feeling, passion; any vehement or excited mental state. b. *Psychology.* A mental 'feeling' or 'affection' (e.g. of pleasure or pain, desire or aversion, surprise, hope or fear, etc.), as distinguished from cognitive or volitional states of consciousness. Also *abstr.* 'feeling' as distinguished from the other classes of mental phenomena.
 - c. Such people are being led by their hearts (the seat of emotions), rather than God.
 - (i) Following one's heart is dangerous (**Pro 28:26; Mar 7:21-23; Jer 17:9**).
 - (ii) We must lead our heart by sound reasoning from a solid understanding of the scripture (**Pro 23:19; Pro 4:23**), rather than being led by it.
 - d. People think they feel God's presence when they feel certain emotions.
 - (i) Emotions are a poor indicator of God's presence.
 - (ii) Jacob was in God's presence, and he didn't even know it (**Gen 28:16**).
 - (iii) God's prophets, writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (**2Pe 1:21**), experienced a wide range of emotions from joy to sorrow to depression to indignation (read the Psalms).
 - (iv) Our emotions are therefore not a measure of whether the Spirit is leading us or not.
 - ii. People can be led by things other than God.
 - a. People can be led by idols (**1Co 12:2**).
 - b. They can be led by hypocrites and their own lusts (**2Ti 3:6**).
 - c. They can also be led away by false teachers who wrest the scriptures (**2Pe 3:16-17**).
 - d. It is therefore very important to understand what it means to be led by the Spirit and how to distinguish the Spirit's leading from our own emotions and lusts.
 - iii. It is much easier to follow one's own emotions and lusts than it is to do the hard work of learning the scriptures and making the difficult decisions which the Bible leads us to make.
- C. What does it mean to be led by the Spirit (**Rom 8:14**)?
- i. Led *ppl.* – [Pa. pple. of LEAD v. 1]
 - ii. Lead *v.* – I. To conduct. 1. *trans.* To cause to go along with oneself. 2. a. *To accompany and show the way to*; to conduct, guide, *esp.* to direct or guide by going on in advance; *to cause to follow in one's path*.
 - iii. The Holy Spirit leads children of God by showing them God's ways and directing them to follow in God's path.
 - iv. The question then becomes: *how* and *by what means* does the Holy Spirit do that?

- a. It will be shown in the next section that the Holy Spirit leads God's children by means of the Holy Scriptures.
 - b. Christians are filled with the Spirit by having the word of God dwell in them richly (**Eph 5:18-19 c/w Col 3:16**).
 - c. God pours out His Spirit to His children by making His words known unto them (**Pro 1:23**).
 - d. It is therefore through the word of God given through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (**2Pe 1:21**) that the Spirit leads men.
- D. How does God lead us?
- i. To be *led of the Spirit* is to *walk in the Spirit* (**Gal 5:18 c/w Gal 5:16**).
 - a. One walks in the Spirit by walking in the word of God (**Psa 119:1**) and thereby walking in God's ways (**Psa 119:3**).
 - b. Walking in the Spirit is not walking in the counsel of the ungodly, but rather in the law of God (**Psa 1:1-2**).
 - ii. God leads us in His truth (**Psa 25:5**).
 - a. God's truth is found in His word (**Joh 17:17**).
 - b. Therefore, God leads us by His word, the Holy Scriptures.
 - c. The LORD shows us His ways and teaches us His paths through His word (**Psa 25:4-5; Psa 86:11; Psa 119:15**).
 - iii. God leads us by His light and His truth (**Psa 43:3**).
 - a. God's word is His truth (**Psa 119:142; Psa 119:151**).
 - b. God's word is His light (**Pro 6:23; Psa 119:105**).
 - c. Therefore, God leads us through His word (**Pro 6:20-22**).
 - iv. God leads us by teaching us to do His will (**Psa 143:10**).
 - a. God teaches us to do His will by His word which is written in our hearts (**Psa 40:8 c/w Heb 8:10-13**).
 - b. Therefore, God leads us by teaching us from the word of God in the scriptures which resonates with the word written in our hearts.
 - v. Wisdom leads us in the way of righteousness in the midst of the paths of judgment (**Pro 8:1 c/w Pro 8:20**).
 - a. God leads us in right paths by teaching us the way of wisdom (**Pro 4:11**).
 - b. Wisdom is found in God's word (**Pro 2:6; Deut 4:5-6; Ezr 7:14 c/w Ezr 7:25**).
 - c. Therefore, God leads us through His word.
 - vi. God leads us by instructing us (**Deut 32:10**).
 - a. God gave us the scripture for instruction (**2Ti 3:16**).
 - b. Therefore, God leads us by instructing us with the scriptures.
 - vii. God teaches us His way and leads us in a plain path when we dwell in the house of God and enquire in His temple (**Psa 27:11 c/w Psa 27:4**).
 - a. The house of God is the church (**1Ti 3:15**).
 - b. God's temple is the church (**1Co 3:16**).
 - c. The word is preached and taught in the church by pastors (**Eph 4:11-12; 2Ti 4:2; Tit 1:3**).
 - d. God's way is in the sanctuary (**Psa 77:13**).

- (i) Sanctuary *n.* – I. A holy place. 1. a. *gen.* A building or place set apart for the worship of God or of one or more divinities: applied, e.g., to a Christian church, the Jewish temple and the Mosaic tabernacle, a heathen temple or site of local worship, and the like; also *fig.* to the church or body of believers.
 - (ii) The sanctuary is the dwelling place (house) of God (**Heb 9:1-2; 1Ch 22:19; 1Ch 28:10**).
 - (iii) The NT church is God's sanctuary (house, habitation) (**Eph 2:22**).
 - e. The Psalmist Asaph was led by the Spirit into proper thinking when he went to church and learned from God through His word (**Psa 73:17-28**).
 - f. Therefore, God leads us through the preaching of the word in His church.
- E. How do we know when God is leading us versus when we are being led by our emotions?
- i. Men have a way of convincing themselves that their ideas are right and therefore must be the product of the Spirit of God leading them.
 - a. All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes (**Pro 16:2**).
 - b. Every way of a man is right in his own eyes (**Pro 21:2**).
 - c. The way of a fool is right in his own eyes (**Pro 12:15**).
 - d. There is a way which *seemeth right* unto a man (**Pro 14:12**).
 - ii. Preachers and professing Christians often claim they are following the Holy Spirit's leading as an excuse to do what they want.
 - a. This makes it hard for ignorant and unlearned believers to argue with them because they are made to feel like they are arguing with God.
 - b. No Christian should ever accept a preacher's or a fellow believer's claim of being led to do something by the Holy Spirit if he cannot produce a Bible verse to support his decision.
 - c. "The Spirit led me" is an invalid argument unless it followed up with a Bible verse.
 - d. There are two ways to deal with a preacher or believer who claims the Holy Spirit led him to do something.
 - (i) Ask him to give you a Bible verse which instructed him to do it.
 - (ii) Answer the fool according to his folly (**Pro 26:5**) and tell him the Holy Spirit led you to believe that the Holy Spirit did NOT lead him.
 - e. The Holy Spirit is not double-minded and therefore will not lead one man to do one thing and another to do something contrary to it.
 - iii. If a man thinks he is being led of the Spirit to do something, he better be able to point to a Bible verse that supports his idea.
 - a. If what he is being "led" to do is not in accord with scripture, he is not being led by God (**Isa 8:20**).

- b. If he cannot point to a Bible verse which is telling him to do the thing which he says the Spirit is leading him to do, then he is being led by his imagination rather than the Holy Spirit.
- c. Be VERY cautious about *essentially putting words in God's mouth* when you say "the Lord led me to..." when you don't have a verse of scripture to back it up (**Jer 23:31**).